

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



Lexington DSS Office
P.O. Box 788
913 Greensboro Street
Lexington, North Carolina 27293
336-242-2500
FAX: 336-249-7588

Thomasville DSS Office
211 W. Colonial Drive
Thomasville, North Carolina 27360
P.O. Box 788
Lexington, North Carolina 27293
336-474-2760
FAX: 336-472-6635

Lexington Child Support Office
P.O. Box 788
913 Greensboro Street
Lexington, North Carolina 27293
336-242-2242
FAX: 336-242-1236

Thomasville Child Support Office
211 W. Colonial Drive
Thomasville, North Carolina 27360
P.O. Box 788
Lexington, North Carolina 27293
336-474-2609
FAX: 336-474-2620

**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2019**

Board Members Present

**Mrs. Karen Watford; Mrs. Jane Murphy;
Mr. Todd Yates; Mrs. Minnie Dukes**

Others in Attendance

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Mrs. Elizabeth Huff; Mrs. Susan Craig;
Ms. Katrina McMasters; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Ms. Sheri Woodyard;
Mrs. Lexa Eagle; Mr. Casey Smith**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Mrs. Karen Watford. An invocation was offered by Mrs. Watford.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Moorefield asked that the Agenda be amended, adding Old Business F.2 – Social Work III Work Against Follow-Up. Mr. Todd Yates made a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Mrs. Jane Murphy seconded the motion. The amended Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Yates made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2019 meeting. Mrs. Minnie Dukes seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address. Mr. Casey Smith was recognized as being present to give a presentation regarding the item added to the Agenda.

Management Report

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick let the Board know that the number being provided for the first quarter of the new fiscal year are preliminary numbers, as the books have not closed for the month of September. There have been no significant changes. In the salaries and operations expenses areas, we have spent 20 percent of the budget. She also provided the Board with a copy of the budget amendment that will go before the Board of County Commissioners tonight.

She explained the Amendment over in depth. She also explained that the current telephone allowance balance is being transferred into the telephone line item in order to have funds to take care of the new Agency cell phones that will be issued at the end of the month.

Mr. Dale Moorefield shared information from the vacancy report. We are currently showing 11 vacancies for October 2019. Mr. Moorefield gave a brief explanation of each vacancy.

Ms. Elizabeth Huff shared information regarding the Medicaid/Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)/Fraud reports. Our Agency continues to do very well with processing times, meeting all state standards for processing applications. The percentage for processing of recertifications is coming up in Family and Children's Medicaid area. Ms. Huff shared there are multiple counties not meeting these requirements, due to policy changes, NC Fast Reports being behind and continually playing "catch up". Our OST representative was consulted today and she assured Ms. Huff our Agency is doing fine. Medicaid applications taken dropped off a little and the caseloads are up slightly. We had slight uptick in the number of fraud claims for September. Reimbursement for collection of fraud repayments for the County was almost \$4000.00.

Ms. Huff shared that the Work First Family Assistance Program (WFFA) applications and inquiries stayed about the same. The caseload dropped slightly for September. Our Agency was able to put one person to work through the contracted services with Goodwill and the Agency completed 3 benefit diversion cases. The participation rate for all-parent households was up a little and we have no two-parent households that are required to participate at this time.

Ms. Huff shared that we have been given the go ahead to begin serving the families from the Child Care Subsidy waiting list and we have 489 children on the waiting list as of today's date. The supervisor for the Child Day Care program and Ms. Huff have implemented a plan to begin serving these children. An explanation was provided to the Board that based on past history in dealing with waiting lists, that approximately one third of the children would still need to be served. Some have been on the waiting list since March and other arrangements have been made for the children; the parents may no longer be working; or the children have aged out; there may no longer be a need for the subsidy. Not all counties have been allowed to begin serving the children on the waiting list; only those whose spending is under one hundred percent of the coefficient. This County's spending coefficient is reported at 83%.

Emergency Financial Programs were reviewed by Mrs. Huff. Spending in this area continues to remain about the same. It has not been extremely hot or cold; the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) funds are used for heating or cooling emergencies that are medically necessary and Work First Emergency Assistance (WF-EA) is used for assistance with heating only. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) will start December 1, 2019 and will target the elderly and disabled citizens for the first month. The general population will be able to begin applying for this assistance beginning January 2, 2020. Ms. Huff has drafted a letter to Director Moorefield outlining the plan to administer the program. Once Mr. Moorefield approves the letter and then the County Manager, media releases will go out to let the public know about the LIEAP service.

Mr. Scott Craver shared the Child Support Management report and that they are doing very well; although slightly under in collections for the quarter. A big part of the deficit will be made up during tax intercept season and hopefully they will exceed the State goal. There has been a very slight drop in total cases and cases under order. The current vacancies appear to be

contributing to the lower numbers of cases and cases under order. Collection on arrears was explained to the Board.

Ms. Katrina McMasters shared that Child Protective Services (CPS) report numbers are up again, with school getting fully underway. It appears that vacancies are affecting workloads and has created an increase in cases per worker. We are up in assessments, but down in the in-home cases area. We also have two supervisors out due to circumstances beyond their control and their numbers are missing from the report. Ms. McMasters discussed information from the entire CPS area report.

Mrs. Susan Craig provided an update for Permanency Planning. There is lots of hard work being done in this area. We had 6 children to enter the care of the Agency and 8 children found permanence in the month of September. When children enter care, there are many services that must be completed and when children find permanence, there is also a lot of work to be done in that transition. It is a very much needed and time-consuming process for both new children and children leaving our care and overall, we did have a relatively good month.

Mrs. Craig shared that Adult Protective Services number of APS reports were down in September. However, the staff remain very busy. The types of reports being accepted are more complex and time consuming especially in managing mental health needs. The workers in this area are going to court a lot more, with seven court cases in September. We were only appointed to 2 of those, but we do help the other families navigate through the process, even when we are not appointed. The number of unclaimed bodies was up in September as well.

Old Business

PBB Bonus – Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Mr. Moorefield reported to the Board the results of Performance Based Budget (PBB) bonuses; 147 employees out of 198 received a bonus. The cost for the Agency for the bonuses was \$72,650.00. 51 people did not receive a bonus for various reasons; some were hired after the beginning of the fiscal year; some left before the end of the fiscal year; and others did not meet their goals or had written warnings during the year. Paper checks will be distributed on October 25, 2019 to eligible staff.

Social Worker III Work Against Follow-up/Solutions

Assistant County Manager Casey Smith shared the three options for getting Social Worker III staff up to the salary level of the Social Worker – Investigate/Assessment and Treatment staff. Spreadsheets were shared with the Board. All options were explained in detail to the Board. None of the options would be big money changes. If any of the options are chosen, Mr. Smith stated there should be a line item on the Agenda to show the Board of Commissioners where this is coming from. There was lengthy discussion about the salary changes and the change to the position classification. There was also discussion about how this could be fair for all employees, from one year of experience to 15 years of experience. Some of the information on the spreadsheets shared will not be conducive to what the Agency is trying to accomplish. There was a very lengthy discussion about a fair way to move people and end the inequity. Social Services will create our own plan for getting these employees where they need to be for salary and experience. Mr. Smith stated that he wanted these changes, if done, to be done the right way. He also stated that since PTRC has just completed the study, this kind of change would be put in question. Mr. Moorefield stated that this situation could have been

avoided if the Agency had been allowed to review the recommendations from PTRC before they were presented to and approved by the Davidson County Board of Commissioners. There will always be inequities, but the consideration at the present is to get the workers who do similar jobs and job functions to similar pay grades and compensation equality similar to what we had prior to the job study by PTRC. The Board directed for Director Moorefield to continue working with County Management to bring forth a solution that accomplishes that equality for identified SW III's and CPS I/A/T's in the Agency.

New Business

DSS Final Expenditures and Economic Impact for FY 2018-2019

Director Moorefield shared that our Agency provided the mandated services to the citizens of Davidson County for less than we projected in our original budget; meaning we underspent the budget in the salaries, benefits and operating expenses by \$268,127.00. We had \$16,926,738.00 in expenditures and \$10,412,191.00 was reimbursed by State and Federal funds; meaning reimbursement was at 62 percent for the year. He then introduced our Fiscal Accounting Supervisor, Caroline Hedrick for her presentation to the Board.

Mrs. Hedrick began the power point presentation by sharing the Mission Statement for our Agency. She shared information and a complete breakdown of expenditures for Contracted Services and Professional Services. A handout was provided for the Board's review. Each slide in the presentation was explained and questions were answered as needed. The economic impact on our community was shared, along with a spreadsheet with the figures for the Board. Benefits issued for Medicaid services, Food and Nutrition Services, Child Care Services, Work First Family Assistance and Fraud Collections all contribute to the revenues coming back into our County. The energy providers we work with were shared with the Board. Mrs. Hedrick also informed them that the providers are paid directly by check and the moneys are not given to the individuals who apply for and are approved for our services. The services paid for our foster children to remain in homes where complete care is given is a large expense for the County. We have had an average of 231 children in foster care for the past year. Adoption assistance moneys in the amount of \$1.8 million is paid to adoptive families. Our Agency is also responsible for being sure that child support is collected for families. Our County collected almost \$13 million in Child Support funds in the past fiscal year. Child Support incentives received by the County must be reinvested in the Child Support program and how that is done was explained. Our Agency also pays the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance coordinator's salary, who is a contracted worker. The remainder of the individuals who prepare taxes are volunteers and are not paid for their services. This service brings more than \$2.6 million back into our County in the form of refunds received by taxpayers. Our Agency also receives donations from the community and a breakdown of the different accounts we use was shared.

Mr. Moorefield informed the Board that when he conducts new employee orientation with our new staff, he shares this information with them so that they are aware of how the Agency is funded and the impact each one has on the citizens of the County.

Record Destruction

The process for identifying files for destruction continues and we have identified 636 CPS records, 66 Foster Parent files and 80 Foster Care files that can be purged/destroyed. Mr. Moorefield asked that the Board consider these files for destruction. A motion to destroy the

files as described was made by Mrs. Murphy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Yates. The motion was approved unanimously.

DSS Director Recruitment

Mrs. Watford asked that Mr. Smith share information about the recruitment of the DSS Director. They currently have nine applications for the position. He has spoken with Mrs. Kathy Cashion, Human Resource Director, to get packets together for each applicant to give to each DSS Board member. These packets will include the application, a resume if one was submitted and the completed Skill Survey that is sent on each applicant. The Skill Survey is a scoring tool that allows persons to rate the applicants anonymously and give input about each applicant. Mr. Smith will get hard copies of these packets to the Board so they can review them on their own and then convene a Closed Session to review and rank each applicant based on information received. They will then need to decide who will be interviewed, set the interviews up and conduct them in another Closed Session meeting. A decision was reached to close the application process on November 1, 2019 and the Board will meet in Closed Session on November 7, 2019. Education and work experience are the only things that would rule out an applicant, based on information received by Mrs. Sherri Woodyard. Mrs. Watford also shared the job description for the position.

A motion to excuse Mr. Richard Wagner from today's meeting was made by Mr. Yates. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Murphy. The motion was approved unanimously.

There was discussion regarding Mr. Wagner's representation of the DSS Board on the Community Child Protective Team/Child Fatality Protective Team, as he will not be able to continue that representation at this time. Mrs. Minnie Dukes was asked to serve on these teams in his stead. The first meeting she will be a part of will be held on Thursday, October 24, 2019 at 8:00 am in the same conference room as the DSS Board meeting.

Mr. Moorefield also shared the date of the Agency Christmas luncheon and that the meeting for December will be held at 11:30am prior to the Agency Christmas Luncheon.

The Board made the decision to meet to review applications for the DSS Director position. The cutoff date for applications will be confirmed with Human Resources and the Board will hold that review meeting on November 7, 2019 at noon in a Closed Session. There will need to be a posting of the special meeting, 48 hours ahead of time. This meeting can be scheduled on the 4th floor in the conference room in the County Managers office.

Mr. Moorefield asked for clarification regarding the Social Worker III Work Against solution. The information will need to be provided to Mr. Casey Smith and then the DSS Board will review what is presented. After that, the decision will be made by the DSS Board to move forward with a recommendation to upgrade the positions and have the request sent to the Board of County Commissioners.

Date of Next Meeting

The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 26, 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 adjourned at 5:52 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield