

**DAVIDSON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*Dale Moorefield, Director*



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
May 22, 2018**

**Board Members Present**

**Mr. John Byrum; Mr. Andy Morris; Mr. Richard Wagner; Mr. Steve Jarvis**

**Others in Attendance**

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Katrina McMasters;  
Mrs. Susan Craig; Mrs. Elizabeth Huff; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick;  
Mrs. Lexa Eagle; Ms. Sherri Woodyard; Ms. Nina Stout; Mr. Bill Gilleland**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:17 p.m. by Mr. John Byrum. An invocation was offered by Mr. Byrum.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. Richard Wagner made a motion to approve the Agenda. Mr. Andy Morris seconded the motion. The Agenda was approved unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Morris made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2018 meeting. Mr. Wagner seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Public Address**

There was no public address. Mr. Dale Moorefield took this opportunity to introduce the special guests for the meeting; Ms. Nina Stout, Supervisor in Adult Services and Mr. Bill Gilleland, VITA Coordinator.

**Management Report**

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick shared the expenditure report with figures as of April 30, 2018. The spending in the overtime continues; however, there has been a shift in percentages of use of overtime. We continue to be over budget in the travel line item and this is mainly due to increases in caseloads and numbers of reports being received. Mrs. Hedrick compared

last year's mileage to this year's and found that the DSS vehicles had been used 7300 more miles and personal vehicles had been used approximately 21,000 more miles. Our overall budget balance will help cover these overages. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program ended in March and our Agency used all of that funding. We continue to receive small allocations in the Share the Warmth funding each month. \$13,899.04 is the current balance. We received an additional Day Care allocation and this helped to bring the spending coefficient down to less than 100 percent. Mrs. Hedrick provided an explanation as to why the total Day Care allocation is not shown on the expenditure report. Overall, as of April 30, 2018, we are at 79 percent spending operating expenses, Public Assistance is at 69 percent, and 76 percent for total Social Services spending.

Mr. Dale Moorefield gave a report on the current vacancies in the Agency. We have 8, 6 of which are in Income Maintenance. 4 of those have been posted and interviews have started. All others have been posted. There are 2 vacancies in CPS I/A/T, one of which is due to one of the newest hires having a personal tragedy and felt they could not do the job at this time. The Account Tech position was vacated due to the person going to work for a local law firm. This position will be posted in the near future.

Mrs. Elizabeth Huff reported that Income Maintenance is still moving right along. The workers continue to stay in the upper 90's for timely processing of applications and in recertifications for Medicaid and FNS. Due to good work statewide, the USDA has released NC from corrective action. Applications taken in the programs are still up and down and caseloads remain about the same overall. FNS reports are still being worked on in NC FAST and appear to be running about a month behind.

Mrs. Huff also reported that Fraud collections were very high in March and remained above normal in April due to tax intercepts.

She also reported that in the Work First area, applications taken and inquiries remain about the same as well as caseloads. Two individuals went to work and this puts the total for the year at 17. Our goal is 20. No Benefit Diversion cases were completed.

In the Child Care area, Mrs. Huff reported that our County got a little more money in subsidy, which puts the allocation at 6.2 million dollars. The April numbers have just been made available and \$448,000 was spent. We are in a good place now in regards to our childcare spending. We still have 271 children on the waiting list, but with next year's budget estimates being lower, we will continue to operate with a waiting list. It normally takes about three months to see changes in spending when the waiting list is put in place. There was discussion about the reasons for the waiting list. The main reason it was implemented was due to the overspending of the allocation. There is no emergency funding if overspending occurs and continues through the end of the fiscal year.

Mrs. Huff shared that in the Emergency Assistance area; General Assistance funding stayed about the same and is used as a last resort to assist someone. Crisis Intervention Program funds are being used, but not as much. This is a crisis-based program and temperatures are not crisis related at this time. Share The Warmth funding is for heating issues only. It can be used if the client needs assistance with bills that were past due in the past three months. Low Income Energy Assistance Program spent all of the funds and

ended in March. WF-EA spending is up and this will continue to be used until temperatures go up and become crisis related.

