

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2018**

Board Members Present

Mr. Andy Morris; Mr. Lance Barrett; Mr. Steve Jarvis; Mr. Richard Wagner; Mrs. Jane Murphy

Others in Attendance

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Ms. Katrina McMasters; Mrs. Elizabeth Huff; Mrs. Susan Craig;
Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Ms. Sheri Woodyard**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Mr. Andy Morris. An invocation was offered by Mr. Andy Morris.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Richard Wagner made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2018 meeting. Mr. Lance Barrett seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address.

Management Report

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick reviewed the preliminary expenditure report for the month of September. Twenty-five percent of the fiscal year has lapsed. Mrs. Hedrick gave justifications for line item overspending as listed on the bottom of the expenditure report. While the Department should not incur daycare purchase expenses due to subsidy payments being issued directly from NC Fast, an expense of \$21,758.60 was incurred during the month of September due to the county being responsible for a lump sum payment to the Division of Child Development and Early Education for a 2015 child care subsidy fraud case that was recently finalized. The client is responsible for making restitution payments to the Agency and partial restitution has been received. Overall, operating expenses are at 20% compared to 21% last fiscal year. Public

assistance expenses are at 18% and overall spending is at 20% compared to 14% for the same time period last year. Spending is on target overall.

Mr. Dale Moorefield reported on the vacancies in the Department. There are currently 12 vacancies listed on the report; however, 2 of the 12 positions have been filled since the report was completed and employees will start next week. Mr. Moorefield explained each vacancy individually.

Mrs. Elizabeth Huff gave a report on Family and Children's Medicaid. Accuracy and processing timeliness remains well above 90% and Mrs. Huff commended workers for getting the Public Assistance decision completed timely. Fraud collections are down approximately \$6,000 compared to last month; however, for the month of September, the Department was the third highest Medicaid claim collector in the State.

There was a drop in WFFA applications and inquiries, which is normal for this time of the year. Some individuals returned to the workforce and this could be due to children returning to school. The participation rate had not been calculated for years and the State has begun calculating this again. August participation rate was 22%. Sharon Davis has filled the supervisor position and is eager to increase this participation rate, which is not being met statewide either.

Childcare subsidy spending is in a pivotal month. Market rate increases went into effect October 1. The spending co-efficient is at 80% and is projected to increase due to the market rate increases. Letters have been sent to families to notify them that the Department is serving families on the waiting list and the list has decreased from 605 to 111 children. Historically, only around one-third of those on the waiting list respond to still needing services. Mrs. Huff stated that the Department should be in good shape for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Mrs. Huff reported on Emergency Financial Programs. None of the general assistance allocations have been spent which is good since this is all county money. CIP expenditures decreased as September was a relatively mild weather month and there were no heating or cooling related crises that would qualify clients for this funding source. LIEAP will begin in December. Work First EA stayed steady, which is the funding source that is used most when crisis funds cannot be used.

Mr. Scott Craver shared that less than one million dollars was collected this month in child support; which is the only time that monthly CSE collections has been below \$1 million in a month since January 2015. One reason for decreased collections is that September military payments have not been released to counties yet and this should show as an increase in collections for future months. The total number of Child Support cases is slightly down, but relatively steady for the first quarter of the year.

Ms. Katrina McMasters shared that September was the largest month for CPS reports since she has been the Program Administrator. There was a huge increase in total number of reports received as 267 reports were received and 152 reports accepted with some workers being assigned 13-15 cases each. The number of cases closed decreased due to the intake volume activity with initiations. The trickle-down effect of vacancies is starting to have an effect on services, but the CPS teams are managing as best possible. The investigative team is fully operational now. The number of in-home cases has declined from 34 to 15 new cases for the month of September. Out of county assists have grown slightly and Ms. McMasters is in conversations with other counties regarding jurisdiction. A steady number of children have

been taken into custody. Per reporter information, the majority of calls are from education and health care professionals.

Mrs. Susan Craig gave a report on Permanency Planning. Seven children came into care and permanence was found for 5; however, children entering care require more work setting up services than those already in care. There were 172 children in custody at the end of September. Four additional families were licensed in September, 3 of which are traditional and 1 relative. Of the 172 children in care, 80 are under age 5, which seems to be unique to Davidson County, as many counties have older children in custody.

Adult Protective Services are maintaining around the same number of reports. Wards decreased by 7 with 4 transferred to the Hope for the Future contract. This contract has 6 of 20 additional slots requested this year still open; however, the unit is being conscious of which wards are transferred to this contract. Three wards passed during the month of September. Mr. Moorefield mentioned that the county paid cremation expenses of 2 unclaimed bodies. Facility monitoring is completed by the Adult Protective Services Unit also and the number of facilities in Davidson County is growing which is good for our area.

Old Business

PBB Bonus FY 2017-2018

Mr. Dale Moorefield reported that 152 of 186 employees qualified for the PBB bonus. The total cost of the bonus was \$74,950, which is slightly less than last fiscal year, and this will be paid from the Department's banked savings. Eligible employees will receive a paper check on October 26, 2018.

New Business

DSS Final Expenditures and Economic Impact for FY 2017-2018

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick shared final fiscal year 2017-2018 expenditures. The Department's mission statement was reviewed and Mrs. Hedrick emphasized that 199.5 positions had been allotted in the budget for carrying out the mission of providing opportunities, which assure personal dignity and self-sufficiency for all citizens. The Summary of Expenditures and Revenues report summarizes fiscal year spending which has been discussed at monthly meetings. Detailed spending of contracted and professional services line items were reviewed for the fiscal year as previously requested by the DSS Board of Directors. Total Department expenditures were \$16,083,912 as compared to \$21,722,888 for the prior fiscal year and total revenues were \$10,480,136 as compared to \$16,048,693 for the prior fiscal year. Reimbursement from State and Federal funds was at 65%. The decrease in expenditures and revenues is due to non-emergency Medicaid transportation and day care funds flowing directly through NC Tracks and NC Fast, respectively, for the current year instead of flowing through the Department's accounts. Overall, total salaries, benefits, and operating expenses were underspent by \$180,576 compared to \$145,215 for fiscal year 2016-2017.

A presentation was given regarding the economic impact that the Department's services have on the community. According to the July 2017 census, Davidson County's population was estimated at 165,466. Seventeen percent of the county population receives Medicaid benefits and 6.9% of the population receives Food and Nutrition benefits. Medicaid provided \$210 million dollars in benefits to Davidson County citizens and funds are returned to the community for health care and pharmaceutical services. Of the \$659,466 in fraud collections, the

Department retained \$134,594 or 20% of the collections. Child Support collected over \$13 million dollars and the Department received \$173,741 in child Support incentives. The Volunteer Income Tax Program (VITA) processed over 2,000 tax returns for citizens and generated over \$2.9 million dollars in Federal and State returns. Overall, \$283 million dollars of benefits and services were provided at a cost of \$5.6 million dollars to Davidson County.

Staff Safety/Security

Mr. Moorefield reported on measures implemented by the Department to ensure employee safety and security in the workplace and out in the field. Identification badges are issued to all county employees and access to various areas of the building is only given with permission. Security cameras provide surveillance with good clarity and are throughout the buildings and parking lots. Entrance doors to areas are on camera. When employees are out in the field, they carry cell phones and supervisors have schedules of where people are going. DSS vehicles are maintained and in good repair with regular preventative maintenance. There is good communication between employees and supervisors and awareness of its importance. When entering into situations that may become heated, law enforcement personnel are notified ahead of time.

The group shared experiences and concerns regarding safety and security at both the Lexington and Thomasville campuses. Mr. Craver added that in Thomasville, there was previously law enforcement in the building, but currently the probation and parole office is providing security as requested when a situation develops. There are 6 different entrances to the Thomasville Colonial Drive building and cameras are installed; however, cameras are not as high quality as in Lexington. Thomasville offices are set up in suites, so it is not as easy for unauthorized people to access areas. Keys are required for external doors with badges used to open interior doors. Mr. Wagner suggested that PBB funds be used to upgrade security cameras for Thomasville next year. Mr. Wagner asked whether the County has identified threat levels for employees and whether employees have been trained on these levels. Mr. Craver responded that Code Red assists with notification to employees. Employees have been encouraged to link into Code Red, but it is not a requirement. Mr. Jarvis asked about policies in place for in-home workers to make contact prior to going into and out of homes. Ms. McMasters shared that dry erase sign in/out boards are used for CPS employees. Mr. Jarvis suggested that a cloud based tracking mechanism be added to phones or devices. Parking lot lighting was also discussed, as energy efficient lights are not as bright as lights used in the past. Elizabeth Huff stated that income maintenance employees encounter clients who become irate due to being declined services. She discussed a recent incident when a client became agitated and irate and how she attempted to diffuse the situation.

Discussion was held regarding security provided by the county sheriff's deputy who provides security for our campus. It is the department's understanding that a county deputy has law enforcement authority within the full county; however, sometimes it is relayed that they do not due to the building being in city limits. There have been times when the city police department has been contacted once someone leaves the building since the parking lot is in the city jurisdiction.

The group concurred that, yes, there are times when employees do not feel safe. Mr. Wagner stated that safety issues have been observed and he would like to see a proactive response to security for employee safety. Discussion was held regarding the addition of security guards at both Lexington and Thomasville campuses or having building security personnel stationed at a desk on the first floor. Mr. Jarvis proposed that funding from the DSS budget be used for funding two additional deputies and that the security needs be worked out among county and

city. Panic button systems were referenced. Suggestions for immediate changes included trimming overgrown bushes at the Thomasville campus, improved exterior and parking lot lighting, and better security cameras.

The Board asked Mr. Moorefield to discuss safety issues with the County Manager and to possibly even invite Mr. Hanner to attend a future meeting. They also approved that a building security design study be conducted with proposed quotes presented to the Board next month. Mr. Wagner expressed that it is the people that need to be kept safe, not necessarily material items.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, November 27, 2018, at 4:15 p.m., first floor of Social Services in Lexington, Conference Room D.

The December meeting will be held on Friday, December 14 at 11:30 am at Lexington Church of God Ministry Center. The Christmas Luncheon will follow. Mr. Morris inquired about the makeup of the Board since there will be commissioner changes in December. Mr. Jarvis expressed that more will be known once commissioner committee assignments are made.

Adjournment

Mr. Steve Jarvis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lance Barrett. The motion to adjourn was unanimous.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield