

June 23, 2020

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 Amy Galey, DSS Board Member; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Reverend Ron Shive, DSS Board Vice-Chair; Edna Parker, DSS Board Member; Ms. Adrian Daye, Director; Ms. Latawnya Hall, Adult Services Program Manager; Ms. Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations; Ms. Jamie Hatfield, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Sherry Cooper, Business Officer; Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director; Ms. Skye Sullivan, FJC Director and Mr. Jason Cole, IT Director were present.

Reverend Ronald Shive, DSS Vice-Chair opened the meeting. Reverend Shive expressed deepest sympathy for Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair with the passing of her husband, Howie Norwick. Reverend Shive asked all to keep her family lifted in prayer.

Public Comment:

None –

Consent Agenda: Reverend Ron Shive, DSS Board Vice-Chair

May items on the consent agenda were approved. Commissioner Amy S. Galey made motion to approve and seconded by Dr. Ernest Eason.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Sherry Cooper

The target rate for revenues is 83% for May. Revenues are \$1,008,082.00 less than last year (6%) less. The target rate for expenditures is 92%. Expenditures are \$50,123.00 less than last year. Expenditures are 10% less than the target rate.

Ms. Cooper discussed the following:

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	Budget	Expenditures	Spending %	Balance	% Left
418000 INSURANCE FICA RETIREM	\$4,151,880	\$3,106,405	75%	\$1,045,475	25%

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	Budget	Expenditures	Spending %	Balance	% Left
463056 SHIFT NC PROGRAM	\$35,412	\$530	1%	\$34,882	99%

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	Budget	Expenditures	Spending %	Balance	% Left
497500 SPECIAL CHILDREN ADOPT	\$21,782	\$0	0%	\$21,782	0%
497510 FEDERAL ADOPT INCENTIV	\$156,206	\$36,619	23%	\$119,587	0%

Ms. Cooper reported the balance of Shift NC, Special Children Adoptions and Federal Adoption Incentive funds will be carried over to next year's budget.

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	Budget	Expenditures	Spending %	Balance	% Left
497260 LIEAP	\$637,067	\$659,280	103%	-\$22,213	-3%

Ms. Cooper discussed the overage in the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) expenditures. Director Daye added the Division established a policy for one-time supplements to be issued to any approved LIEAP household that received benefits in 2019. The supplements were used as a benefit and credit to individual family energy accounts.

The allotments were as follows:

LIEAP Allotment 2019 – 2020	One-Time Supplement
\$300.00	\$10.45
\$400.00	\$13.94
\$500.00	\$17.43

Fraud: See report -

Unit	May 2020	May 2019	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$20,632.01	\$45,761.56	\$249,878.02	\$315,442.99

Ms. Gobble reported both Program Integrity staff telework and continue to maintain 100% timeliness with no interruption to work flow. The unit established \$112k in claims – the highest amount in the last five years. USDA extended suspension of program integrity claims, recoupments and delinquent payment forgiveness until 6/30/2020. The unit is receiving less referrals due to Economic Services staff are not conducting face-to-face interviews due to COVID.

Ms. Gobble also reported with her new role as Assistant Director of Operations she will give updates of other services such as Child Care to board monthly.

Ms. Gobble reported we will start the CIP/LIEAP (Crisis Intervention/Low Income Energy Assistance Program) in July. We are working on the protocol of how to see customers during the pandemic. We are working on social media blasts to get the message out to customers. Ms. Gobble report she will have more information to report at July Board meeting.

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

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: Ms. Latawnya Hall

Child Support –

Unit	May 2020	May 2019	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$1,002,562.89	\$983,515.47	\$10,029,419.06	\$11,031,533.19

Ms. Hall announced Elder Abuse Awareness Day was June 15, 2020. With the current pandemic, we did not host an event this year but created “you tube” video celebrating the event. We continue to work within mandated guidelines to provide services for Adult Services – we have seen a slight increase in reports (51) March; (52) April and (53) May. We do anticipate a drastic increase as we move forward due to elderly residents are starting to be seen by physicians for visits instead of via phone.

Ms. Hall reported Child Support court started June 5, 2020 with 120 people on docket. The first court date went very smoothly – we offered customers masks who were present without one. The upcoming court date there are approximately 125 on docket. Ms. Hall reported Child Support staff are using different court rooms to practice social distancing and are contacting customers on the docket to see if issues with case could be worked out via phone before having to appear at court.

Guardianship – The unit continues to flow as normal. We will begin virtual court soon. We have scheduled future cases for July in WebEx. We continue to make contact calls and continue to use collaterals.

