

October 26, 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. Edna Parker, DSS Board Member; Ms. Adrian W. Daye, Social Services Director; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Ayoka Baldwin, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Angela Cole, 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; Ms. Skye Sullivan, FJC Director; and Ms. Andrea Rollins, County Budget Analyst Director were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

Public Comment:

None –

Consent Agenda: Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair

September items on the consent agenda approved. Edna Parker, Vice-Chair made motion to approve and seconded by Commissioner Pamela Thompson.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble

Assistant Director Gobble reported on Revenues and Expenditures – September marks the first quarter. We are beginning to receive quarterly allocations for October.

	SEPTEMBER 2021	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$3,632,302.00	29%	\$2,128,662.00	19%
EXPENDITURES	\$4,339,808.00	19%	\$4,325,058.00	22%

Assistant Director reported on the following Revenue line item:

323020 AT RISK CASE MANAGEMEN	\$50,000	\$39,230	78%	\$10,770	22%
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Assistant Director Gobble we expect to exceed more than what we budgeted. Fiscal staff monitor each line item monthly – we monitor to make sure DSS staff are pulling down funds as we code services. Assistant Director Gobble reported we had minimal overspending in the first quarter.

Assistant Director Gobble reported on the following Expenditure line items:

412200 VACATION LEAVE PAY-OUT	\$50,000	\$18,560	37%	\$31,440	63%
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Vacation leave payout is trending high due to retirements and resignations.

412600 NON-PERMANENT SALARIES	\$180,000	\$58,839	33%	\$121,161	67%
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This line item is trending high due to amount of part-time Energy staff we have hired as well as Vanguard Contract staff for Child Welfare.

497530 INDEPENDENT LIVING	\$31,532	\$16,218	51%	\$15,315	49%
497560 GA FOR FOSTER CHILDREN (683)	\$30,000	\$27,368	91%	\$2,632	9%

Both of these line items are trending high due to as reported in last month’s meeting – Stimulus funds for LINKS Children. We pulled funds from both line items to pay recipients.

Assistant Director Gobble reported we are coming up on another fiscal audit from the State. Audits will become more frequent than normal. We have submitted all requested information to State.

Fraud: See report –

Unit	September 2021	September 2020	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$6,683.43	\$2,225.00	\$29,477.43	\$15,799.39

Danae Pickard reported there were four administrative disqualification hearings held in the month of September– all clients found guilty of committing an intentional program violation. The suspension of collections will impact revenue.

Ms. Pickard reported the new Fraud Investigator is working well with minimal guidance and has been a true asset to Program Integrity.

Question: What does the Fraud look like? Is it intentional?

No – the majority of fraud are not intentional violations. They are Inadvertent Household Errors (forgot to add someone on the case or remove someone from case), etc.

Performance Management -

There were three goals not met for the month of September:

Specific Goal: DSS will initiate 95% of all screened-in reports within assigned time frames.

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021
# REPORTS COMPLETED	70	69	110
# INITIATED WITHIN TIME FRAMES	64	66	100
# REPORTS INITIATED TIMELY	91.4%	95.7%	91%

Assessors are mandated to initiate CPS reports within the timeframe specified or diligent efforts to initiate must continue until the initiation has been completed. For the month of September, 10 reports were not initiated timely, however, with each report the assessor made an appropriate number of attempts via a variety of methods to initiate within the specified timeframe.

Specific Goal: DSS will pass the monthly Medicaid report card with 90% or higher application processing rate.

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021
# APPLICATIONS	826	963	941
# COMPLETED WITHIN TIME FRAME	733	878	851
PERCENTAGE	87%	90%	89%

This goal was not met due to worker delay & staffing challenges were the root cause.

Specific Goal: DSS will process 95% of Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) applications within one business day for applicants with no heat or cooling source.

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021
# APPLICATIONS	5	2	7
# COMPLETED WITHIN TIME FRAME	5	2	6
PERCENTAGE	100%	100%	85.71%

This goal was not met due to case was untimely and case had to be reopened due to an error which made the case late. The error did not affect the client receiving service.

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

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: LaPorscha McCullough

Child Support – (Statistical Report Information)

Unit	September 2021	September 2020	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$862,742.68	\$883,502.57	\$2,650,888.03	\$2,973,192.75

Ms. McCullough reported Child Support currently has four vacancies. The supervisors are working hard to fill the vacancies. The receipt of job applications is very low. Due to large amount of vacancies, supervisors are now working cases to fill the void.

Adult Services -

Ms. McCullough reported we currently have five vacancies in Adult Services. The supervisors are working hard to fill the vacancies. Supervisors are stepping in assisting where needed – conducting home visits and monitoring facilities.

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

Ms. Angela Cole reported Child Welfare currently have nine vacancies in assessments (front end staff). We have twenty assessment positions and being down nine affects a lot. We have identified two potential candidates which are going the hiring process.

Ms. Cole expressed we are not able to control the amount of reports we receive and with only eleven staff to work cases, supervisors have to work cases. Out of the eleven staff, there are not many veteran staff, new staff are going through Pre-Service Training and are not in rotation to work any cases.

Ms. Cole reported we continue to look for ways to support staff – we have Full/PT Vanguard contract staff to help as much as possible.

Question: Do you have any information on the proposed Compensation Plan that could help with staffing recruitment?

Director Daye reported she has not received any follow up regarding the proposed compensation plan.

Board Chair Heidi Norwick asked Commissioner Thompson about DSS Compensation Plan – Is there any follow-up from the last board meeting?

Commissioner Thompson responded meeting is scheduled for next week to discuss salaries across the board. Commissioner Thompson expressed if she receives any feedback regarding DSS Compensation she will share with Board Members.

Ms. Ayoka Baldwin presented follow up report on the Family First Act presented at last Board Meeting. The act became effective October 1, 2021 that affects youth entering or currently in DSS custody in non-Medicaid placements will only be allowed to remain in those placements for 14 days.

Ms. Baldwin reported we currently have four children in Congregate Care – two were grandfathered in the facility, one child is a new placement and one child has already exceeded the 14-day requirement and we are actively looking for placement. We have issues placing older children – very difficult to find placement providers.

Director Daye added Congregate Care impacts DSS when child is no longer eligible for IV-E funding once the 14-day requirement is over, which means we receive 66% reimbursement at about \$2k - \$4k monthly with funding. But, without IV-E funding, we will only receive 33% of cost of care and the County is responsible for cost of care.

Director Daye reported the State has informed all Department of Social Services, they will make all agencies “whole”. The State has shared with Directors they will give funding back that is expended for Family First. We have not been informed when? Or how long? The Family First Act will make us shift out minds when it comes to placements for older children. We need to

strategize – MH providers will need to build up placement network as it pertains to older children.

Question: Are the young people in these facilities connected to crime as reported in JCPC? Do you see any relationship?

Not sure – we are not aware of any issues with the youth in DSS custody in connection with the JCPC youth as it relates to crime. Children that we have placed in facilities may need leveling for a certain period.

Question: Once the 14-day requirement is over – the IV-E funding goes away?

Yes – IV-E children (federal funds) in Congregate Care will go away. There are certain criteria that must be met.

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

Ms. Jamie Hatfield announced new Economic Services Supervisor for Adult Medicaid started on October 18, 2021. She is getting acclimated with new team and has great ideas. We are very excited that she is now at Alamance County DSS.

Ms. Hatfield announced that based on the evidence from the 10-month audit that began in July 30, 2020 – Alamance Co. DSS has corrected all deficiencies identified and the State is closing the Accuracy Improvement Plan. The audit evaluated the agency's compliance with federal and state accuracy standard requirements when determining Medicaid eligibility. The audit identified deficiencies with meeting the required accuracy standard of 96.8% for Medicaid approvals/redeterminations and denials/terminations that started in 2019. In February 2021, the State and Alamance County DSS entered into a partnership to develop, implement and monitor an Accuracy Improvement Plan to assist in meeting the required 96.8% accuracy standard.

Ms. Danae Pickard announced Food & Nutrition households enrolled in FNS program have received 25% increase to FNS benefits effective October 1, 2021. This is a part of a national re-evaluation of benefit amounts by USDA and The Thrifty Food Plan. This is a permanent increase in benefits while at the same time the temporary 15% increase due to COVID-19 ended on September 30th. The increase is the result of a congressionally mandated re-evaluation of the program to determine if it reflects the current cost of a nutritionally adequate diet with the Thrifty Food Plan.

Ms. Pickard reported the FNS Application Team is fully staffed with one retirement coming at the end of this month. The FNS Ongoing Team has eight vacancies with a team of sixteen.

Ms. Pickard reported CIP (Crisis Intervention Program) funding is different this year. Since there is no State approved budget, CIP allocations are being allocated in small amounts at different intervals. We may have funds this month for three weeks and may not receive any more until four weeks. Ms. Pickard also reported the State is working on new water program reported we are currently on the third allocation of CIP (Crisis Intervention Program) funds. We have PT Energy staff on board to complete and process applications.

Ms. Wendy Roberts reported Medicaid eligibility levels due to public health emergency have been extended through January 2022.

Ms. Roberts reported the several vacancies throughout her unit. We continue to interview constantly but the application pool is minimal. We are thankful for the extension of the waivers so we are able to stay afloat.

Family Justice Center – Skye Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan, FJC Director reported FJC continues to stay busy and probably will not slow down. See Presentation.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of September 30, 2021

Vacancies	41
New Hires	6
Interagency Transfers	1
Resignations	8

Mr. Ring reported as of today, we currently have 48 vacancies. Mr. Ring reported we had ten resignations in October – all left for more money. We have ten job postings currently for DSS and for all 10 job postings, we only received 17 applications over the weekend.

Director Daye added we currently have 55 vacancies – we have several people in the hiring process which makes Mr. Ring’s total 48. Director Daye announced we are definitely in Crisis Mode. Hat’s off to Front Line Supervisors and Program Managers for holding services together for citizens of Alamance County.

Mr. Ring reported the following:

Date	Position/Unit	# of Vacancies
10/7/2021	Child Welfare/	10+
9/29/2021	SW III (Adult)	9+
9/29/2021	IMC II (Economic Services)	25+

Mr. Ring added he screens all new applications before they reach the Program Manager for any vacant position.

Question: Are they in-house applicants? Are the applicants from outside of Alamance County?

99% of applicants are outside of Alamance County Government

Question: While screening applications for qualifications – do you try to move applications to a different pool that the applicant is qualified?

No – according to OSHR policies – we have to keep application on file for the position the applicant applied. We are not able to move applications to other positions.

Question: Do you inform applicants who apply for positions they are not qualified? Do you encourage them to apply for positions they meet qualifications?

Mr. Ring added through phone conversation with applicants he does encourage the applicant to apply for other vacant positions.

Energy Programs: Candice Gobble

Assistant Director Candice Gobble announced a new program that will become a part of the Energy programs. The new program is LIHWAP (Low Income Home Water Assistance Program) is a federally-funded program that provides emergency assistance to low-income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for drinking water and wastewater services.

There are 533 vendors across the State – there are very little vendors who want to work with the new Energy Program. This is a work in progress. We will report more when the program is up and running.

Child Care: Candice Gobble

Assistant Director Gobble reported we currently have 140 children on the child care waiting list. The supervisor, Katrina Jackson, is looking to pull 80 children off the waiting list but some may need meet the eligibility requirements. We are trying to get the co-efficient back up – we want to spend more instead of underspending.

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

We continue to set up new employees as they come on board – IT staff work very hard daily.

Question: What about the security camera project?

The storage for servers has been installed. We are not sure where County IT is with the server. All 32 cameras are mounted and up and running. We are not recording due to no server.

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

Strategic Planning –

Director Daye reported DSS is in the beginning stages of the Strategic Planning process. As reported in previous email, we are changing the format of the Strategic Plan and including all staff to create the plan. We have created a “jot” form survey that will be forwarded to board members this week. We are in the process of surveying staff as well.

Ivey Building -

Director Daye reported the Ivey/Petree Building is now complete. We are waiting on furniture for the space – we are looking at 16-18 weeks. Director Daye added IT Unit did a great job in installing all media/electronics for the space. We were hopeful the building would open in November. The building is located in HSC parking lot. Alamance County plans to do a “Grand Opening” of facility. Once scheduled, all DSS Board Members will be notified and invited to attend.

Legislative Updates – Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney

Attorney Hamlett presented the following 2021 Legislative Updates/Changes:

1. Foster Parents Bill of Rights
2. Placement providers right to be notified & heard
3. Additional training for foster parents
4. Defined relative
5. Relatives continue to have priority for placement, if cannot place with relative then non-relative or former foster parent can be considered
6. Neglect definition revised
7. Members of Legislature & some commitments will have access to Child Welfare records with certain provisions
8. Diligent efforts to locate relatives within 30 days of removal
9. Two tracks for cases – permanency planning hearings in lieu of review hearings when children removed from parent, guardian or custodian, if remain in the home review hearings
10. Statewide Operational CPS Hotline
11. Sibling placement and contact
12. Medication Assisted Treatment cannot be held against a parent
13. Rapid Response Teams
14. Hospital ability to file motion when child medically prepared for release but no appropriate placement

New Business: Domestic Violence Awareness Month (FJC)

Skye Sullivan, Family Justice Center Director introduced FJC staff who assisted in the Domestic Violence Awareness Month presentation. The staff were as follows: Katelyn Murray, Latawnya Hall, NaCasha Davis, Jenaro Hernandez, Angie Castillo Mercado, and Kristie Coffey.

Ms. Sullivan reminded board members to please wear purple for Domestic Violence Awareness month and Candlelight Vigil is scheduled for Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at JB Allen Courthouse at 6:30pm.

The following information was presented:

What is DVAM?

Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) – was launched nationwide in October 1987 as a way to connect & unite individuals & organizations working on domestic violence issues while raising awareness for those issues. Over the past 30 years, much progress has been made to support

DV victims and survivors, to hold abusers accountable and to create and update legislation to further those goals.

Statistics –

- 1 in 4 women & 1 in 9 men experience the following:
 - Severe intimate partner physical violence
 - Intimate partner contact sexual violence
 - Intimate partner stalking with impacts such as injury, fearfulness, post-traumatic stress disorder
 - Use of victim services contraction of sexually transmitted diseases

- 1 in 7 women & 1 in 18 men have been stalked by an intimate partner during their lifetime to the point in which they felt very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or liked.

- 1 in 10 women have been raped by an intimate partner

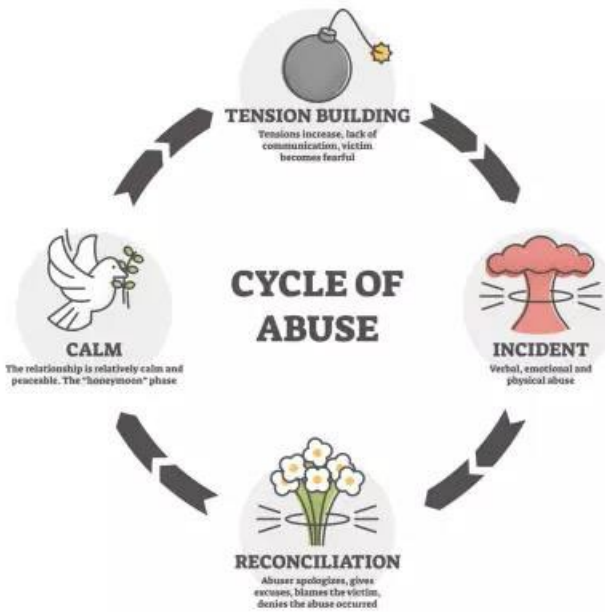
- 1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence

- Between 21-60% of victims of intimate partner violence lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse

What is Domestic Violence?

Also referred to as Intimate Partner Violence, Relationship Violence, Family Violence and Domestic Violence, etc.

Domestic Violence is a pattern of behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate partnership.



Types of Abuse –

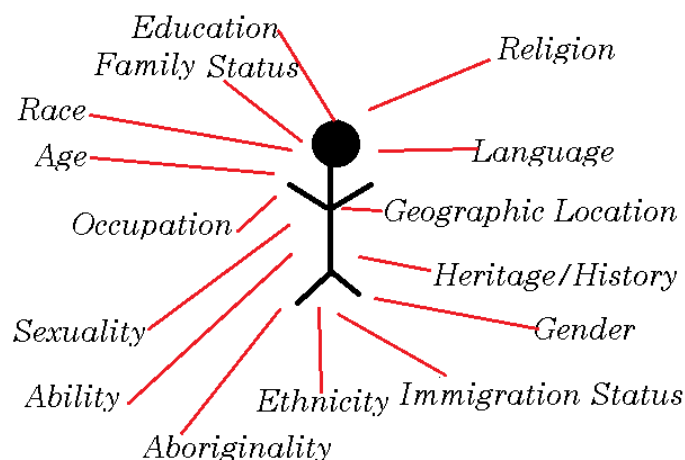
- **Teen dating violence** – persons who are considered teenagers who are in a dating relationship. Many issues are specific to school and peer social groups (1 – 11 females and 1-14 males experience)

- **Intimate partner** – persons in romantic relationship regardless of gender
- **Family** – persons who are related and one person who uses power and control dynamics over the other. For domestic violence protections orders the relationship is specific to parent/child and grandparent/child
- **Elder Abuse** – persons who are over 50 years old. The offender could be a spouse, family member or caretaker.
- **Roommate Violence** – persons who are current or former household member but are not in a romantic relationship

Why Do They Stay? /Why Do They Go Back?

- Economic dependence
- They just want the violence to stop
- Fear of greater physical danger to self-and/or children, if they try to leave
- Fear of emotional damage to children
- Fear of losing children in custody battle
- Lack of alternative housing/available housing
- Lack of job skills
- Social Isolation
- Fear of Involvement in court processes
- Fear of Retaliation
- Abuser promises to change – victim loves the abuser

Intersectionality – coined by Kimberle’ Crenshaw in 1989, the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.



Assessing Lethality –

Presented the Danger Assessment Questionnaire (FJC has adopted this policy) – the questionnaire is 20 questions. Ms. Sullivan expressed you don't have to answer "yes" to all questions – as long as one question is "yes" – we can assess the lethality.

Homicides –

A study of intimate partner homicides found that 20% of victims were not the intimate partners themselves, but family members, friends, neighbors, persons who intervened, law enforcement responders or bystanders.

- 72% of all murder-suicides involve an intimate partner
- 94% of the victims of these murder suicides are female

Additional Risk Factors –

- The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the risk of homicide by 500% (*This is one of the 20 questions in the danger assessment*)
- If the abuser has strangled victim in the past, the risk of being killed by them is 10x higher
- 75% of domestic violence related homicides occur upon separation and there is a 75% increase of violence upon separation for at least two years

Evidence Based Interventions

Law Enforcement –

- **Pro-Arrest/Mandatory Arrest Policies:** Law Enforcement & Prosecution Services emphasizing the importance of arrest and prosecution (Treat all acts of domestic violence as crimes and document them accordingly)
- **Policies Incidental to Arrest/Enforcement:** Policies to eliminate dual and/or mutual arrest. Every response to domestic violence should include screening for self-defense injuries and determining the predominant aggressor.
- No incident of domestic violence should be investigated without cross screening for sexual assault; strangulation; stalking and when appropriate, child, elder and animal abuse, which can be commonly co-occurring crimes.
- Use of Lethality Assessment Program for all jurisdictions
- Offender Accountability Programs (Larry Blount, DV Coordinator for DSS) – MEN only
- Comprehensive training on DV for patrol, detectives and leadership

Prosecution & Courts –

- A dedicated Civil Protection Order Docket
- Dedicated domestic violence criminal court days
- Integrated Domestic Violence Court triggered by the criminal DV case and handles all related victim matters including family court
- Specialized ADA's and other court personnel for domestic violence

- Comprehensive training on DV for prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges and clerks
- Victim access to attorneys for no or low cost
- Domestic Violence Intervention Programs
- Supervised Visitation Programs
- Monitored Pre-trial release programs
- Separate waiting rooms for victims and children
- Local standards and expectations for 50B's, civil remedies, bail and criminal sentencing

Victim Services –

- Co-located services: One site for detectives, prosecutors, advocates, civil legal, medical, spiritual support and community based social service professionals
- 24/7 access to victim crisis services
- Information on victim's rights & general information on victimization
- Safety planning
- Assistance with victim compensation applications and restitution
- Assistance with property repair and return
- Negotiations with creditors, landlords and employers
- Transportation & childcare services
- Protective relocation, address confidentiality, or shelter
- Crime scene cleanup and assistance with funeral arrangements after a homicide
- Information on administrative or justice-related case proceedings
- Mental health services, counseling, substance abuse services and support groups
- Connection to faith communities and cultural groups
- Housing assistance
- Educational and literacy services
- Job training/placement and employment services
- Assistance with document replacement interpretation and translation services

Director Daye thanked FJC staff for participating and your continued commitment to Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse.

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, November 23, 2021** via zoom.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date approved: _____