

July 26, 2022

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at Alamance County Social Services, 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., 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. Krista Knight, DSS Board Member; Commissioner Pamela T. Thompson, DSS Board Member; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Candice Gobble, Director; 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. Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager; Mr. Jason Cole, IT Director; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, Attorney; Ms. Rebecca Lambert, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Kailee Morrow, Adult Services Supervisor and Ms. Andrea Rollins, County Manager's Office were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

Chair Norwick congratulated Candice Gobble as the new Alamance County Social Services Director.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda: Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair

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

Oath of Office:

Ms. Krista Knight affirmed the Oath of Office as new DSS Board Member administered by Carmen Morrow, Notary Public. Effective term – July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025. Ms. Knight gave brief overview of background. Ms. Knight currently works as Peer Specialist for RHA.

Chair Norwick welcomed Ms. Krista Knight as new board member.

Vice-Chair Nominations:

Chairman Heidi Norwick nominated Maria Hernandez as Vice-Chair due to replace Edna Parker whose term ended June 30, 2022. Chair Heidi Norwick made motion and seconded by Dr. Ernest Eason.

Action: Unanimous vote approved Maria Hernandez – Vice-Chair.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble

	JUNE 2022	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$14,881,430.00	101%	\$11,377,340.00	98%
EXPENDITURES	\$20,366,310.00	87%	\$19,010,662.00	91%

Director Gobble reported we are now closing out Fiscal Year 2022 – 23 – during the month of July, we still receive invoices that are coded back to June. The close out should be fully completed by August.

Director Gobble reported on the 101% of budget for Revenues. The 101% is due to Cardinal Innovations funds available of \$2m over the last fiscal year. We are working with VAYA who has now taken over Cardinal Innovations and are trying to figure out way to use funds and hopefully will allow designated funds to be carried over into FY 23-24’.

Fraud: See report –

Unit	June 2022	June 2021	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$2,977.55	\$7,754.00	\$69,840.03	\$74,085.46

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

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: LaPorscha McCullough

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

Unit	June 2022	June 2021	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$1,042,448.84	\$988,995.70	\$15,978,974.11	\$11,140,584.87

Child Support –

Child Support met 3 out of 5 goals in Performance Management Goals compared to only meeting 1 goal last fiscal year. This is a huge accomplishment.

Child Support is gearing up to Celebrate Child Support Awareness Month scheduled in August. There are several events planned: Child Support 101 for Community Partners and School Supply Give-a-way.

Board Members shared other Back to School Events:

- Dream Center
- Burlington Sock Puppets
- Chamber of Commerce (McKinney-Vento Children)

Adult Services -

- Ms. McCullough announced we have a new APS Supervisor, Ms. Faith Rios. Ms. Rios was promoted internally.
- APS cases have increased for the month of June. We received 92 reports and we screened in 62 of the 92 reports. At the end of the FY, we screened a total of 100 reports with ½ staff.
- We are down 3 staff in APS – fully staffed is 6 positions. We have recently seen an increase in cases/referrals from the Elder Abuse Grant, Adult & Family Care Homes and ARMC.
- The State is currently working on revamping the Adult Services manual.

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

Ms. Cole reported the following:

- we have 14 children into custody this year – this is an increase from last year.
- we continue to interview – we have 3 new staff who will start on August 1, 2022

Ms. Lambert announced the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, LINKS in NC, assists current and former eligible foster care youth and young adults ages 14-21 in achieving self-sufficiency through support services, resources and LINKS Special Funds.

For the FY 2022-2023, NC DSS has a one-time use of additional Chafee funds available to support the purchase of school uniforms and clothing. To be eligible to receive the one-time fund allowance, a youth must meet the following three requirements:

- Be between the ages 14-17 years old
- Be in foster care
- Be open for LINKS Services in the Services Information System (SIS)

Each county using these funds can provide up to \$500 per youth and the additional time-limited funds provided must be expended by September 30, 2022.

Alamance County DSS has 23 youth – allotment of \$11,500.00.

Ms. Lambert reported 18-21 LINKS program coordinator has started planning in-person events to be announced soon.

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

Ms. Hatfield reported the following:

Medicaid Transportation – We are now down to (1) PT-staff who is providing Medicaid Transportation services. The full-time employee of 20 years retired and we are in the process of interviewing for the position.

Public Health Emergency is slated to end October 13, 2022. The PHE ended for Special Assistance (SA) ended July 16, 2022 which now requires face-to-face interview as well as signed FL-2.

Ms. Pickard reported the following:

The Continuing Appropriations Act of 2021 and Families First Coronavirus Response Act allowed states the option to continue certain waivers that have been approved during the COVID. NC requested to extend the following waivers which have been approved for a period of three months (July, August and September 2022):

- Extend Six-Month Certification Period
- Waive Interview Requirements
- Telephone Signature Waiver
- Suspend Claims Activity
- Waive Fair Hearing Timeframes
- Extend Administrative Disqualification Hearing (ADH) Timeframes

We continue to provide refresher trainings for current staff in anticipation of the waivers ending

Ms. Roberts reported interviews continue in Economic Services. Applications continue to be slow and we have also experienced applicants not reporting for interviews.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of June 30, 2022

Vacancies	42
New Hires	3
Interagency Transfers	1
Resignations	6

Energy Programs: Danae Pickard

We are now experiencing staffing shortages in our Energy staff. We currently have Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) and Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) money available.

Child Care: Candice Gobble

- No report.

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

- We are currently working with supervisors to prepare staff to Telework. We have also created a system where Social Workers are able to dictate notes on phones and word processing can transcript.

Director's Report – Candice J. Gobble, Director–

Director Gobble announced we will send out the final report for Performance Management Report for FY 2022-23. There were 5 goals not met. Child Support goal showed not met for DSS standards, but met the goal for the State.

Action: Final Report will be emailed to Board Members this month.

Director Gobble reported abatement has been completed in Child Support unit since July 15, 2022. There were no issues – all is clean. We are hopeful Child Support will be able to transition back to their office spaces by next Monday. During the abatement process, they found issues on the 1st Floor (Health Department) as well and that work has been completed.

We are now offering staff – Hybrid work schedules coming soon. We

New Business:

Guardianship Presentation – Kailee Morrow, Adult Services Supervisor

Ms. Morrow gave brief background and presented the following:

What is Guardianship?

- Legal relationship in which a person(s) or agency (the guardian) is appointed by the court to make decisions and act on behalf of a person who does not have adequate capacity to make such decisions involving the management of personal affairs, property or both.
- A court process is required to create a guardianship
- NC G.S. 35A – governs our work specific to Guardianship

What is the Role of a Guardian?

A guardian is a surrogate decision maker and advocate for an individual (the ward) who has been adjudicated incompetent by the court. The guardian must allow the ward to participate as much as possible in the decisions affecting him or her. The guardian is required to preserve the opportunity for the ward to exercise the rights that are within his or her comprehension and judgement, allowing for the same possibility of error as a person who is not incompetent. The guardian must protect the ward's right to make his or her own choices.

The State has changed the terminology of ward to Persons Under Guardianship (PUG).

Principles of Guardianship –

- Guardianship should be considered only when less intrusive alternatives are not appropriate and it will give an individual a fuller capacity for exercising his or her rights.

- Guardianship should seek to preserve opportunities for the individual to exercise rights that are consistent with his or her capabilities, allowing for the possibility of error to the same degree as is allowed to persons who are not incompetent.
- A person under guardianship should be involved in **all decision making** consistent with his or her capabilities.

What is Capacity?

Capacity means that a person lacks a sufficient understanding or lacks the ability to make or communicate responsible decisions concerning his/her person.