Mr. Moorefield shared information regarding Kamp Kiwanis with the Board. The camp can serve and house 60 kids per week. They are treated like “kings and queens” for that week and fed well. They are encouraged to stay despite bouts with being homesickness and return year after year. The camp serves children ages 7 to 11 and it is free for them to attend. Our Agency takes the applications for Kiwanis Kiddie Kamp each Spring.

Mr. Scott Craver reported that Child support had a steady month. He let the Board know that it will probably be a stretch to meet the collection goal set for this fiscal year. They now have their new person on board and their numbers should increase once she is on boarded and trained. There was discussion about collections and amounts that should be seen each month. Mr. Craver let the Board know that in comparison with other counties, Davidson County is very high in collections.

Ms. Katrina McMasters reported that Child Protective Services numbers are as steady as ever. The number of reports received in April was up one from the month of March, which was also very busy. That number is expected to increase in May due to the school year ending with school personnel traditionally reporting situations they have concerns going into the summer break from school. They have seen a good number of cases with Domestic Violence occurring with the children present. Forensic interviews are being conducted and causing cases to be open longer. In-home cases are going up again. We have made progress in supervisory efforts to keep abreast of the current situation in each case. We are trying to close cases within 45 days when appropriate. The number of children requiring petitions to be filed to remove them from their homes is rising. 13 petitions were filed in April and all were placed in Foster Care. Workers seem to be taking the increases in expectations in stride. The new State initiative was discussed regarding drug positive babies born to drug positive mothers.

Mrs. Susan Craig reported that 13 children came into care through Child Protective Services, one due to a dissolved guardianship and one from Division of Juvenile Justice; bringing the total to 15 new children in Foster Care for the month of April. There were two sibling groups of 4 each and they have been kept together at this point. It appears one of the groups may have to be split up due to all of the medical appointments for the four children. Everything else seems to be holding steady.

Two proclamations discussed, Older Adults Month and Foster Care Month. There was discussion held about what we can do that would be special for the children in foster care. Ideas were presented and Mrs. Craig will do some investigation and let the Board know what she learns.

Mrs. Craig reported that Adult Services is holding steady. The number of wards our Agency has responsibility for is down by 4; 3 passed away and 1 transferred to guardianship. Efforts have been made to help staff deal with the losses.

## **Old Business**

### **2017 Annual PBB Report**

The County's Annual Report was shared with the Board. The results for DSS start on page 28 of the report. Each Program Administrator will report on the tracking and goals for their respective areas. Our Agency achieved almost 98 percent success in meeting our goals overall. The Performance Based Budget savings program was discussed and the goals for each area were briefly shared by Mr. Moorefield. Our Agency exceeded most of the State set goals in all areas. This report is an overall look at what the Agency has done and is an effort to show the community what the Agency is doing.

Performance Based Budgeting for Income Maintenance is a collaborative effort for the entire area. Office support can be looked at on an individual basis. The work at the front desk is very important. Setting goals is important and each employee is important. The area has met 98 percent of their goals for this year and that figure should increase by the end of the year. In the Office support area, tracking of the number of phone calls answered, sent to voice mail, hang ups, etc. is one of the measurements. Another measurement is for total number of calls coming into the switchboard, which is for the entire County, not just DSS. 75 percent of the calls that come in are answered on the first ring set. The switchboard operator is meeting that goal at 99.2 percent. When calling other counties, you do not actually get to talk to a person most of the time. This makes Davidson County unique and callers appear to appreciate being able to reach an actual person. The Income Maintenance Caseworker I staff also operate at the front desk and their goals are to take some of the front-end work off the line workers for processing applications. These workers see 60 percent of the people at the front desk that come in to see an Income Maintenance Caseworker II and their needs are met by the IMC I. This goal is being accomplished at 100 percent. They are actually seeing almost 70 percent.

