

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2018**

Board Members Present

**Mr. Andy Morris; Mr. Richard Wagner;
Mr. Steve Jarvis; Mr. Lance Barrett**

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**

Call to Order

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

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Sherri Woodyard requested that a change be made to the Agenda to add a Closed Session to discuss a Personnel Matter pursuant to NCGS, section 143-318.11(a)(6) The Closed Session will be added to Old Business F1. Mr. Steve Jarvis made a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Mr. Richard Wagner seconded the motion. The Amended Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Lance Barrett made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2018 meeting. Mr. Wagner seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address.

Management Report

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick shared the expenditure report for the month of August. Seventeen percent of the year in spending has lapsed. We have overspending in a few areas; 26 percent of our Overtime budget has been used; 37 percent of the OT is in the Permanency Planning area; 32 percent in the CPS area, and 25 percent in the Adult Services area. The spending is attributed to increased caseloads and the number of vacancies. The overspending in the departmental supplies area is due to purchases for the new positions. Vehicle mileage is at 23 percent for this year. County vehicles have been used to travel 51,438 miles. There was discussion about the increase in mileage for both personal and county vehicles. The Agency is at 13 percent spending for the

year. Mrs. Hedrick also shared a budget amendment that would be used to change some account balances around due to receiving monies into those accounts. She gave a complete explanation regarding the requested changes listed on the amendment. This amendment will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in two weeks. There was more ongoing discussion about use of county cars and the fact that they are being utilized heavily and regularly by all staff for Agency business.

Mr. Dale Moorefield reported on the vacancies in our Department. We currently have 13 vacancies and Mr. Moorefield explained each one individually. He also shared that a decision and offer had been made for the CPS Social Work Supervisor. Mr. Ezekiel Gump will move into that position effective October 1, 2018. He also mentioned that a job offer was made to an individual for one of the Social Worker III vacancies, but the offer had to be withdrawn due to negative results from a background check. There was discussion as to why the offer had to be withdrawn and more specifics were shared regarding a poor driver's license report with numerous recent violations in regards to the applicant and the potential risks for them operating vehicles on Agency business.

Mrs. Elizabeth Huff shared that in the Medicaid and Food and Nutrition Services areas, workers are doing an awesome job in maintaining accuracy and timeliness. There has been an increase in applications; almost 200 in Medicaid and nearly 50 in FNS. There has been quite a strain on workers due to the increase in applications while working with vacancies. Mrs. Huff shared that she has no idea as to why applications are up; it seems the majority of the Medicaid applications have come through the Healthcare.Gov site.

Mrs. Huff reported that collections in the Fraud area were just over \$30,000 and the reimbursement to the County was over \$5,200.00.

Mrs. Huff shared that in the Work First area, the numbers are about the same. Caseloads are down slightly. They did approve five benefit diversion cases in August. She explained these were Child Only cases where kids going back to school had increased expenses in their households and these Benefit Diversions were approved to help get the things those children needed rather than have them come onto Cash Assistance on a more permanent basis. Mrs. Huff discussed the State goals section of the report regarding participation rates. This is the first month true figures have been available since moving the program into the NC Fast world and the participation rate was explained. Because our Agency is now serving folks with numerous barriers, they sometimes do not see the value in working or completing a work experience in preparation for next employment. Work First is a pay after performance program, so no money is going out to these individuals unless they are successfully participating, with the exception of those who are able to show good cause for not participating.

In the Child Care area, Mrs. Huff explained there was not a lot on the report. She did share that NC Fast Child Care is not working the way it should. There are reports in Data Warehouse regarding spending, numbers served, etc.; however, the State has informed her that these reports are not correct. Mrs. Huff has been unable to get an explanation as to why they cannot get the reports correct. Our current spending coefficient is now 80 percent and we are serving off the waiting list. There was lengthy discussion about how to seek advice from someone higher up in the division. Mrs. Huff also offered an explanation of over and under payments for day cares during the transition into NCFast for childcare. There was also discussion regarding how notifications are handled when there is a violation at a day care.

Mrs. Huff reported that our Agency did not use any of our General Assistance funds in the month of August due to non-extreme temperatures and that also contributed to less spending in the Crisis Intervention Program, as this assistance must be utilized for a crisis. Spending in the WF-EA increased, but overall, spending is down in the Emergency Assistance area.

Mr. Scott Craver reported that in the Child Support area, they are ahead of where they were last year at this same time, by about 4 tenths of a percent. The number of cases increased slightly this month. He shared there was a State Shout Out to Wendy Burcham for an arrears collection in the amount of \$25,720.00 which paid off the arrears on that case in full.

In the Child Protective Services area, they are seeing similar numbers to a year ago; CPS accepted 94 Neglect reports in August and Dependency reports are up this year. However, 142 assessment cases were closed this month as compared to 45 last year at the same time. The numbers of children in sibling groups is larger than normal. In-home caseloads have grown exponentially in recent months. We have not been able to close cases as quickly as we have been in the past. Safety risk cases must remain open longer to be sure of safety. Our Prevention Program of Family Outreach remains very stable and offers services that must be accepted voluntarily. During the month, CPS filed 5 petitions, which brought 8 children into DSS custody.

Director Moorefield shared information from our CPS Corrective Action Plan and the improvements as noted from our State CPR's in their most recent visit. CPS is moving cases along much better, the documentation is much improved and gaps in seeing families are gone. Both Mr. Moorefield and Mr. Craver shared how impressed and pleased they are with what has been done. Ms. McMasters shared that 50 cases were pulled for final review in regards to the corrective action plan. Mr. Peter West, CPR, read through 38 cases and determined that he had all the information he needed to recommend that Davidson County be released from the Corrective Action. The results were very good and Davidson County has unofficially been released from corrective action. A letter confirming this is anticipated soon. There was considerable discussion as to what prompted the Corrective Action and the results that have been achieved. Workers and Supervision have made tremendous strides in documenting the work being handled with families. Ms. McMasters reiterated that we would continue to monitor any potential problems and continue to make more improvements. Mr. Moorefield stated that this has been a movement over many months with Ms. McMasters implementing changes in work processes for supervision and expectations. High Risk case concerns were discussed and how these are designated to in-home work. In the end, staff has made statements that "Ms. McMasters has righted the ship" and Director Moorefield agreed with that description.

Mrs. Susan Craig reported that in the Permanency Planning area, there was a small increase in the number of children in care. Eight children came into our custody and care and permanence was found for four others. We are now seeing experienced relative placements who have opted to become licensed foster parents, which nets them a greater monetary benefit for helping raise the children who cannot remain with their parent(s). We currently have 170 children in DSS custody, 78 of which are in traditional foster homes.

In the Adult Services area, Mrs. Craig reported that report numbers are up slightly. They currently have 50 open Adult Protective Services cases and our County is responsible for 89 wards. The Hope for the Future contract continues to help with the most demanding of individuals, but those slots are filling up.

Old Business

Mr. Wagner made a motion to move the meeting into closed session at 5:19 pm. Mr. Barrett seconded the motion and the meeting went into Closed Session.

Closed Session

No action was taken during Closed Session. The meeting returned to open session at 5:43 pm.

New Business

Agency PBB FY 2017-2018

The Agency's PBB measures and results were shared in the packet. Mr. Moorefield explained that each area has goals that are set from objectives. The percentages presented in the PBB charts indicated how effective our staff has been at providing our services for the public. Overall, the Agency scored well reaching 98 percent of our goals. The Agency stats are also included (in part) in the County's Annual Report, which will come out towards the end of the calendar year. Mr. Moorefield expressed his appreciation for the continued effort of the staff to meet and exceed the goals that are set for success in the Agency.

Employee PBB Bonus for FY 2017-2018

Mr. Moorefield shared that he met with Assistance County Manager, Casey Smith, on Friday, September 21, 2018, along with the other Department Heads regarding the availability of PBB bonuses for employees that qualify. He asked that the Board vote to approve these bonuses for eligible DSS staff. He shared the balance of our PBB funds with the Board as well as the projected expense of the bonus for FY2017-2018. Mr. Moorefield also shared the qualifications necessary to receive the bonus and that the most an employee can receive is \$500. There was some discussion about delaying this vote and Mr. Moorefield explained the requirements of the Finance Department to have the list of recipients to them no later than October 12, 2018. Mr. Wagner made a motion to move forward with PBB bonuses for employees. Mr. Morris seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Staff Safety/Security

Due to time constraints with our meeting, Mr. Wagner made a motion to table the Staff Safety/Security update and discussion until the next Board meeting. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 23, 2018, at 4:15 p.m., first floor of Social Services in Lexington, Conference Room D.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield