

April 25, 2023

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at HSC Building (1st Floor) 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Ms. Heidi Norwick, Chair, DSS Board Chair; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Commissioner Craig S. Turner, DSS Board Member; Mr. Timothy Britt, DSS Board Member; DSS Board Member, Mrs. Tyronna Hooker; Ms. Candice Gobble, Director; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Jamie Hatfield, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Wendy Roberts, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager; Ms. Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director; Mr. Jason Cole, IT Director; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney and Ms. Kailee Morrow, Guardianship Supervisor were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda: Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair

March 2023 items on the consent agenda approved. Dr. Ernest Eason made motion to approve and seconded by Commissioner Craig Turner.

Oath of Office:

Ms. Carmen Morrow, Clerk to DSS Board administered Oath of Office to Mrs. Tyronna Hooker. Mrs. Tyronna Hookers term will expire June 2025.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble

	MARCH 2023	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$9,048,391.00	65%	\$10,461,016.00	73%
EXPENDITURES	\$14,616,262.00	56%	\$14,420,024.00	63%

Director Gobble reported on 3rd Quarter Financial Report –

Director Gobble announced Ms. Virginia Hunker has been named the Fiscal Officer for DSS. She will begin in June providing the fiscal report at board meetings.

Expenditures – YTD	Revenues – YTD
Budgeted: \$25,946,698.00	Projected: \$13,528,129.00
Expensed as of 3/31/2023: \$14,616,262.00 – 56%	Received as of 3/31/2023: \$9,048,391.00 – 67%

Trending:

- Daily Travel – 200%
- Unreimbursed APS – 340%- We received additional APS Essential Funds: \$17,888

Vaya Funds used in lieu of Unreimbursed DSS lines: \$163,389.00

Lapse Salary as of 3/31/2023	Comp Time costs as of 3/31/2023	Overtime Costs as of 3/31/2023	Contract Employee Payout as of 3/31/2023
\$1,505,638.00	\$78,475.02	\$23,894.65	\$211,647.08

% of County Funds Used as of 12/31/2022	APS Funding Maximization as of 3/31/2023	CPS Funding Maximization as of 3/31/2023	Funds used for Foster Care Kids w/o placement
38.15%	92.82%	91.48%	\$12,044.07

Fraud: See report –

Unit	March 2023	March 2022	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$838.00	\$5,636.23	\$28,999.00	\$63,605.66

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

Assistant Director Wellons reported Rebecca Lambert, Child Welfare Program Manager will return from maternity leave next week.

Assistant Director presented Board Members with the Alamance County Foster Care & Adoptions “It matters to this one” cooler as a token of appreciation.

Assistant Director Wellons reported on child welfare case of Foster Child who ran away 10 days ago – 17-year old female - she has now been located and we will open the “Blue Cottage” until placement can be secured for the child.

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: LaPorscha McCullough

No report.

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

Unit	March 2023	March 2022	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$1,093,264.55	\$788,655.02	\$7,967,579.17	\$7,569,330.35

Child Support –

No report.

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

Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager reported the State has started a Child Welfare Workforce Study regarding the Statewide turnover. Focus Groups have been created to start the process.

Question: When will the study be complete? Who is running the study?

[Answer: NCDHHS – North Carolina Division of Health and Human Services will conduct the study and there is no timeline to when the study will be complete.](#)

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

Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Program Manager reported on the Temp-to-Hire program with Prime Personnel. We currently have four temps on staff in Economic Services. We currently hired two temporary staff to FT from Energy to Economic Services.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of March 28, 2023

Vacancies	45
New Hires	8
Interagency Transfers	3
Resignations	5

Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director presented the following information:

Mr. Ring reached out to Social Services in surrounding counties and asked the following questions:

[**Is the starting salary for a position the same for an applicant that has experience in that field compared to an applicant that has no experience? Yes or No**](#)

County	Response
Chatham	No
Durham	No
Forsyth	No
Guilford	No
Orange	No

If there is an increase in starting salary for experience, how is that calculated?

County	Response
Chatham	1% for every year of direct applicable experience
Durham	No set calculation or formula. They look at the knowledge of the program, asking salary, recruiting difficulties of the position, etc.
Forsyth	Based on education + experience + internal equity
Guilford	Based on years of experience, established years to proficiency assigned to the position
Orange	Step Plan

Does your Agency utilize career ladders (financial stipends for specific duties)? Yes or No

County	Response
Chatham	Yes – they did not specify what types of career ladders
Durham	There is a 5% shift differential for after-hour work and on-call workers receive a stipend for their rotation.
Forsyth	No
Guilford	No
Orange	No

Do you have other financial stipends available to employees? Yes or No

County	Response
Chatham	No
Durham	No
Forsyth	No
Guilford	No
Orange	Bilingual

What type of increases have your employees received in the past three years?

County	Response
Chatham	Merit and COLA
Durham	COLA, longevity and standard performance review increases
Forsyth	Merit-based pay adjustments, pay plan adjustments due to Compensation Study, and merit increases based on performance appraisal
Guilford	Merit increases in 2020 and 2021. 5% increase for all benefitted employees in 2021. Compensation study completed in 2022 and benefitted employees received a minimum of a 3% increase.
Orange	3% COLA for 2022.

Mr. Ring reported on Reasons for Leaving stats from 2020 – 2022 –

Employed less than 2 years	82 Employees
• Other Employment	37
• No reason provided	18
• Environment	5
• Moving	4
• Stress	4
• Terminated	4
• Conflict	3
• School	3
• Family	2
• Personal	2

Employed 2 – 5 years	28 Employees
• Other Employment	14
• No reason provided	8
• Moving	1
• Stress	1
• Terminated	2
• Family	1
• Personal	1

Employed 5 – 10 years	8 Employees
• Other Employment	4
• No reason provided	2
• Moving	1
• Retirement	1

Employed 10+ years	2 Employees
• Conflict	1
• Retirement	1

2018	# of Positions	#of Separations	Turnover %	# of Vacancies	% of Vacancies
Agency	215	63	29.30%	20	9.30%
Child Welfare	54	19	35.19%	3	5.56%
Adult Services	22	4	18.18%	2	9.09%
Economic Services	72	28	38.89%	11	15.28%
Child Support	18	7	38.89%	3	16.67%
Other	49	5	10.20%	1	10.20%

2020	# of Positions	#of Separations	Turnover %	# of Vacancies	% of Vacancies
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Agency	231	50	21.65%	26	11.35%
Child Welfare	53	21	39.62%	6	11.32%
Adult Services	23	5	21.74%	1	4.35%
Economic Services	100	12	12.00%	13	13.00%
Child Support	18	6	33.33%	2	11.11%
Other	37	6	16.22%	4	11.43%

2021	# of Positions	#of Separations	Turnover %	# of Vacancies	% of Vacancies
Agency	232	88	37.93%	46	19.91%
Child Welfare	54	25	46.30%	10	18.18%
Adult Services	23	18	78.26%	1	4.35%
Economic Services	100	27	27.00%	32	32.00%
Child Support	18	12	66.67%	2	11.11%
Other	37	6	16.22%	2	5.71%

2022	# of Positions	#of Separations	Turnover %	# of Vacancies	% of Vacancies
Agency	225	69	30.67%	50	22.22%
Child Welfare	54	28	51.85%	16	29.09%
Adult Services	23	15	65.21%	7	30.43%
Economic Services	98	16	16.33%	25	25.51%
Child Support	18	7	38.90%	1	5.56%
Other	32	3	9.38%	1	9.68%

Child Care: Candice Gobble

No Report.

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

No report.

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

Director Gobble reported the Sign-On Bonus proposal from last month was denied. The proposal requested the consideration of offering sign-on bonuses to incoming employees for the following positions:

1. SW III
2. SW I/A&T
3. IMC II

Director Gobble reported there is no further information to report. Director Gobble reported the County Manager stated the focus is on salary increase not bonuses.

Question: Do you put salary ranges on your job postings?

We have requested with County HR to place on job postings in the past. There have many discussions regarding the ranges.

Director Gobble reported the following budget amendments will be on the Commissioners Agenda for May 15, 2023 meeting:

APS Essential Funds	• +\$17,887.60 funds
Energy Programs	
• Crisis Intervention Program (CIP)	• +\$37,414.00
• Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)	• -\$430,782.00
• Share the Warmth	• +\$1,068.61
• Low-Income Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)	• +\$260,177.00
• LIHWAP Program Administration	• +\$16,666.93

Director Gobble reported VAYA is on the County Commissioners Agenda as well. There may be conversations regarding the Statewide Plan for Child Welfare.

Director Gobble reported on PRTF located in Raeford, NC that was recently closed. All children have been removed from facility. There were four children from Alamance County.

New Business:

Adult Services Presentation – LaPorscha McCullough

Ms. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager introduced Ms. Kailee Morrow, Guardianship Supervisor who presented the following:

The Effects of Placement Disruption in Adults -

What is Facility Placement?

- Facility placement is a structured living environment that ensures the health, safety, and wellbeing of disabled or elderly adults.
- Individuals who require assistance with ADL’s and IADL’s (i.e. Assistance with Activities of Daily Living and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living), supervision, medication management, appointment scheduling, bathing, dressing, toileting, grooming, etc. may qualify for facility placement.
- There are different types of facility placements: Family Care Homes, Assisted Living Facilities, and Skilled Nursing Facilities.

Placement Disruption: Alamance County Stats:

As of April 2023 -

- Alamance County has 49 Family Care/Adult Care Homes
- Alamance County has 5 Skilled Nursing Homes

These facilities are regulated by the Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR) which is a part of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

Adult Care Homes do not include skilled level facilities (Nursing Homes) or Mental Health Group Homes.

Alamance County Social Services only monitors Adult Care Homes.

Family Care Homes:

- 2 to 6 beds
- Least Restrictive
- Normally a house or home converted into a family care home
- Residents must be able to ambulate out of the home on their own in case of fire
- Beds have to be made when a new child comes to placement at Blue Cottage. The Social Workers are responsible for stripping the beds and washing the linens.

Assisted Living Facilities:

- 7 to 100+ beds
- Often a “step up” from a family care home
- Residents are able to receive some assistance to get out of the home in case of fire
- These facilities are your Springview, Alamance House or Mebane Ridge

In 2018, Alamance County had 60 Adult Care Homes in Alamance County (currently there are 49 homes)

- Of the 11 facilities that closed over the past five (5) years, all of them accepted Medicaid recipients
- Eight (8) of those facilities accepted clients who were often “hard” placements
- When facilities close, they directly impact adult services dramatically, but more importantly the residents are affected.
- Some of the factors that contribute decline in placement:
 - COVID
 - Staffing (need of staff and the quality of staff)
 - Administrative Staff (Owners) are getting older
 - Inability to handle the care of the residents

Placement Disruption: Why? -

- Residents who have Medicaid are limited to options of facilities (Small amount of beds are set aside for Medicaid recipients)
- Extreme mental health behaviors –

- This requires more intervention and ultimately costing the County or the residents family to pay more for room/board
- Residents are left at the hospital until placement is found (30-day Discharge Notice)
- No funding source (not receiving Social Security, Disability, Unemployed)
- Communication between Administrators – the administrators discuss cases
- Family Preference
- Being private pay (No Special Assistance)
- Limited Special Care Units – (Dementia/Cognitive Units)

Placement Disruption: Adult Services Staff-

Staff: “All Hands-on Deck”

Hinders overall work performance

- Staff are pulled from regular task to support in assisting in finding placement.
- Staff are unable to complete regular task, thus placing client in jeopardy due to missing engagement opportunities.
- Creating opportunity for missed case initiations, follow-ups, and closing.
- Limits time needed for other cases
- Disruption in work/life balance
- Burnout

Case: Double A –

- 18-year old male
- Resided with his father, but his father was unable to meet his needs.
- APS (Adult Protective Services) report was submitted to DSS, APS evaluation conducted and Protective Order obtained.
- Diagnosis:
 - Type I Diabetes
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
 - Post-Traumatic Disorder
 - Seizure Disorder

Five placement disruptions during the last eight (8) months (August 2022 – April 2023)

- Four (4) different placements in one (1) month
- Approximately 12,000 minutes have been spent on Double A (Social Worker Time Only)
 - 200 worked hours
- \$130,000 in cost of care, medication, sitters, food and clothing fees have accrued (Respite Care)
- Double A has had 40 hospitalizations during these eight (8) months

- He is currently hospitalized as of today and DSS has applied for Disability (5 months pending)

How you can help:

- Funding:
 - Additional Adult Services Funding
- Staff:
 - Additional Adult Services Staff
- Legislature

Question/Answer Session:

Question: What is the payor source? Do they have Medicaid?

- *The payor source varies for each individual. The majority of Persons Under Guardianship have no income and DSS completes application for Medicaid for the individual. The application process takes up to 45 – 60 days for approval/denial.*

Question: Can facilities decide who they will take in the facility?

- *Yes – The provider completes FL2 form which indicates the medical issues of the individual and the facility will decide if they take them or not.*

Question: What drives a facility to have only certain Medicaid beds?

- *Facilities receive licensure from the NCDHHS and have to comply with Medicaid and provide some Medicaid beds. The private owned facilities determine who they allow to reside at their facilities.*

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, May 23, 2023** at DSS – Professional Board Room located on the 1st Floor at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:27pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date Approved: _____