- This includes but is not limited to provisions for health or mental health care, food, clothing or shelter because of physical or mental incapacity.
- This may be reasonably determined by the director or he/she may seek a physician's or psychologists' assistance in making this determination.

We always try to find family first and try to get holistic view. We do rely on the PCP from physician.

Question: Who is Director?

Answer: *DSS Director – Candice J. Gobble*

Question: Who gets the cases of those persons who make bad decisions regarding financial matters?

Answer: *Adult Protective Services Unit gets those cases and screen in reports. We go through the reports and recommend Rep Payee or POA (Guardian of the Person).*

What is Competency?

A person's competency consists of the level of mental and physical ability a person has in regards to their capability to adequately care for themselves in either or both of these capacities.

- It is important to know the extent of a person's needs to determine the course of action that needs to be taken.

Types of Guardianship –

- **Interim Guardian:** Temporary – short period of time – helps avoid imminent or foreseeable risk of harm to the person or their estate.
- **Guardian of the Person:** handles duties of care, custody and control (medical needs, clothing, etc.)
- **Guardian of the Estate:** manage the property, estate and business affairs (assets)
- **General Guardian:** a guardian of the person and the estate (encompasses both)

Each of these types of guardianship can be limited –

- The adult retains some rights that would have otherwise been lost during guardianship

- Limited guardianship is tailored to meet the needs of the incompetent adult

Our Role in the Community –

Guardianship Evaluations –

- Adult Protective Services Reports
- Hospital (local & state)
- The Clerk
- Community Partners (increase from the jail)

Adult Protective Services to Guardianship

Request from the community (removal and new appointment)

Provide oversight to assist new guardians in their role

Pop Quiz:

How many Persons under Guardianship does ACDSS currently serve?

- *131 as of July 25, 2022*

What is the age of the youngest and oldest adult that guardianship serves?

- *18 - up*

Guardianship Statistics:

We currently have 131 Persons Under Guardianship –

Age Range	# of Persons Under Guardianship
Between 18 – 25	6
Between 26 – 49	24
Between 50 – 64	32
Over 65	69

Currently our youngest P.U.G is 18 and the oldest is 106 (May 2022) – we have lost three P.U.G. this week who transitioned.

Activities Social Workers Assist In:

- Dental Appointments
- Medical and Mental Health Appointments
- End of Life Decisions
- Continuing Education/Obtaining a Trade (work very hard with Vocational Rehab and Alamance Community College)
- Social Activities – decreased due to COVID
- Persons Under Guardianship Holiday Event – the P.U.G are so excited at this time to receive gifts (we are hopeful we will go back to purchasing gifts instead of gift cards to ensure P.U.G receive the items they requested) –

Question: Do any of these individuals attend Friendship Center?

Answer: *Yes, if they are living at home they are able to attend Friendship. If they are in placement, they are not able to go to Friendship Day, but can attend other programs (there are not appropriate day programs for elderly individuals). Our younger P.U.G.'s that are in placement attend Country Club, Universal, Together House, and PSI.*

Adult Care Guardianship –

There are currently six Guardianship Social Workers -

- One SW takes all evaluations, APS to GSHIP, Clerk cases and manages a caseload of 10
- Five SW manage the remainder of the cases (ongoing cases)

Question: How many cases do the SW have who work the ongoing cases?

Answer: *26*

Question: What is the State mandated caseload?

Answer: *For Guardianship – the caseload is 30 MAX (30 is not a manageable number due to the complexities of the cases)*

For CAP – currently there is no mandated caseload. I have asked several times with our state consult and they have no number. However, both CAP Social Workers carry a caseload of 26 and it is becoming very difficult to keep up.

Announcements:

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding Community Presentation for Alamance County Commissioners – Educational series of DSS 101.

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, August 23, 2022** at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Suite C, Burlington NC – Education Rooms A & B located on 1st Floor.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date approved: _____
