

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2019**

Board Members Present

**Mr. Andy Morris; Mrs. Jane Murphy; Mrs. Karen Watford;
Mr. Richard Wagner; Mr. Todd Yates**

Others in Attendance

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Katrina McMasters; Mrs. Susan Craig;
Ms. Elizabeth Huff; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Mrs. Lexa Eagle; Mrs. Sheri Woodyard;
Ms. Terrie Miller; Mrs. Wendy Burcham; Mrs. Jenny Reierstad; Ms. Kristy Parker;
Ms. Tasha Wall; Ms. Shakiera Verdell; Ms. Amanda Schoch**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:16 p.m. by Mr. Andy Morris. An invocation was offered by Mr. Morris.

Mr. Dale Moorefield requested that an item be added to the Agenda at G.6. – Closed Session, per NC General Statute 123-318.11(a) 6 – Personnel Issue.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Todd Yates made a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Mr. Richard Wagner seconded the motion. The amended Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Wagner made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2019 meeting. Mrs. Karen Watford seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address. Mr. Dale Moorefield asked the guests present to introduce themselves and let the Board know the area in which they work. These guests were our employees of the month for the year.

Management Report

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick shared the Expenditure report with the Board as well as an amendment page. With 92 percent of the fiscal year behind us, we continue to have overages in overtime, postage, Foster Care reimbursement (which is reimbursable). Foster care was over budgeted last year and we scaled back this year not anticipating increasing the numbers of children in care as we have experienced. In Adult Day Care, we are at 100 percent spending. We received extra ADC money that we were not able to use due to receiving it so late in the State fiscal year. Total operating expenses are at 86%; same as last year; for public assistance, we are at 81%; and total spending for the Agency is at 85%. We continue to be under budget overall. Mrs. Hedrick shared the Budget amendment that will be going to the BOCC tonight. This is for a finding during an audit, which resulted in a Medicaid overpayment. The finding was in regards to an SSI recipient whose SSI terminated and the recertification/review was not completed timely and the individual continued to use their Medicaid card. Claims submitted for medical procedures resulted in an overpayment and as this was our error, it is considered a County chargeback.

Mr. Moorefield shared information regarding the vacancy report. We currently have 13 vacancies and we are trying to get all of these positions filled. Mr. Moorefield gave an extended explanation for each of the vacancies. He also shared that an offer for the Office Support III position has been accepted and that individual will begin work on July 15, 2019.

Ms. Elizabeth Huff reported that we only have one month left in this fiscal year. Our accuracy rate remains about the same as well as processing times for FNS. We continue to do well with Medicaid processing times, staying well above the State requirement of 90%. For recertifications, we need to get those processed timely so eligible recipients have no interruption in service. In the workload area, applications for Medicaid went up slightly. These numbers fluctuate a little each month. FNS caseloads went down slightly. The FNS benefits being issued and coming back into Davidson County are just over \$2.5 million a month. Program Integrity/Fraud collections were good again in May, collecting over \$81,000.00.

Ms. Huff reported that in the Work First area in May, they took 11 applications and had 13 inquiries. The Pay after Performance stipulation for WFFA does deter some from applying for the benefit. The total number of cases is 187 as of May 31, 2019. There were no individuals that went to work through the WFFA program during the month and there were no benefit diversions completed. The Work First State Representative came on Monday and let Ms. Huff know that 20 percent for the all parent participation rate is actually good compared to statewide numbers, even though the State goal is 50 percent. The Rep advised them to keep doing what they are doing, because the Work First roles are down to the hardest to serve individuals.

In the Child Care area, Ms. Huff reported that it appears we will end the year with a spending coefficient of 99.9%. The waiting list is still in existence per State Requirements and we have a total of 122 children awaiting service. We are currently serving just over 1000 children per month for childcare subsidy, which averages about \$444.00 per child.

In the Emergency Assistance area, there is nothing extraordinary to report. With the temperatures not being too cold or too hot through May, the use of CIP funds is very limited. WF-EA spending increases in the utilities assistance when CIP funds cannot be used. EA is a little more lenient, but there must be a child under the age of 18 in the home to qualify for these funds.

Mr. Scott Craver reported that in the Child Support area, things are holding steady. The last three months have been the biggest months all year. He stated we would need another month of similar collections in order to reach the State-set collection goal. Most everything is steady. Another Child Support agent received a Shout Out from the State, which would mean they were in the top 20 in individual collections statewide. Cindi Houser had a \$17,640.00 worker's comp collection.

Ms. Katrina McMasters reported that Child Protective Services had another busy month. They received 277 reports in May, which is the second highest month for the year. Hopefully, there will be a reprieve from so many reports during the summer. Physical abuse reports continue to rise. 127 of the new reports were assigned to workers for assessments and 27 were referred to the Forensic Unit for investigation. They saw an increase in cases; only closing 101 cases in May. They ended May with 217 open cases and 315 kids were involved in those open assessments. They opened 24 new in-home cases in May, which brings the total to 94 at the end of the month. Family outreach referrals doubled in May. Our Agency took custody of 12 children during the month. Examples of physical abuse were given for the Board. There was discussion about how the entire division is working. There was also discussion about using Vanguard Temp Service. The numbers of applicants and the necessary qualifications and training for the social work jobs was also discussed. We do participate in job recruitment fairs/events. The use of recruiting headhunters for getting employees into jobs was also mentioned. Mr. Yates spoke about the use of Fountain software as a possible web-based place for finding employees. This software would have to be purchased and then pay for additional boosts as to how much it is utilized. With such a low unemployment rate of 2.3%, it is even more difficult to find qualified applicants for working in the Agency.

Mrs. Susan Craig reported that Permanency Planning was busy in May, having 12 children come into the Agency's custody. They found permanence for 13 children and they currently have 196 children in care. This is 30 more children than were in care at the same time last year. A new MAPP class started about 3 weeks ago and we have licensed 3 more homes. The number of foster homes ebbs and flows, because we license families and then folks complete their families and the homes are closed for a variety of reasons.

Adult Services had another significantly high month, having accepted 28 of 45 reports. The number of wards (persons our Agency has guardianship over) increased this month, bringing the total to 89. In the Information and Referral area of the unit, we helped 128 individuals. We had three calls requesting assistance with unclaimed bodies; however, Mrs. Reierstad was able to locate resources for two of the individuals and the Agency had to assume responsibility for the third one.

Old Business

The Board wished Mr. Moorefield a Happy Birthday today. The Board also had questions about last month's budget amendment and it was approved. There were also questions about the lawsuit, Hawkins vs. Cohen that appears on the website and Mr. Moorefield explained what it was. The latest news on NC Fast for Services is that 6 counties that had actually gone onto NC Fast in the Child Welfare area have opted out completely.

New Business

Employee of the Year/Month Recognition

Employee of the Month/Year is recognition for employees in the Agency who may go above and beyond and are recognized by their peers. Mrs. Susan Craig chairs the committee and it is made up of the Program Administrators, unit supervisors and some line staff. They meet once a month and review all of the nomination forms that have been submitted by the nominee's peers. Anyone can make a nomination with the exception of a supervisor or upper management. A plaque is displayed outside the workers door during the month for which they were chosen as Employee of the Month. If chosen, you get special parking privileges, four hours of administrative leave, and you are in the running for Employee of the Year. They also are recognized via announcement through email and Careletter, when the Employee of the Month is chosen and further recognized at our Agency Picnic. Mr. Moorefield announced each monthly winner and then the Employee of the Year, Angela Scott, a social worker in the Adult Services area. Her nomination was submitted by one of the Agency attorney's and Mr. Moorefield shared the nomination with the Board. The Clerk of Court also recognized Angela's professionalism in open court the day she testified, as was stated in her nomination. Mr. Moorefield thanked the group for their hard work and loyalty and congratulated them on being chosen Employees of the Month by their peers.

Record Destruction

We continue to identify records for purging in the Child Welfare Services area, and have identified 383 Foster Care files and 19 Foster Home files that can be purged/destroyed per the State retention policy. Mr. Moorefield asked that the Board to consider these records for destruction.

Ms. Jane Murphy made a motion to destroy 383 Foster Care and 19 Foster Home files as identified per State policy. Mr. Wagner seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

There was also discussion about the possibility of file storage in the basement of the Davidson House once Adult Services moves in. They should be able to move into the building around mid-July. There was also discussion about how the records are destroyed.

Energy Program Outreach Program

Every year about this time, based on the General Assembly's direction in Session 2014-100, Section 12J.1(t), we have to complete an outreach plan for our Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). The plan for our County was included in the packet sent to the Board. This plan has to be completed and approved each year. LIEAP is a one-time payment issued on behalf of those who qualify for the assistance each year and the payment is made directly to the vendor that provides the applicants heating source to help offset the costs during the winter months. The plan also includes whom we will notify and share information with and how individuals will get the information regarding eligibility. The plan indicates we will be reaching out to the general population, not just the people who come to the Agency for services. The plan must be signed by the Director of Social Services and the DSS Board Chairman and be sent to the State by end of business today. There was discussion about being sure that the people who are served through Senior Services, either on site or by Meals on Wheels, get a flyer of some type to be sure each one is aware of the program.

Mr. Richard Wagner made a motion to approve the Energy Program Outreach Plan as presented. Mrs. Karen Watford seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Medicaid Transformation/NC Medicaid Managed Care

North Carolina is changing the way folks receive Medicaid. This is big news for recipients and providers as well as this is a new way of doing business for Medicaid providers and for Medicaid recipients. The majority of Medicaid recipients will be moving from a fee for service plan to a more Managed Care option where Prepaid Health Plans (PHP) will be responsible for providing health care to beneficiaries. The PHP's will receive a flat, capped rate every month to care for beneficiaries and will be responsible for providing innovative whole person health care, including physical, mental and behavioral health care. They will be expected to provide advanced medical homes, value based care, and healthy opportunities to utilize Medicaid dollars differently as they will strive to produce healthy outcomes for beneficiaries in the most cost effective manner. Mr. Moorefield shared the "playbook" with the Board that was provided by the State. Individuals will be required to sign up with a health plan for themselves and/or their children. Approximately 75% of recipients in North Carolina will have a standard plan or PHP in NC Medicaid Managed Care. The remaining 25% will be fee for service similar to current operations and these are the people who may have an exemption due to their need for extra care, have severe mental health issues, and/or numerous health issues. These folks will be in NC Medicaid Direct. Davidson County will be one of the counties in the first phase of this new way of handling Medicaid. Our Agency will continue to process Medicaid applications and redeterminations, as well as determining initial and ongoing eligibility for Medicaid. We will do replacement cards and provide non-emergency medical transportation for the folks in the NC Medicaid Direct group while the PHP's will handle this for the NC Medicaid Managed Care folks. The larger group NC Medicaid Managed Care (75%) will be required to choose a plan and a primary care provider and this open enrollment will begin June 28, 2019. Notifications will be sent to all recipients to educate them and let them know about the changes that are taking place. Enrollment brokers must be used to get clients enrolled and the DSS will refer recipients to them for this purpose. The enrollment broker for our area will be Maximus and they have completed this process for several other states and they know what to expect. The beneficiaries may struggle with this in the beginning because we will not be able to help them. This enrollment process is something they will have to complete on their own, either in person, in writing, by telephone, or electronically. We anticipate many calls about this change, but our Agency will have to refer the beneficiaries to the Broker for their enrollments and any questions they may have. The plan and provider they choose will ultimately be responsible for issuance of replacement beneficiary cards as well as scheduling transportation for patients to and from medical appointments. This change will be effective November 1, 2019. There was extensive discussion about how the elderly people will handle this and what will be required of them. There was also discussion about the doctor's being wholly responsible for the individuals' care. Maximus portrays that this will be an easy transition for them and the beneficiaries. The initial increase in phone calls will subside once beneficiaries become familiar with this new way of doing business. We anticipate there will be lots of returned mail, but all of this will be handled by the Broker and our Agency will make mailing address changes as we are notified by the Broker. If the beneficiaries do not enroll and choose a plan, they will be automatically enrolled into one of the plans and they will then have 90 days to change that plan if they choose to do so. Each of the plans may offer different benefits, so they will need to be sure about the plan they choose. There were descriptions of things that can be done to help each beneficiary reach their health goal.

The upside of this change for the County is we will not have as much Non-Emergency Medical Transportation work and we plan to utilize that opportunity to gain additional Income Maintenance Eligibility services. Statewide Medicaid Transformation is seen as an opportunity to save money, as beneficiaries will be channeled to medical homes and away from the Emergency Rooms for non-emergent care. The timeline for mailings and the plans were shared with the Board. The purpose of moving in this direction is to address the overall health of each individual receiving Medicaid to the best of the providers' ability and be a more cost-effective way to achieve healthy outcomes for recipients.

Board Updates and Appointments

Commissioner Todd Yates has been appointed to a three-year term on the Board by our County Commissioners. Mr. Moorefield thanked him for his willingness to serve on the Board. The Oath of Office for Mr. Yates will be completed in July, for this FY 2019-2022 term. The Social Services Commission has no nominations at this time to replace Mr. Morris' seat and will repost this position from July 1 – August 31. Mr. Morris has agreed to remain on the Board until a new person is appointed.

The Social Services Institute offers training for new DSS Board members. This training will be offered in late July. Mr. Moorefield asked that anyone interested let him know about whether they would like to attend. Mrs. Watford, Mrs. Murphy, and Mr. Yates have not had this valuable DSS Board Member training.

Mr. Yates made a motion to move into Closed Session at 5:46 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wagner and passed unanimously.

Closed Session – Personnel Matter

No action was taken during Closed Session.

Mr. Yates made a motion to return to Open Session and Mrs. Watford seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting returned to Open Session at 5:55 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting

Our next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 23, 2019, at 4:15 p.m. on the first floor of the Governmental Center in Lexington, Conference Room D.

Adjournment

Mr. Yates made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Watford seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield