

June 22, 2021

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held virtual (zoom) with the following in attendance were: Commissioner Pamela T. Thompson, DSS Board Member; Ms. Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Ms. Adrian Daye, Director; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Ayoka Baldwin, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations; Ms. Jamie Hatfield, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Wendy Roberts, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney; Mr. Jason Cole, IT Director; and Ms. Skye Sullivan, FJC Director were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

Public Comment:

None –

Consent Agenda: Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair

May items on the consent agenda approved. Commissioner Pamela T. Thompson made motion to approve and seconded by Dr. Ernest Eason.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble

Ms. Gobble reported the State FY ended May 31st but the County FY ends June 30, 2021 - we did well pulling down funds in revenues. Last year, we pulled down 10% more due to receiving additional COVID funds. Ms. Gobble reported we are on target for expenditures – we were only 2% shy from last FY. We will request funds to be moved over to next fiscal year. The fiscal team met and we have come up with a plan to make sure we are on top of line items to avoid unnecessary overpayments.

	MAY 2021	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$10,658,269.00	92%	\$9,230,600.00	82%
EXPENDITURES	\$16,685,178.00	85%	\$16,206,260.00	82%

Fraud: See report –

Unit	May 2021	May 2020	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$6,345.65	\$81,181.83	\$66,331.46	\$249,878.02

Assistant Director Gobble announced we have interviewed internal applicant for the vacant fraud position and extended position which will create another vacancy for economic services. The fraud portion of the single audit yielded “no findings” for EPI testing. The Medicaid portion of the single audit have not been completed yet.

Collections remain suspended for all programs. The suspensions have been extended until December 2021. This will continue to impact revenues significantly.

Performance Management -

Assistant Director Gobble reported on the current FY Performance Management Goals that we are not currently meeting for May 2021.

Specific Goal: Child Support—DSS will have 77.85% of child support cases under order establishing support obligations. For May, we are currently at 74.36%.

According to the waivers provided by the State, we are passing our goals. Without the waivers, we are off but the same information from last month applies. We are working to fill our vacancies, as we are almost back fully staffed. We have a PT trainer assisting with training our staff. Once we are fully staffed and agents are properly trained, we will see our numbers increase. Non-Cooperation’s are a part of the reason we are not where we need to be regarding cases under order. We cannot non-cooperate cases where the client is receiving Medicaid due to COVID, which means we have a lot of cases open the we are not allowed to move. We also only have two establishment agents working cases at this time, which is why we are not meeting our cases under order.

Services – Ms. Lynette Wellons/Assistant Director of Services -

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: Lynette Wellons

Assistant Director Wellons reported for Adult Services for Ms. McCullough.

Child Support – (Statistical Report Information)

Unit	May 2021	May 2020	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$928,685.14	\$1,002,562.89	\$10,142,077.82	\$10,029,419.06

Alamance County Child Support was recognized at the State level in two areas for this month:

- We were #1 in the highest large sum payment from non-custodial parent to arrears of \$34,427.85
- We were #13 due to receiving \$10,646.94 in arrears paid in full

Ms. McCullough is currently interviewing for Child Support Establishment Supervisor. Our new internal trainer will host his first training class in July. We are currently 5 positions down in Child Support, we recently offered positions to 2 potential candidates and the both declined. One specifically cited salary as the reason for declining the offer.

Adult Services -

We are currently seeking 2 vacancies for SW III positions in Adult Services unit. The new APS supervisor is transitioning into her new position and is doing well. Elder Abuse Awareness Day was June 15, 2021 – please continue to wear your purple ribbon for the month of June to continue to promote awareness for Elder Abuse.

Children Services Program Manager: Ms. Angela Cole/Ms. Ayoka Baldwin

Assistant Director Wellons reported on MAC funding, which is an uncapped resource has increased from \$17k to \$42k. Guardianship and Child Welfare staff are focused on pulling resource down.

Assistant Director Wellons reported we continue to be plagued with vacancies in Child Welfare. We are amazed that staff are able to work cases.

Ms. Ayoka Baldwin reported the following:

- We celebrated four graduates who are participants of the LINKS program. The children were very appreciative of the gift bags. The celebration was held via zoom.
- The Community Response Grant Program (CRP) has planned a zoo trip to Asheboro zoo. This will be a great opportunity for families to bond who have participated in the grant program here at DSS.
- On-site In-Home review will take place next week. We have already pulled the 3 cases to be reviewed.
- There is a change within Foster Care at the State Level – Psychotropic Medication Policy Change. This change is to ensure that the children & youth in foster care are receiving appropriate psychotropic medication regimens & that the State is meeting federal reporting requirements. The Division of Social Services has made policy and practice changes to increase the level of monitoring of psychotropic medication at the local level.

Economic Support: Ms. Jamie Hatfield/Ms. Danae Pickard/Ms. Wendy Roberts

Ms. Jamie Hatfield introduced Ms. Wendy Roberts as the new Economic Services program manager.

Ms. Hatfield reported the following:

- All Economic Services staff are now back working in the building as of June 14, 2021. We conducted zoom meetings for staff that served as refreshers since the majority of have staff been teleworking as it relates to protocols and policies.

- We are currently evaluating all programs – business will not be the same before the pandemic.
- COVID Workgroup has meet to discuss the current process and make changes as it relates to new CDC guidelines. We will roll out new screening protocols and staff flow chart to staff very soon as it relates to vaccinations.

Ms. Danae Pickard reported the following:

- We have received notification that multiple COVID waivers that were set to expire June 30th for FNS were extended through December 31, 2021 or whenever the Governor lifts the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, whichever is sooner. We will be absorbing that information and forming a plan to address what that would look for our economic services programs and departments.

Question: Will the stimulus checks affect customers receiving benefits?

The Stimulus checks so far has not been counted as income. The additional income did not affect anyone receiving services.

Family Justice Center – Skye Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan reported the following:

- Ms. Sullivan reported the Elder Abuse billboards is up for Elder Abuse Awareness for the month of June. Domestic Violence billboard will be up in October to promote awareness.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of May 31, 2021

Vacancies	38
New Hires	6
Interagency Transfers	2
Resignations	8

Mr. Ring reported as of today we currently have 44 vacancies – 20% of our workforce which is one out of five positions. This is very significant and impacts every department within DSS. We have staff doing the work of two staff. We are currently down 9 positions in Child Welfare. Director Daye added we are at crisis level of vacancies. We have staff who are disgruntled due to being overworked where we now have leadership team in the field to support staff. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding scenarios of how vacancies impact each unit.

Energy Programs: Candice Gobble

Ms. Gobble presented the Energy Outreach plan to board members. This is an annual plan that highlights the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which is a federally funded block grant program comprised of three different programs:

1. Crisis Intervention Program (CIP)
2. Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)
3. Weatherization

To maximize the success of this program, outreach to county residents through key community partner stakeholders, each county department of social services is required to develop and implement an Energy Program Outreach plan. This plan is a framework to assure that eligible households are made aware of the assistance available through these programs.

Each County must form an outreach planning committee that creates the opportunity for county level collaboration to discuss and plan how to effectively reach county residents to inform them of the services provided by the energy programs. The committee should meet at least twice a year: September for outreach planning related to LIEAP and April to review the outcomes related to LIEAP and to plan for outreach activities for summer weather.

The Committee Members consist of the following:

- Salvation Army – Lt. Mike McGee
- Allied Churches – Jai Baker
- Burlington Housing Authority – Allen Blue
- Alamance County Libraries – Susana Goldman
- Centro La Comunidad – Lucy Rubiano
- Meals on Wheels – Amanda Bartolomeo

Alamance County DSS will work with local apartment complexes that serve the 60 and older population in identifying applicants and receiving applicants. ACDSS will post and distribute flyers within the community as needed to further awareness. Information will be provided to agencies who work directly with children aged birth to 5, such as the local partnership for children. Adult Services staff will submit LIEAP applications for individuals under guardianship. Additional guidance will be provided to Child Welfare and Child Care teams on how to determine potentially eligible customers

Board members approved the 2021 Energy Outreach Plan – motion made by Dr. Ernest Eason and seconded by Commissioner Pamela Thompson. The approved plan will be signed by Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair and Director Daye as approved on June 22, 2021.

Child Care: Candice Gobble

No report.

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

We have made concessions for Economic Services staff who returned to building on June 14, 2021. We continue to work with County IT on new security cameras for HSC campus. We have met with County Maintenance and IT on the new Ivey Building – we will begin to work on door security, etc. for DSS this month. We are also working on the new security system program for Child Support.

Director's Report – Ms. Adrian Daye, Director –

Director Daye reported on County Managers Budget presented at County Commissioner's Meeting on June 21, 2021. As reported at the last meeting, we asked for current PT On-Call position to be FT On-Call position. This is not a new position – it will be reclassified position. With all of the reimbursements from State and Federal reimbursement, the total reclass will come in at \$25k. This position would reduce comp time of other social workers who have to cover on-call. This position was not granted in the upcoming 2021-2022 budget.

Director Daye gave updates regarding Foster Child case where there are no resources. Cardinal Innovations has secured placement for child. The County incurred a lot of cost to as we waited on placement for child. The plan is to recoup cost to County from Cardinal Innovations. The plan has been submitted to Bryan Hagood - \$12k total for final approval.

Director Daye reported on meeting with Clyde Albright, County Attorney and Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney regarding the Cardinal Innovations sub-capitated agreement that was designed to help with children with MH needs. Director Daye reported there were tons of red flags in the agreement. Director Daye reported we made changes to the agreement and submitted to Cardinal Innovations. We asked for language to be added in the agreement to address that Social Services role is not to find placement for MH services and that's the role of the LME/MCO. Cardinal Innovations amended the agreement with suggested changes. The agreement will be presented to County Commissioners for approval at July 21, 2021 County Commissioners meeting.

Director Daye reported we are changing DSS Agency Plan – we want to look at an outside facilitator to work with Leadership Team on to facilitate the plan. We have seen challenges with front line staff and hope this progress will give “buy in” for staff. The goal is to have plan by January 1, 2022.

New Business: Family Justice Center Community Needs Assessment

Ms. Skye Sullivan, FJC Director we recently celebrated 10-year anniversary for FJC recently. Ms. Sullivan presented the following:

The needs assessment covered the following topics:

- Overview & Purpose
- Timeline & Methodology
- FJC Data Review

- Themes from Safety Assessment & Space Study
- Themes from Focus Groups & Client Survey

Overview & Purpose:

The Family Justice Center previous strategic plan was 2015 – 2020. The Justice Advisory Council (JAC) of Alamance County voted to create the FJC Mission Work Group subcommittee in March 2020 and participated in SWOT analysis of FJC. Ms. Sullivan was hired in June 2020 and the committee was formed in July 2020. The workgroup subcommittee members were as follows:

- Skye Sullivan, FJC Director
- Adrian Daye, Director – Alamance Co. Department of Social Services
- Allison Young, Attorney – Legal Aid
- Chris Gaddis, Assistant Chief Burlington Police Department
- Cliff Parker, Chief Deputy, Alamance County Sheriffs’ Department
- Gary Ander, Stepping Up Initiative
- Meredith Peffley, Executive Director, Crossroads
- Dr. LaTonya Penny, Executive Director, Family Abuse Services
- Sara Huffman, Regional Operations Director, RHA
- Kathryn Overby, District Court Judge
- Nellie Harrelson, Survivor

Timeline & Methodology –



Conclusion & Recommendations – FJC Director & consultant used data to incorporate findings into annual planning and decision-making.



Data Collection – From January 15 through April 2021, FJC Director Skye Sullivan and Scottie Seawell, Leading & Governing Associates, Inc. conducted a community needs assessment. The assessment included both a space & safety study of the FJC building, a data review from the past 10 years, 5 focus groups of FJC partners & staff, interviews of 51 former FJC clients and a review of community data and information related to the demographics and trends in Alamance County NC.



Funding – In January 2021, FJC Director secured funding through Impact Alamance Capacity Building Grant to hire a consultant to lead the community needs assessment process. Scottie Seawell, a consultant with Leading & Governing Associates, Inc. was hired for the process.

FJC Data Review -

Clients Served	2018	2019	2020
# of clients serves (unduplicated)	1023	1347	904
Total visits to FJC for services (unduplicated)	1795	2007	1024
% of clients returning in the same year for services	5.7%	7.4%	2%
Avg. time spent with clients in hours	2.35	1.56	1.9
Referrals to partners in FJC	1,766	2,026	1,084
Elon Law Visits	287	364	52
# of clients interested in 50-B	614	906	618
# of 50-Bs filed at FJC	427	477	445

FJC Data Review Continued -

2020 FJC Referral Sources	Number
DA's Office	28
Clerk of Court	35
Family/Friend	113
Social Media	8
Victim Liaison – ACSO	18
Law Enforcement	392
Magistrate	115
Other	151

Themes from Safety Assessment -

Skye Sullivan reported FJC contracted with Envirosafe to conduct Safety Assessment –

- Security Camera system has blind spots (*awarded \$20k for lighting for blind spots*)
- Evaluation of panic buttons in client spaces

- Safety protocols and response
- Increase in incidents with abusers in parking lot and at front door
- Victims need to move inside the building as quickly as possible
- Dumpster needs to be relocated to back of parking lot (hiding space for abusers)
- Victims need to be able to park closer to the building, designated parking spots
- Lighting in parking lot needs to be improved
- Evaluate who has access to the building
- Visitor tracking and sign in need to be established

Themes from Space Study –

County operated building. No partners pay rent, maintenance, furniture, etc. Some partners are paying utilities. The building space is approximately 13k sq. foot but 5k sq. foot is dedicated to Fire Marshall's office, which leaves at total of 8,500 square for FJC staff. Most other Family Justice Center's have at least 20k – 30k square footage.

Breakdown of space allocations:

- FJC Staff- 7% of FJC
- Family Abuse Services-26% of FJC
- DSS Economic Services & Child Protective Services- 13% of FJC
- Burlington Police Department-9% of FJC
- Alamance County Sheriff's Office-7% of FJC
- Client Interview Rooms/ Shared Space- 38% of FJC

Immediate space needs:

- Storage for client supplies
- Additional interview rooms
- Internal waiting room
- Support group and group therapy space
- Individual Therapy space
- Building-wide intern office
- Client kitchen space
- Dedicated Playroom

Question: When victims come here to FJC – who transports them to safe space?

Transportation is always an issue. We use Law Enforcement (Burlington PD and Alamance County Sheriff's Office), Uber, Taxi service and bus passes as modes of transportation.

Themes from Focus Groups:

Successes to Build Upon:

- New Executive Director
- The Family/Justice Center Model

- Services/resources available at FJC/Safe Location
- Collaborative approach to the work/collaboration/teamwork
- Supportive partners
- FJC Staff/Partners in Court
- Strategic Framework

Opportunities for Improvement: Shared knowledge, communication and collaboration by all in support of the FJC Model/Services/Resources available -

- Knowledge of all services provided at FJC/resources provided
- Coordination/Collaboration
- Open communication followed up by action/information and communication
- Develop a Sequential Intercept Map or Flow Chart for FJC
- Digital document to update partners with information about staff, services provided, pictures, etc.
- Orientation/Training of Staff & Partners
- Working with Law Enforcement, partnering with investigations, forensic interviews, filing charges

Additional Resources/Services/Available

- Mental/Behavioral Health
- Additional Resources Needed – staffing, funding, space
- Space Challenges
- Flexible Hours/Availability of Services During Off-Hours and Weekends

The 50-B Process – additional support in court and opportunities for partnership

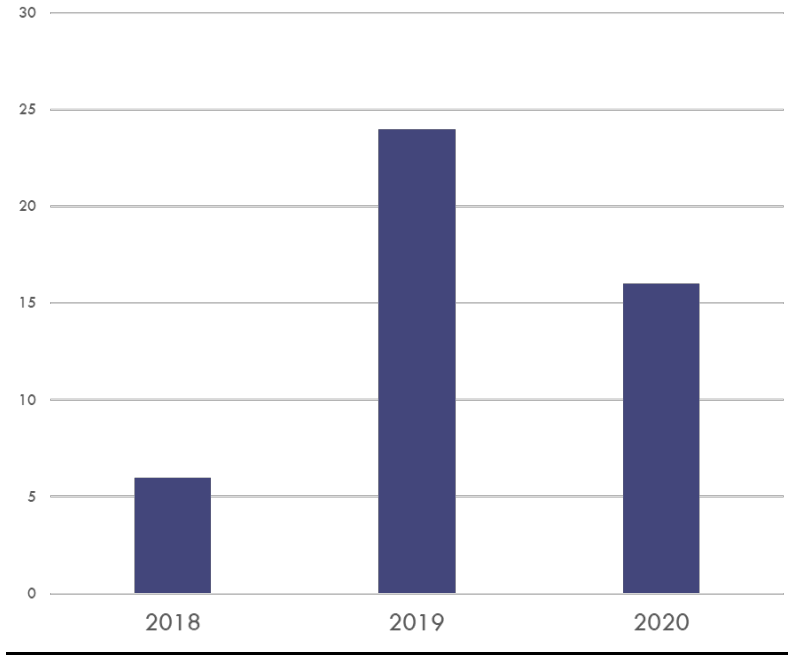
Service Needs

- Updated/Condensed forms, updated intake process and improved coordination of services
- Getting more investigators in the building and DA’s office in the building to meet client needs
- Increased coordination of forensic interviews, follow up services, and high-risk case review

Client Survey Results –

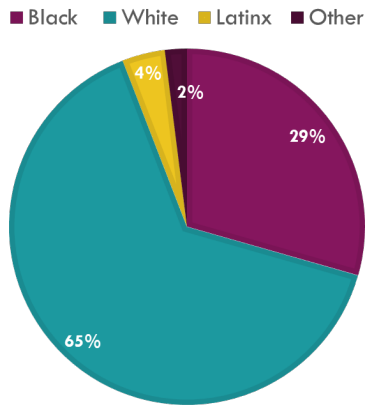
Total Clients Surveyed: 51

Date of Services at the FJC

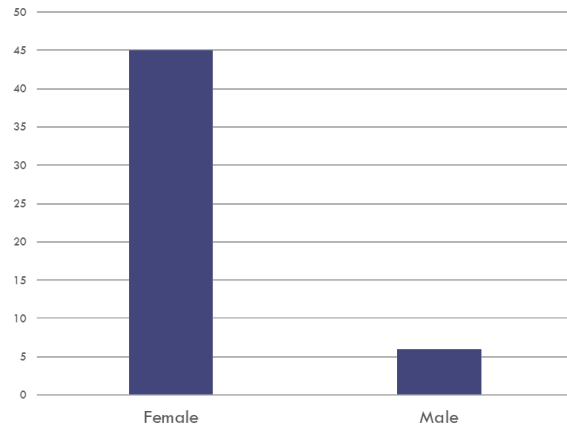


Respondents Demographic Information -

RACE



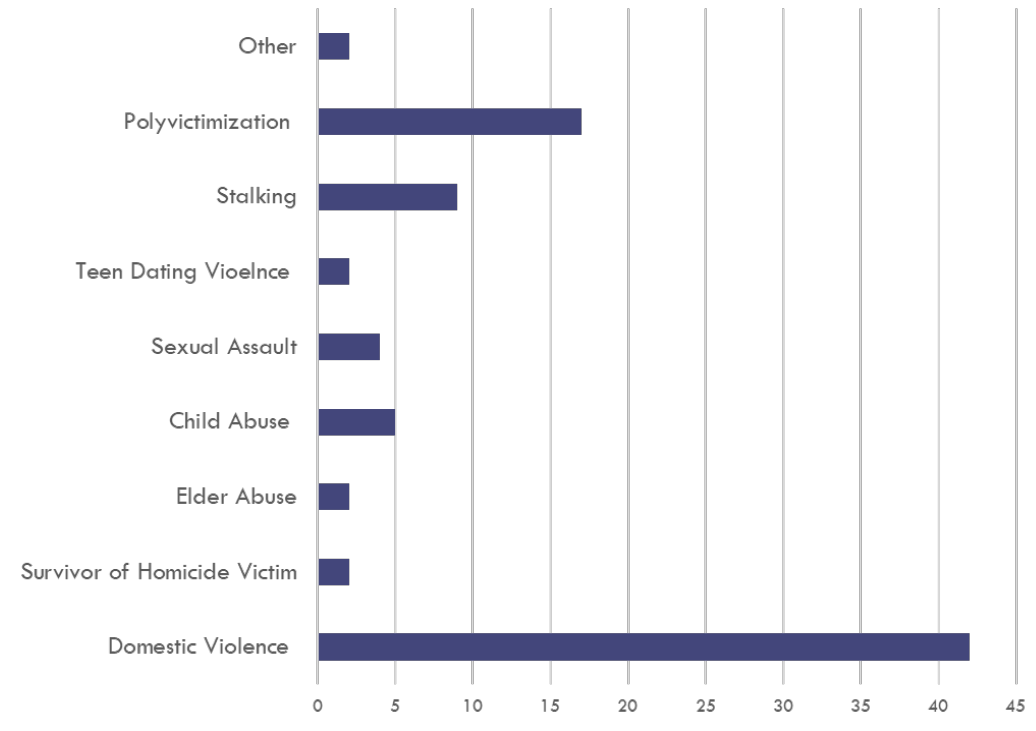
Gender



Respondents Demographic Information –

Age Range	23-68
Average Age	41.7
Median Age	38
Disabled	8
Veteran	1
LGBTQ+	2
Limited English	3

Victimizations



Responses –

1. What was your primary reason for your visit?

Restraining Order	10
DV Support, safety planning, options & resources	13
Physical Assault	4
Stalking/Harassment Resources	3
Sexual Assault Resources	3
Emergency Shelter/Housing	4
Filing Charges	4
Custody from abuser/Legal	11
Abuse From caretaker	1

2. Did you feel welcome at the FJC?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	46	90 %
No	1	2 %
No Answer	4	8 %

3. What was the communication like between the agencies that assisted you at the FJC?

Positive	38	75 %
Negative	5	10 %
No Answer	8	15 %

4. Were there any needs that were not met at the Family Justice Center during your visit?

- Supervised Visitation
- Follow-Up
- 50-C Issues
- Court Preparation
- Counseling/Therapy
- Mediation with unsafe person
- Custody Issues

5. What could be improved here at the FJC?

- Shorter Intake/Wait times
- Better Follow-Up, sooner calls
- Be able to speak to same person each time they come in to agency
- Not moving place to place in the building
- Staff understanding laws about 50B

- Court Preparation
 - Better investigating of cases
 - Have someone check on children
6. How could we make you feel safer here at the FJC?
- Make ACP (Address Confidentiality Program) more available
 - Explain difference between 50B and Rule 65
 - More Security on site, go back quicker
 - Escort for people going to court
 - Officers went outside to escort her in b/c offender was her, have more clients
 - Armed guard or law enforcement may make people feel safer depending on the situation
 - The unsafe person shouldn't know people are there in the first place

Law Enforcement Specific Responses –

7. Do you feel comfortable having law enforcement officers in the building?

Yes	44	86%
No	1	2%
Neutral	1	2%
No Answer	5	10%

8. Do you think Law Enforcement officers should be in the building?

Yes	38	75%
No	1	2%
Neutral	7	13%
No Answer	5	10%

9. Does having Law Enforcement Officers in the building make you feel safer or less safe?

Safer	42	82%
Less Safe	1	2%
No Impact	3	6%
No Answer	5	10%

Responses –

10. Are there any services or agencies that should be at the FJC?

- Clarity about how collaboration works with DSS/CPS & opportunities to partner on case
(This lets us know that we are not doing a good job inform customers we have DSS staff in building)
- Housing resources

- Crossroads On-Site
- Therapist on-site, on-going support
- People with children need additional services for their children
- Shelter for older single women (*50-65 non-existent*)
- Educational services on-site
- Service to contact unsafe person so they may be able to talk it out with someone in the middle – i.e. to perform home visits, mediation
- More services for parents (DV only serve English speaking men in Alamance County – there are no DV classes for women)

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, July 27, 2021** in-person at Family Justice Center located at 1950 Martin Street, Burlington NC. The meeting will be held in the large meeting room on the lower level.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date approved: _____