

November 23, 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, Chair, DSS Board Chair; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Ms. Edna Parker, Vice-Chair, DSS Board Member; Ms. Maria Hernandez, DSS Board Member; Ms. Adrian W. Daye, Social Services Director; 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. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager; Ms. Danae Pickard, 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

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

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble

Assistant Director Gobble reported on Revenues and Expenditures –

	OCTOBER 2021	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$4,785,662.00	38%	\$3,272,241.00	29%
EXPENDITURES	\$5,753,570.00	25%	\$5,919,130.00	31%

Assistant Director reported there is no change with Revenues. We continue to wait on LINKS funding. We continue to monitor lapse salary.

Assistant Director Gobble reported on the following Expenditure line items:

435300 MAINT & REPAIR VEHICLE	\$18,000	\$10,173	57%	\$7,827	43%
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This line item will exceed what is budgeted due to the costly repairs of four of the agency fleet vehicles.

Director Daye reported we have ordered furniture for the Ivey Building. The order will not be delivered until February 28, 2022. The anticipated open date for Ivey Building is December. The furniture we ordered is hospital grade furniture (very durable) – meaning the furniture can be sanitized and cleaned, if needed.

Question: Will the other partners move into the Ivey Building without furniture?

Yes – the other two partners will occupy the building.

Fraud: See report –

Unit	October 2021	October 2020	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$5,807.37	\$8,205.42	\$35,284.80	\$24,049.81

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

Performance Management -

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

Specific Goal: Child Care—DSS will process 95% of Child Care Subsidy applications within 30 calendar days of the application date.

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021	OCTOBER 2021
# APPLICATIONS	23	33	50	48
# PROCESSED WITHIN 30 DAYS	22	32	50	45
% APPLICATIONS PROCESSED TIMELY	96%	97%	100%	94%

All three of the untimely applications were for different reasons (no pattern of error):

- *Untimely was due to being the first denial for a new worker and she gave the parent more time than she should have to comply with providing needed information. The policy has been reviewed with the new worker.*
- *Untimely was due to worker mistakenly recording on their manual application tracking that they had already approved an application and were just waiting on a child care choice; however, the worker had actual forgotten to complete the last step to authorize and it was not caught until the application was already untimely.*
- *Untimely was due to worker receiving an error message in NC FAST when attempting to authorize the application, and this was not reported to the Supervisor or Lead Worker until after it had gone over due.*

Assistant Director Gobble added the Child Care Unit reported the unit is looking to clear the wait list for child care. Currently we have 37 applications on the list and they will pull off this week. There are some customers not completing recertifications due to not working due to COVID.

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
# REPORTS COMPLETED	70	69	110	90
# INITIATED WITHIN TIME FRAMES	64	66	100	75
# REPORTS INITIATED TIMELY	91.4%	95.7%	91%	83.33%

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 October, 15 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 process 85% of SAA within 45 days of receipt. (Baseline)

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021	OCTOBER 2021
# APPLICATIONS	9	8	6	5
# PROCESSED TIMELY	9	8	6	3
% PROCESSED	100%	100%	100%	60%

This goal was not met due to both untimely applications were due to worker oversight (one was denied and the other was marked as Administrative when rekeyed).

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

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: LaPorscha McCullough

Child Support – (Statistical Report Information)

Unit	October 2021	October 2020	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$845,851.35	\$846,296.54	\$3,496,739.38	\$3,819,489.29

Ms. McCullough reported Child Support completed State Audit. There were five cases reviewed – we received 100% on all cases. We currently have six vacancies in Child Support – (1) Child Support Agent I, (4) Child Support Agents II and (1) Office Assistant.

Adult Services -

Ms. McCullough reported the Christmas Program for Persons Under Guardianship (P.U.G) is currently underway. We are asking volunteers to donate gift cards from Walmart or Target to purchase gifts for our elderly wards. Ms. McCullough reported on Adult Services vacancies:

- APS – 4 SW III positions down for a Team of 6 – currently have 2 SW III on leave
- Guardianship – 3 SW III positions down for a Team of 6
- Adult Services – 1 SW III short

Assistant Director Wellons announced DSS is taking part of the County Wide Job Fair that will be held on Tuesday, November 30th from 10am – 2pm at Graham Recreation Center. We are hopeful we will have a great turnout – we will conduct onsite interviews, we have created process to do job offer and we have created a DSS flyer.