Mrs. Huff shared that the results of the PBB measurements mean a lot to the workers as it gives them a sense of value as well as a sense of importance in the Agency. PBB moneys are being used to redesign the front desk area, allowing more room, more privacy, and more confidentiality for our clients and customers. The switchboard will be moved to that area as well. Mrs. Huff also let the Board know that the TV being used for tonight's meeting as a monitor was purchased with PBB moneys. The TV monitor has proven very helpful for numerous online trainings. PBB measurements give employees incentive to meet their goals to qualify for potential PBB bonuses. Questions were asked about the volume of calls coming into the switchboard. There were 48,516 calls in the third quarter, 124,249 calls in the first three quarters of the year. The switchboard is for the entire County, not just DSS.

Mr. Craver shared that Child Support is unique. They are currently working with an antiquated computer system with no idea if there will be a new system in the future. Child Support goals are set by the State. The State lowered the bar as to what is expected. Davidson County has set our own goals. The ending goals from one year are carried over to the next year and increased slightly. The collection goal was reviewed. A greater amount has been collected every year since 1999 with the exception of one year. The State Rep comes regularly and supervisors try to get good information to help increase and improve numbers. Our State Rep is very willing to help staff. Staff recently worked with law enforcement in regards to serving papers for Child Support. This has not been at

the top of their priority list, but it is anticipated this recent communication will help. Law enforcement contacts are important and Thomasville Police Department is on board to make service a priority.

Ms. McMasters reported that the State does not give much wiggle room for CPS for initiation of reports. Our County does a good job; however, initiation is sometimes out of our control. One thing we fall short on is good documentation of our efforts and work and our goals have been revised to focus on improvement in this area. Ms. McMasters explained that Immediate Response means go now and everything must be dropped and initiation must take place right then. CPS continues to struggle with the 45-day case closures. Ms. McMasters discussed the current goals for CPS with the Board. Some of the goals may change because they are being continuously met. Program improvement Plans that the State has been helping with was discussed. The new goal for getting cases closed within 45 days is 75 percent. The Board asked if staff are receptive to the changes. Ms. McMasters shared that some are, and some are not. She and the supervisors continue working with staff to get their buy-in to the changes. Staff are not sure how it is humanly possible to achieve the new goals set by the State. There is a safety net offered by the State, that is that documentation of all actions, and attempts need to be recorded. The reason that cases are not being closed was discussed with the Board. The new manual for CPS has been reviewed and it is a good road map for taking care of each report. Case assignment is also being looked at in order to get a better balance of cases. The Board asked how quickly new staff will be trained and ready for a caseload. Ms. McMasters explained that would depend on experience and the availability of the State mandated training each worker must attend.

Mrs. Craig shared that Foster care is somewhat a roll over from CPS. The most important things for Foster Care workers is seeing children in their home 5 out of 6 visits. Caregivers of the children will have to be seen as well beginning July 1, 2018. Accomplishing this requirement will take creativity on the part of the workers. If reunification is the plan, the parents also have to be seen in their homes and walk-throughs will have to be conducted as well. There will be adjustments for DSS and foster parents. 87 children found permanence in fiscal year 2016-2017, which is the ultimate goal for children in Foster Care.

Mrs. Craig also reported on the services clerical staff. Every time CPS takes a report, there is a work up to complete with checks in many different areas. This goal was met at 99 percent and there were 1047 reports processed.

Mrs. Craig also reported on the Adult Services area. 99 percent of Adult Protective Services evaluations were initiated according to the goal set by the Agency. Only one report was not initiated. There are Status Reports done on each ward, each year. These reports may include, but are not limited to medical information, dental information, medications being administered, other relative placement possibilities, and many other things. All of these reports are done by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the each month.

