

April 26, 2022

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at Family Justice Center, 1950 Martin Street, Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Ms. Heidi Norwick, Chair, DSS Board Chair; Ms. Maria Hernandez, DSS Board Member; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations; Ms. Jamie Hatfield, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Wendy Roberts, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager; Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Skye Sullivan, FJC Director; Mr. Jason Cole, IT Director; Ms. Rebecca Lambert, Child Welfare Program Manager and Ms. Sharon S. Scott, Interim DSS Director were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

**Public Comment:**

None

**Consent Agenda: Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair**

March items on the consent agenda approved. Dr. Ernest Eason made motion to approve and seconded by Maria Hernandez, Board Member.

**Staff Reports:**

**Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble**

	<b>MARCH 2022</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>	<b>PRIOR YTD</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>
REVENUES	\$10,461,016.00	73%	\$8,594,304.00	74%
EXPENDITURES	\$14,420,024.00	63%	\$13,754,649.00	70%

**Fraud: See report –**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>March 2022</b>	<b>March 2021</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Prior Fiscal Year</b>
Fraud	\$5,636.23	\$11,366.00	\$63,605.66	\$55,195.81

The Fraud Unit continues to maintain 100% timeliness and manage workflow. There were three Administrative Hearings held – all clients found guilty of committing an intention program violation.

Collections remain suspended.

## Performance Management -

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

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021	OCTOBER 2021	NOVEMBER 2021	DECEMBER 2021	JANUARY 2022	FEBRUARY 2022	MARCH 2022
# REPORTS COMPLETED	70	69	110	90	100	63	28	111	128
# INITIATED WITHIN TIME FRAMES	64	66	100	75	91	60	27	104	120
# REPORTS INITIATED TIMELY	91.4%	95.7%	91%	83.33%	91%	95.2%	96.4%	93.7%	93.75%

**Goal Not Met:** 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 March, eight reports were not initiated timely. For all eight reports, the assessor made an appropriate number of attempts via a variety of methods to initiate within the specified timeframe.

**Specific Goal: Economic Services**—DSS will process 85% of SAA within 45 days of receipt. (Baseline)

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021	OCTOBER 2021	NOVEMBER 2021	DECEMBER 2021	JANUARY 2022	FEBRUARY 2022	MARCH 2022
# APPLICATIONS	9	8	6	5	7	0	4	4	10
# PROCESSED TIMELY	9	8	6	3	7	NA	3	3	8
% PROCESSED	100%	100%	100%	60%	100%	NA	75%	75%	80%

**Goal Not Met:** When the application was re-opened, it was not marked Administrative. The application was not scanned to the appropriate queue and assigned untimely.

**Specific Goal: Energy**—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	OCTOBER 2021	NOVEMBER 2021	DECEMBER 2021	JANUARY 2022	FEBRUARY 2022	MARCH 2022
# APPLICATIONS	251	282	345	169	254	357	374	320	176
# COMPLETED WITHIN TIME FRAME	249	281	341	169	249	353	360	282	167
PERCENTAGE	99.20%	99.65%	98.84%	100%	98.03%	98.88%	96.26%	88.13%	94.89%

**Goal Not Met:** These applications were Dual applications, because of this, the programs had different due dates and we were unable to change the application date on the CIP application, causing it to show overdue. New process was implemented in March; however, due to those applications being February applications not disposed until March, the applications are showing untimely.

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

Assistant Director Wellons gave the following updates:

- The Blue Cottage** – The Blue Cottage was created when DSS has placement issues and used as an alternate for placement (24-hr. schedule for SW staff) until placement is found. The building is not able to be used now due to foul smell in the building. County Maintenance has been called on multiple occasions and other vendors to find the smell. We received report last week that dead animal was found in vent and County Maintenance has ordered new vents to place at the trailer. In the meantime, we had a large sibling group of 6 children that needed placement – we were able to

secure placement for 4 of the 6 children, the other 2 were placed in temporary placement until we could secure permanent placement.

**Adult and Family Services Program Manager: LaPorscha McCullough**

**Child Support – (Statistical Report Information) – see report.**

Unit	March 2022	March 2021	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$788,655.02	\$1,043,874.02	\$7,569,330.35	\$8,136,916.21

Ms. McCullough reported Child Support will host a “Meet & Greet” with agency staff within the next week for all staff to learn more about Child Support services. We are hopeful this will encourage bridging the gap of all DSS services.

Ms. McCullough reported we are planning Child Support “Amnesty Day” for non-custodial parents. We have reached an agreement with DSS Attorney to host at least twice a year. Amnesty Day will allow non-custodial parents to make a payment on their case without repercussions.

**Adult Services -**

Ms. McCullough reported the following:

- We continue the search for new supervisor for Adult Protective Services Unit
- APS Essential Funds are now being used to help with placement of Adults. We have helped with purchasing medical equipment, hotel rooms, roofs on home and other repairs needed to help the elderly population.
- Elder Abuse Awareness Event is scheduled for June 2022. We will have an Elder Abuse Awareness Night at the Burlington Sock Puppets baseball game on June 16<sup>th</sup> and they have agreed to let two of our Persons Under Guardianship (P.U.G) throw the first pitch at the beginning of the game. More information to follow.

**Children Services Program Manager: Ms. Angela Cole/Ms. Rebecca Lambert**

Ms. Angela Cole reported April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Historically, there would be “Ring Out” Abuse Event held at the Courthouse, unfortunately, no program this year. The pinwheels will still be located around the courthouse as well as DSS and other community partner agencies. Ms. Cole reported all DSS staff received a prevent child abuse bracelet to wear for the month of April.

Ms. Cole reported Community Response Grant audit is scheduled for next month. We will provide outcomes to Board at a later meeting.

Ms. Rebecca Lambert reported Foster Care audit occurred this month and we did very well. We continue to work on morale for staff.

Ms. Lambert reported Guardian Ad Litem Appreciation is scheduled for April – we will provide small tokens to celebrate our partnership.

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

Ms. Hatfield reported Public Health Emergency was scheduled to end April 16, 2022 but has been extended again. Once the PHE ends, we will have an additional 90 days to get programs back up and running pre-COVID. We are actively developing a plan for training. The new date is July 16, 2022.

Ms. Hatfield reported Alamance Elder Care invited DSS to attend meeting –one of the Adult Medicaid Supervisors attended the meeting with other county partners and discussed Special Assistance and Long- Term Care on ways to apply for these services.

Ms. Pickard reported DHHS has allocated \$10 million funds to counties to support county efforts of administering the FNS programs due to workload increases that all counties are experiencing as a result of increased food insecurity due to the pandemic. We are currently working on a plan on to use the administrative funds. The reimbursement rate is 100%.

Ms. Pickard reported we have received additional Energy funds for all the current energy programs. We continue to work on the applications received when funds were depleted.

Ms. Pickard reported recipients aged 60 or older and disabled who received LIEAP automatic payment during the month of December 2021 – will receive an additional one-time LIEAP payment due to underpayment issue. These households will receive the difference between what they already received. The payment will be made directly to heating provider.

Ms. Wendy Roberts reported we continue to interview for IMC positions. For the month of January – we had 40 vacancies. As of April, we are down to only 14 vacancies. We have revamped our training program to a 3-month process. Training occurs in 3-week sessions. We currently stagger training. We continue to work on training programs to occur once the PHE ends.

Ms. Roberts reported Economic Services staff will participate Community Health Fair held at Gate City Dream Center scheduled for May 2022.

### **Family Justice Center – Skye Sullivan**

Ms. Sullivan reported the following:

- FJC is down four positions - (1) maternity leave and (2) surgeries and (1) vacancy – critical position. We continue to use Interns from Elon University to assist when needed.
- Presented to Alamance County Commissioners Budget Retreat on April 14, 2022 regarding FJC becoming its own County Department – Ms. Sullivan thanked Candice Gobble for providing the fiscal information needed for the presentation.

- Recently attended DV Fatality Review Training in Charlotte. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team is scheduled in Alamance County and will be a 2-day event scheduled for June 2022. Ms. Sullivan reported she is currently working with the DA’s office to identify the first care for review.
- Continue to expend a lot of money in client support, specifically for hotels – we are feeling due to Family Abuse Services closing the shelter for DV.
- Family Abuse Services has a new Executive Director, Ms. Detra Betts. FJC and Family Abuse Services will host a “Meet & Greet” scheduled for Friday, April 29, 2022 at Family Justice Center.

**Question: Does Family Abuse Services have a budget for hotels?**

*Not sure what’s in FAS Budget – With the new Executive Director starting with FAS – we are hopeful there will be oversight and preparation for the new budget to include funding.*

**Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations**

**Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring**

See Statistical Report – as of March 31, 2022

<b>Vacancies</b>	40
<b>New Hires</b>	9
<b>Interagency Transfers</b>	1
<b>Resignations</b>	6

Mr. Ring reported as of today we currently have 41 vacancies. Economic Services has made great strides in hiring. Since January 1, 2022 we have 27 separations but have hired 31 new staff. We consider that number a positive. The constant issue continues to be we are not receiving a lot of applications.

Mr. Ring reported going forward we are going to change the job postings to see if we can generate more applications instead of being specific in the posting. We continue to work with OSHR on qualifications for applicants who have applied for Director’s position.

Social Services participated in the annual UNC-Chapel Hill Job Fair – the event was held virtual this year. The event was a total of 3 hours and we didn’t have one applicant – the event reported there were 300 potential applicants, there were only 75 applicants who participated, but none were for Alamance.

Alamance Co. Health Department hosted an on-site Job Fair – they shared they only 27 potential applicants but only 2 were qualified for the jobs that were posted.

**Energy Programs: Danae Pickard**

See Economic Services Report

### **Child Care: Candice Gobble**

Assistant Director Gobble reported we continue to watch the spending platform for Child Care. We are currently at 93% with no waiting list.

### **IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole**

Mr. Cole reported we continue to process all technology for new staff.

### **Director's Report – Sharon S. Scott, Interim Director–**

Ms. Sharon Scott reported she continues to be impressed with staff here at Alamance County Social Services. The staff work hard and long each day. The volume of work has increased since she retired, as well as the speed of the work. The team continues to work without complaints.

*Question: Has all staff returned to the building?*

*Answer: Yes*

### **New Business: Ann Petree Building –**

Assistant Director Lynette Wellons gave the following presentation on the Ann Petree Building.



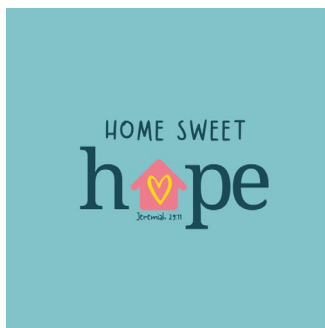
Assistant Director Wellons presented the following as a virtual tour:

- The Entry & Waiting Room
- Conference Room – Team Meetings and Child & Family Team Meetings
- Restrooms (2)
- Secured Storage Room
- Inviting Visitation Space & Family Room
- Staff Workroom – (4) Non-Permanent Work Stations/One Way Glass for Supervised Contact and Audio Transmission
- Outside Area – Picnic table

The space is almost completed – we are waiting on badge swipes for doors for staff to access for visitations. Currently, we have one key and are scheduling the rooms. We conducted our first visit on a trial run last week and the visit went very well. The family was comprised of 3-year-old and 6-year-old. Once the area is fully functional – we will be able to conduct three different visitations as well as Child & Family Team meeting in the conference room all at the same time.

There are local touches with paintings and photography work showcased throughout the building. Home Sweet Hope, local non-profit out of Mebane NC graciously designed, installed and gifted the interior décor for the visitation and family rooms. The owner is of Home Sweet Hope is one of our licensed foster parents with Alamance County Social Services.

A special thanks goes out to Molly Feudale, Color My Monday, for providing the amazing lobby wall art which gave the space a pop of color. L.A.K.E. Designs and VanWeest Customs for fabricating the beautiful custom pillows and bench cushions. Kait Reckert and Stephanie Kinley for lending their photography skills to create the Alamance County picture collages. The Family Room for donating the diapers to stock the rooms, Staci Stepp for putting heart and soul into designing the rooms.





**Question: What do you mean the building is not fully complete?**

*Answer: We continue to wait on badge swipes, which will give all DSS staff access.*

Assistant Director Wellons invited Board Members to tour the building at the end of meeting.

**Announcements:**

Assistant Director Candice Gobble reported April is Local County Government month. DSS will host a DSS favorite tradition “grits” breakfast bar for all staff. The event will be held on Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 9:30am.

**Adjournment -**

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, May 24, 2022** at Family Justice Center, 1950 Martin Street, Burlington NC.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Carmen L. Morrow*

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Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_