Children Services Program Manager: Ms. Angela Cole

Ms. Cole reported we have established new PPE protocol for Child Welfare staff. We are enforcing the importance of PPE when seeing customers face-to-face. Child Welfare staff continue to telework, but when in building have the option to wear a face covering, if social distancing is allowed. The State has given guidance for Child Protective Services on how best to protect children, staff and family during this challenging and fluid situation.

Question: Do you have plenty of hand sanitizers for county vehicles?

Yes – we have plenty of PPE for vehicles and we encourage staff to wear face masks while sharing vehicles with staff especially when transporting customers.

Question: Do you find that some staff are not wearing mask?

Director Daye added we have heard of some instances where Social Workers were not wearing proper PPE. Supervisors have gone over expectations with staff and have stressed the importance not only for self, but for customer as well. Director Daye reported we have created a COVID Workgroup that includes staff person from Health Department to address issues.

As discussed in May Board Meeting – the statistical reports have been updated to reflect the correct statistics:

M E A S U R E	MAY 2020	MAY 2019	CURRENT YTD	PRIOR FY
CHILD WELFARE				
# OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES REPORTS	135	247	2,270	2,221
# OF CPS CASES INVESTIGATED	23	13	168	149

Ms. Cole reported we continue to receive cases – quite a few require daily intensive work. We continue to receive less reports due to no school.

Ms. Wellons reported the following:

- We are starting to wrap up the groups for Deciding Together: A **Training Program to Prepare Families for Fostering and Adoption Deciding Together**, which is a series of guides that will help families decide if they want to become a foster or adoptive parents. Two out of the three groups will finish in July. MAPP Classes continue to be postponed due to COVID-19. We continue to reach out to potential candidates to keep families engaged. We are hopeful that we will be able to incorporate these families into Deciding Together.
- We continue to license foster care placements – we continue to follow the guidelines per DHHS that were established due to COVID.
- We have increased parent and child visitations – we are conducting visits face-to-face. We have protocol in place for face-to-face visitations. When we have experienced exposure issues, we contacted COVID Hotline and followed the 14 day quarantine timeframe for DSS staff as well as parents.
- We have heard suggestions from staff who have expressed the need for support in these difficult times – we have included more WE CARE groups for staff – Mary McGinty Shaw, LCSW facilitates all groups.

Economic Support: Ms. Jamie Hatfield

Ms. Hatfield reported the following:

- On March 18, 2020 – the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 was signed to provide programmatic waivers and flexibilities related to the outbreak of COVID-19. DHHS elected to take advantage of numerous waivers to eliminate hardships for NC families. The waivers are now ending on June 30, 2020 and we are waiting on guidance from DHHS for 30 day approval period.
- FNS (Food and Nutrition Services) – DHHS has requested approval from USDA to extend these waivers until July 31, 2020 and is waiting for a decision. If not extended, the following will expire June 30, 2020:
 - Administrative Disqualification Hearing by Telephone
 - Application and Recertification Interview Waiver
 - FNS Certification Period Extensions for June Recertification's
- Economic Services has submitted 11 Income Maintenance offers to HR to fill vacant positions – we are currently working on virtual training format and work space
- P-EBT (Pandemic EBT) – All counties had to work P-EBT issuance reports “Card Status Report Undelivered County” report. We had to update address and submit for P-EBT card to be reissued. As of June, there were 130 cases listed on the report who do not receive FNS benefits. The challenge was all staff do not have access to ebtEDGE program – Pam Horner in HR has access and volunteered to help which help Economic Services a great deal.
- COVID Workgroup has been created of DSS staff, as well as Health Department staff to discuss issues as it relates to Human Services building. Our first topic will be mandatory face coverings at HSC.

- Economic Services Supervisors hosted a breakfast for staff and Ice Cream stations for staff as a token of appreciation for the hard work that has been produced during these three months of the pandemic.

Family Justice Center – Skye Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan reported she has been on the job for three weeks now. The following updates were provided:

- FJC has activated a COVID protocol for FJC that includes the wearing of face coverings in all common areas due to multiple exposures to COVID, so as a precaution the partners and FJC created a building wide protocol.
- Ms. Sullivan reported the majority of partners are not on site at FJC during COVID – they are still teleworking – the services have not been impacted. The numbers for face-to-face have decreased, but there is an increase in Domestic Violence cases. Ms. Sullivan reported restraining orders for 50+ have decreased.
- Ms. Sullivan reported conducted lunch staff meeting with FJC staff - we had a Juneteenth Celebration – great conversation about the current issues around the world.
- Governors Crime Commission Grant (GCC Grant) – we received the approval for continuation funding for two more years. Ms. Sullivan reported we have surplus of \$149k that will need to be allocated – there will be many updates done at FJC such as signage, painting of building and purchase of COVID specific equipment for building. All purchases are covered under grant funding.

Question: How are the customers feeling about virtual meetings as it pertains to Crisis? Any feedback? Why in person?

There is split feedback – when not safe in the same house to conduct virtual visit – all restraining orders must be conducted in person at FJC. The in-person rule has been approved by Judge. The electronic 50-B can be done at FJC with Judge all at “one stop” shop at FJC.

Question: Can you get an I-Pad and conduct virtual during COVID?

There is a lot of information that has to be approved from the legal side. There is evidence and information that must be scanned into the system which is not feasible with I-pad.

Ms. Sullivan asked board members what type of information/updates they would like to hear as it relates to FJC for future meetings. Ms. Parker added she would like to hear challenges and successes and statistical information.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Ms. Gobble reported with her new role as Assistant Director of Operations she will give updates of other services such as Child Care to board monthly.

Ms. Gobble reported we will start the CIP/LIEAP (Crisis Intervention/Low Income Energy Assistance Program) in July. We are working on the protocol of how to see customers during the pandemic. We are working on social media blasts to get the message out to customers. Ms. Gobble report she will have more information to report at July Board meeting.

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of May 31, 2020

Vacancies	24
New Hires	6
Interagency Transfer	1
Resignations	6

As of May 26, 2020 - There are 16 current vacancies within Social Services. We currently have (3) positions on hold due to upcoming budget. There are 11 vacancies within Economic Services unit. We continue to recruit for vacant positions.

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

Mr. Cole reported the IT unit has completed 412 work orders. We continue to work with FJCwe have noticed a decrease in calls for teleworking staff. We are in the process of looking for ways we can assist Energy Staff with the upcoming energy season to practice the CDC guidelines. Director Daye added we are challenged with figuring out ways we can run the Energy program during this season – the offices are small. We are trying to come up with innovative ways.

Mr. Cole reported we are in the process of replacing 35 PC’s and laptops for DSS staff.

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

COVID-19 – Director Daye expressed to Board Members we continue to work and navigate services through the ever changing policy changes with COVID-19. Director Daye gave shout out to DSS Management Team for continuing to roll out changes to staff with no complaints as it pertains to COVID-19.

Budget – Director Daye reported with the upcoming 2020-2021 FY Budget – DSS will have 11 frozen positions. Our salary line was decreased by \$538k – we currently have 26 vacancies and we will continue to monitor our salary line as we move throughout the year and access our needs with vacancies.

Director Daye we have decided to freeze all vacant positions for 30 days to meet the \$538k threshold. There may be some positions that are critical and we will access each one to determine the need. The largest hit to County Budget was the merit pay for all county employees has been taken out of the budget. This is the only means that staff can gain a pay raise.

CARES ACT provided Hazard Pay for first responder staff – which does not include all county employees. At DSS, APS (Adult Protective Services) and CPS (Child Protective Services) were the only staff who received hazard pay due to complexities of duties of these positions with the potential exposure to COVID in the course of the job. If a second phase of Hazard Pay is approved, Child Support staff will be included due to court is back in session.

Director Daye reported Foster Care licensed families will receive an additional \$100 per child during the pandemic. We also received more funding for APS/CPS and LINKS – we will meet to discuss how to spend the allocation.

Director Daye expressed that we have some staff who have anxiety about working in COVID environment. We have added more WE Care meetings for staff to be able to provide support and help ease anxiety with our Trauma Informed Specialist via Zoom – Mary M. Shaw.

Director Daye reported the State has allocated additional PPE for APS/CPS staff who are deemed as first responders. We will receive more disposable masks, disposable gloves and hand sanitizer. Director Daye added County Maintenance and Emergency Management have been great in providing adequate PPE when we have any shortfalls. They have been very responsive to our needs.

Director Daye added she has met with Joel Brooks, County Maintenance Supervisor and conducted walk through of DSS and determined which areas that may need Plexiglas and/or air scrubbers to provide a safe and secure environment for our customers, as well as our staff.

New Business:

None

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

Dr. Ernest Eason made motion to adjourn meeting. The motion seconded by Edna Parker.

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, July 28, 2020** in the Boardroom located on the first floor at the Human Services Building.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:
Carmen L. Morrow

Date approved: _____