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

Ms. Angela Cole reported Child Welfare will take part in on-site State Review on November 30th that focuses on assessment and intake services of Child Welfare. This is typically a lengthy review from beginning to end. We will also participate in a quarterly data review with Child Protective Services representative.

Ms. Cole reported we have some candidates we are hopeful to move forward with job offers. We currently have nine vacancies in assessments (front end staff) – we received one resignation this week. We currently have supervisors working caseloads. We continue to work together as a team.

Assistant Director Wellons added November is National Adoption month. We have completed 8 adoptions this year. The Foster Care Christmas Event will be drive-thru again this year due to COVID. This is always an exciting time for Child Welfare to deliver presents to foster children. We are very fortunate to have great faith-based organizations that help with this project every holiday. We continue to struggle with the placement of teenagers with the Families First Act for Congregate Care. Assistant Director Wellons reported on case with teenager that occurred this week where DSS was lucky that Foster Parent stepped up to take teenager and so far, the teen is doing well. We are hopeful the teen will be able to take advantage of the services provided under the LINKS program.

Assistant Director Wellons reported VAYA/Youth Villages are working together to provide one single point of entry. This pilot will start in December – very excited.

Assistant Director Wellons reported we are currently trying to fill Child Welfare supervisory position from employee who will retire at the end of December.

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

Ms. Jamie Hatfield reported we are preparing Economic Services for the day the State Health Emergency ends and all waivers end. We are gearing up training and safety protocols to be

prepared. We currently have 21 IMC II vacant positions. We will have two retirements in January. The positions continue to be critical. We currently have 16 FNS positions and 8 of them are vacant. We have 1 training position vacant. We have interviews scheduled for next week.

Ms. Hatfield reported on Open Enrollment Federal Market Place (FFM) has started. This service will double workload for staff. Open Enrollment started October 1st – We are hopeful to gain new employees at the upcoming Job Fair scheduled for the end of the month.

Ms. Danae Pickard reported Food & Nutrition supervisors met this week to create training plan to prepare for the amount of vacancies. The LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) automated payments will begin in December for those recipients over the age of 60 who receive the benefits last year.

Family Justice Center – Skye Sullivan

Ms. Sullivan, FJC Director reported FJC continues to stay busy and numbers continue to increase for services. As you can see on the Performance Management Report:

Specific Goal: Family Justice Center— The Family Justice Center will track the number of victims assessing services in person and will increase victims served by 10% from previous year.

	JULY 2021	AUGUST 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021	OCTOBER 2021
# OF VICTIMS (21-22)	158	159	165	168
# OF VICTIMS (20-21)	90	101	68	111
% OF INCREASE	75%	57%	143%	51%

For the month of September – we had a 143% increase. We average at least 10 clients on Monday – we saw at least 28 clients last Monday. We continue to use PT Time staff on Monday’s to help with the number of customers seen on Monday’s.

Ms. Sullivan reported there were 2 homicides this month – we have experienced some very heavy cases at FJC. We continue to operate with limited space. With our safety assessment – there were a couple of blind spots pointed out within our safety assessment. We are currently undergoing the camera project – we hope the project will be completed by the end of December.

Ms. Sullivan reported we continue to work on the contract for the Domestic Violence Fatality Team – we plan to be up and running by March 2022. Lynette Wellons will represent DSS on this committee.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Assistant Director Gobble reported DSS Boosters Committee has planned a number of events for staff “morale boosters”. The events are as follows:

- October – Halloween Walk, Door Decorating Contest and Treat bags provided to all staff who participated.

- November – 50/50 Raffle served as fundraiser for DSS Boosters Committee.
- December – We will host several Holiday Events – “Ugly” Christmas Sweater Contest, Hot Chocolate Bar and other events.

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of October 31, 2021

Vacancies	50
New Hires	2
Interagency Transfers	3
Resignations	9

Director Daye reported we currently have 60 vacancies as of November 22nd. We have 17 sign-on bonuses (out of the 17 – 5 are no longer with us). We continue to hold steady with 2 referral bonuses so far.

Question: What’s the timeframe for the bonuses?

Sign-On Bonus is \$2k if you are hired for one of the Top 5 HT Positions (\$1k after probation has ended (6 months) and the other \$1k at 6 months after probation (1 year).

The 5 staff who left recently were as follows:

- One hired on 8/30/2021 – resigned 10/14/2021
- One hired on 8/30/2021 – resigned 10/19/2021
- One hired on 9/1/2021 – resigned 9/30/2021
- One hired on 9/27/2021 – resigned 10/18/2021
- One staff released from probation

Within the last exit interviews, the sign-on bonus got them here at DSS, but they were not prepared for the amount of work.

The 12 staff that are currently working through the sign-on bonus period so far have been successful in the current positions.

Question: When posting vacant positions, do you post at Universities?

Yes – we currently post through all job sites. Skye Sullivan has posted the upcoming Job Fair on all local university websites.

Energy Programs: Danae Pickard

See Economic Services Report

Child Care: Candice Gobble

See Performance Management Report

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

Mr. Cole reported IT will set up 3 laptops for the upcoming Job Fair. The HSC/DSS camera project is now complete – we have 36 fully operational cameras functioning on the HSC campus. We continue to tweak angles.

Mr. Cole reported IT is working with County IT on the network system for the Ivey Building. We are currently waiting on the final inspection.

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

Director Daye gave a huge “shout out” to all DSS staff working here at Alamance County DSS during this critical time. These are very challenging times and staff continue to remain positive while working. We have endured many successful stories and the Community has been great to partner with during these difficult times.

Director Daye thanked all DSS Board Members for their continued support and advocacy for staff as well as the citizens of Alamance County. Director Daye wished all Happy Thanksgiving.

New Business: DSS Training Programs (All Staff)

Assistant Director Candice Gobble opened the presentation for all DSS Training Programs:

Training Development in Economic Services:

In the Beginning	Primary Source of learning was reading & applying the manual. Hand written determinations & paper files.
Prior to 2014 and NCFAS	Peer-to-Peer Training became more prevalent as more computer systems came into business practices including Economic Services
Need for Trainers and Online Technical Support	In 2014, the State released their eligibility system. NC FAST – Web Based Training, seminars and need for Trainers and Technical Support
Training & QA Department	Currently we have a dedicated supervisor who works with 5 trainers and 2 Quality Assurance Analysts – we recently added an Energy Trainer. The QA staff also act as hearing officers.
2022 and Beyond	Innovation and improved tools for new and seasoned staff while maintaining State and Federal standards of work

Subsidized Child Care –

With the Child Care Training plan – the plan alleviated a lot of work from the supervisor of the Child Care Unit. She has been able to work with the trainer and create a structured training plan for Child Care due to the following:

- Error Trends Identified and Structured Training Plans Created

- Troubleshooting Support & NC FAST Point of Contact established
- Ability to increase Quality Assurance Reviews
- Additional Support for Staff & Supervisor

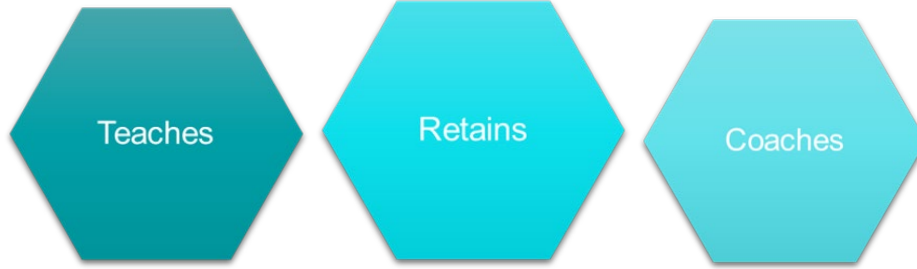
Ms. McCullough presented **Child Support Training**:

Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisory Demand • High Turnover • Errors • Lack of ongoing training with State Issued Training/Webinars • No Focus on Specialty Areas
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed challenges • Recognized the investment • Developed training curriculum • Survey of staff for needs
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with outside staff • Reclass & internal hire of current staff to become Child Support Trainer • Continued ongoing assessment of needs • Monitoring child support data

Ms. McCullough reported in April 2021 – Child Support Goals – we only met 2 out of 8 goals. With the new improved training curriculum and training plan established as of October 2021, we met 5 out of 5 goals at 100%. We have strong well-equipped agents.

Ms. Angela Cole presented training plan for **Child Welfare**:

Quality Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in State sponsored training • Demand on Supervisors & Peer Time • Inadequate training available • Policy Changes
Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recidivism • Data trends • Internal audits • State & Federal Reviews
Staff Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of one-on-one time with Supervisor • Need for professional development • Lack of focus on enhancing skillset • Lack of confidence and morale
Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent agency expectations & processes • Varying interpretations & application of policy • Contributes to turnover



Announcements:

No meeting in December. Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays!

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, January 25, 2022** via zoom.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date approved: _____