Mrs. Hedrick reported on the Fiscal area, which includes Fiscal, IT, Medicaid Transportation and our Interpreter. Accuracy in accounts payable goal was set at 100 percent and ended at 99.15 percent. 99.5 percent of Medicaid Transportation bills were processed timely. The goal for IT was to meet a high satisfaction rating, which was met at 99.5 percent. Our Interpreter met her goal of translating documents into Spanish at 100

percent. One of the Account Tech I positions is acting as secretary for JCPC and completion of all tasks involved were met at 100 percent. The goal for Fiscal is to minimize County dollars spent. The goal is to be below 39 percent, which was met last year, at 37.5 percent. We are currently at about 38.5 percent this year. We continually try to use all State and Federal dollars allocated. During the Single audit, there were no Fiscal findings. The only IT finding was unlocked computers. Mrs. Hedrick has continued to stress how important it is to have computers locked when workers are not at their desk. There was one State finding during that audit and it was corrected on the next 1571. There are no State mandated goals for the area.

Mr. Moorefield reiterated that our Agency takes PBB measurements very seriously.

## **New Business**

### **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) 2018**

Mr. Moorefield shared that Mr. Bill Gilleland is back with VITA, but is no longer a DSS employee, having retired effective June 1, 2017. He also shared that nearly 3 million dollars in refunds were received by the people VITA assisted. Mr. Gilliland had 37 volunteers this year and completed 2,112 tax returns. This is a 4 percent increase from the previous year. Mr. Gilleland has built a strong corps of volunteers and other agency partnerships including the Davidson County libraries and Davidson County Community College. The volunteers represented more than 198 years of experience in tax preparation and committed more than 2500 hours of their time just this tax season. The IRS holds our VITA program in high regard each year and did so once again this year. VITA is not a mandated services provided by DSS, but it is an extremely valuable economic service provided here in Davidson County.

Mr. Gilleland shared that the volunteers are the key to the success of this program. There were numerous experienced preparers completing these returns. The VITA program served about 2500 people. Taxes are now a year round issue due to people coming in wanting to get taxes done from 2017 and several years back. Mr. Gilleland shared the numbers from the 2018 VITA Summary sheet provided to the Board. He also discussed how tax credits may affect a taxpayer's return. The Health Care issue will be different and there have been many challenges for preparers and taxpayers alike. A total of \$43,634,000.00 was earned by the people who filed taxes with VITA. . Public Services Announcements and County Website alert the public to this service and VITA has also continued to reach out to the County employees to let them know that services are available. The appointments at each library were full each week this year, so no additional advertising was necessary.

Individual stories about returns completed were shared. Mrs. Lexa Eagle shared that most of the taxpayers she helped were very, very appreciative, even when they were told they had to pay rather than receive a refund. In listening to other stories during the luncheon held to honor the volunteers for the VITA program, it is evident that this service is much needed and appreciated in the County, as well as a few, who come from other counties around us that do not offer this same service.

There was discussion to assure the Board understands the importance of this service in our County.

## **Program Focus –Adult Services**

Because May is Elder Abuse Awareness month, we felt it would be appropriate to focus on the work of our Adult Services Unit. Ms. Nina Stout is the supervisor of this group. She states they are a very small unit, but very mighty. She shared that their work encompasses both APS evaluations and ongoing care in comparison to CPS and Foster Care, which are separate. This unit does evaluations, but adults have the right to refuse services unless a situation is extremely harmful and could cause severe health issues or death. A brochure was shared regarding services provided by the Adult Services staff. Adult Protective Services (APS) is a mandated service. Guardianship for adults is a key piece of Adult Services. Mr. Moorefield is the person who is ultimately responsible for our wards. A Resource List was shared with the Board and the Board requested that this Resource List be put on the County website. Ms. Stout shared that they encounter many people that do not know where to find resources or how to go about seeking help at all. Observation status was discussed. Education in numerous areas for adults and their families is an important piece of Adult Services' job. This area is responsible for a wide variety of services and ages that need to be served. Ms. Stout expressed that she has a very dedicated staff. Our entire DSS is unique to most because they work as a team.

Mr. Moorefield shared information and an invitation to the Board to attend the Employee Recognition Picnic to be held on June 8, 2018 at the Kiwanis Kiddie Kamp at Noon.

## **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, June 26, 2018, at 4:15 p.m., First Floor of the Governmental Building Lexington, Conference Room D.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Steve Jarvis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:14 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield