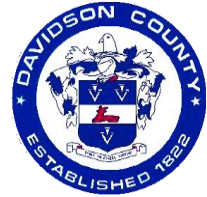


**DAVIDSON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*Patricia Baker, Director*



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
June 23, 2020**

**Board Members Present**

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

**Others in Attendance**

**Ms. Trish Baker; Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Susan Craig; Ms. Katrina McMasters;  
Ms. Elizabeth Huff; Ms. Sheri Woodyard;**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Ms. Karen Watford. She thanked all for being there and asked for a motion to excuse Mr. Richard Wagner. With a motion from Mr. Yates and a second from Ms. Dukes, Mr. Wagner was unanimously excused from the Board Meeting.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Trish Baker asked that the Agenda be amended to add Energy Outreach Plan for review and approval to I-4. Mr. Yates made a motion to approve the amended Agenda for the meeting. Ms. Murphy seconded the motion. The amended Agenda was unanimously approved.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Mr. Yates made a motion to approve the regular and closed minutes of the May 26, 2020 meeting. Ms. Dukes seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Public Address**

There were no public in attendance for comments.

**Board Member Comments**

Mr. Yates made a comment about the COVID-19 emergency funds. Ms. Trish Baker informed the Board her updates would include COVID-19.

Ms. Dukes gave her condolences to Ms. Watford for the loss of her Father-in-Law.

## **Management Report**

Ms. Baker updated the Board on the number of vacancies. We currently have 10 vacancies with one position being filled by the end of the month. The position being filled is Account Specialist II, Caroline's old position, and everyone should meet her at the July Board meeting.

Ms. Baker pointed out the financial report that was submitted for review. Mr. Yates questioned vehicle mileage and overtime, asking why they were increasing. Ms. Baker informed the Board; using County Cars is better than Social Workers using their personal cars. Ms. Baker also stated that overtime had decreased when COVID first hit, but now everything is back in full swing and visits are having to be made up, there is more overtime. She said she would look further into vehicle mileage and overtime and respond by email with any additional information.

Ms. Elizabeth Huff reported Food & Nutrition Service Applications have leveled out since COVID first started and Medicaid Applications have increased. All applications are being processed timely and completed faster than required by the State. Food and Nutrition Services applications are being processed in 9 days and Medicaid is at 23 days. There have been no Work First inquires due to little to no walk in traffic. Child Care spending before COVID was at 95.6% but because of the COVID emergency child care (waiving parent fees, not being able to terminate, etc.) spending has increased to 100.7%. Since we are overspending due to COVID, the State is going to reimburse the difference. Emergency Assistance is currently not being utilized because individuals are not in disconnect status or eviction status.

Mr. Scott Craver reported May being a huge month with collections coming in at \$1.2 million (some of this is credited to stimulus money and Unemployment). This is the second highest month of the year. To meet goals, there needs to be another \$1.5 million collected. Mr. Craver also reported the number of cases has dropped to 5,737. Scott is hopeful that child support will meet all five state goals. Child Support Court is back in session with a few changes due to COVID. Clients are checking in at the door and then being called when their case is up. There is currently one vacancy in Establishment and interviews are underway.

Ms. Katrina McMasters reported May being the lowest month of reports and second lowest number of closed cases. The types of reports that are coming in are more serious and our Forensics Team is getting slammed. There have been seven abuse and four sexual reports made; tripling the number of abuse cases and doubling the number of sexual cases. Ms. McMasters stated there have been 84 reports coming from Law Enforcement which is increasing the number of Domestic Violence cases.

Ms. Susan Craig reported that two children found permanence in May. Court has started back up with two full days a week. Ms. Craig stated for the month of May there were 23 cases heard and for the first two weeks in June there had been 31 cases heard. To provide a reference on how many cases are being heard, Ms. Craig reported June 2019 had 39 cases heard the entire month. Ms. Craig informed the Board that virtual visits are starting to be made up. Making up virtual visits brought concerns to the Board as to the reason why and how. Ms. Sheri Woodyard stated State policy says we can do virtual visits but she knew that our judges would not accept this so we are making up virtual visits and as of now, there have been no push back from the court. Ms. Craig stated that when there is overtime; it is court reports, visits, etc. from the double cases being heard and the visits being made up. Mr. Yates asked if we should request a change to this in the State Statute, during an emergency – if this would be helpful. Ms. Woodyard stated the Statute does not say we have to make this up but virtual visits are not "visits". We asked parents to consent and if they agreed we did, if they wish to revoke their consent they can. Ms. Woodyard and Ms. Craig stated Group Homes are following Nursing Home guidelines and not allowing children in or out of the facility so these visits have not occurred as the child would lose

their placement. Mr. Yates asked about what percent of visits need to be made up. Ms. Craig stated that about 10 families continued visits in person, so the majority of visits which have occurred during the COVID crisis would need to be made up.

Ms. Susan Craig reported Adult Services numbers are down and SW are continuing to see wards virtually. Court hearings are no longer virtual and are back in the court room.

## **Old Business**

There was no old business for discussion.

## **New Business**

### **Record Destruction**

Ms. Baker shared that the Agency has records that meet the record retention criteria for destruction. She asked for the Board's approval for destruction. Ms. Dukes made a motion to destroy the records as described. Ms. Jane Murphy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Court Update**

Ms. Sheri Woodyard noted court is back in business at full force. In the court room, there is a COVID-19 Coordinator who ensures all court rooms are meeting space requirements. For example, court room B allows only 14 members of the public inside. According to Ms. Woodyard, cases being heard have stayed on schedule better than before. While most hearings are in person, if there is a juvenile or another who cannot meet in person and wishes to participate, the Judge will allow a remote hearing. With Ms. Woodyard being in court most of the week, Danielle De Angelis has offered to help with adjudications, there are currently 22 cases and she has taken about 1/3 of the cases.

### **Director Updates**

Ms. Trish Baker gave the Board three bills that are making its way through the House or Senate for voting. These bills, SB 808, SB 708, and SB 918, are concerning for DSS. These bills would increase the workload on Income Maintenance Caseworkers and Social Workers. Along with the increase in workload in SB 808 and HB 918, SB 708 would give access to confidential information to the general assembly.

Ms. Baker gave an update on COVID-19. There has been \$4.3 million in FNS supplements issued to Davidson County residents since March. Work-First recipients received \$74,000.00 in supplements and P-EBT has resulted in \$5 million in benefits to families with school age children. There have been continuous issues with P-EBT cards; pin numbers are not working, addresses are wrong, names are wrong, and even the NC Fast reports are wrong. The State has approved licensed Foster Care placements to receive an additional \$100.00 per month for 3 months, which will be issued in July. Beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, families who were impacted by COVID can apply for the COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Program which is part of the CARES Act allocation for Davidson County. This program is for families at or below 250% poverty. If they meet the qualifications, they are allowed up to \$500.00 for rent/utilities, \$300.00 in prescriptions, and \$350.00 for food (depending on household number). Mr. Yates asked if there was a program similar to this in other Counties. Ms. Baker stated she has not heard of anything. Ms. Baker also informed the Board that the State has made Adult Services and Child Protective Services workers

first responders. With APS and CPS workers being first responders, the State is allowing each County a certain amount of PPE at no cost to the county. She has submitted our order and we should be getting that over the next few weeks.

### **Energy Outreach Plan**

Ms. Elizabeth Huff spoke of the LIEAP and CIP programs. The CIP program is year-round. The applicant must have a heating or cooling related crisis. LIEAP starts in December for the elderly (60+) and January for the general population. This program runs through March or until funds are exhausted. For LIEAP, there are flyers displayed everywhere and advertised by Media. There was a motion from Mr. Todd Yates to approve the Energy Outreach Plan and a second from Ms. Jane Murphy. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Yates asked if we advertised on the County Facebook page. Ms. Baker informed the Board that the Agency does share information to be posted on the County Facebook page.

Mr. Yates made a motion to move the meeting into closed session at 5:14 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Murphy. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Closed Session**

Closed session ended with a motion from Mr. Yates and a second from Ms. Dukes at 5:39 pm and returned to open session at 5:40 pm.

### **Return to Open Session**

There was no further discussion during Open Session.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 28, 2020 at 4:00 pm at the Governmental Center, fourth floor, Commissioners Meeting Room, Lexington, North Carolina.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Yates made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Duke. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 pm.

Minutes submitted by Patricia Baker