

August 22, 2023

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at HSC Building (1<sup>st</sup> Floor) 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Ms. Heidi Norwick, Chair, DSS Board Chair; Commissioner Craig S. Turner, DSS Board Member; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candice Gobble, Director; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Virginia Hunker, Business Officer; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney; and Ms. Mary M. Shaw, SW were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

**Public Comment:**

None

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

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

**Staff Reports:**

**Fiscal: Ms. Virginia Hunker**

	<b>JULY 2023</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>	<b>PRIOR YTD</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>
REVENUES	\$146,686.00	1%	\$31,311.00	0%
EXPENDITURES	\$1,315,334.00	6%	\$1,409,505.00	7%

Ms. Hunker reported we are now reporting for new Fiscal year. The fiscal reports are a month behind – July services will be reimbursed in August.

Director Gobble reported coming in November 2023 – we will begin paying ½ of Room & Board for kinship placements within in Foster Care. Director Gobble informed Board Members we did not include in our initial budget. We estimate \$21k that could impact budget beginning in November.

Director Gobble reported we continue to monitor VAYA funds month to month.

**Fraud: See report –**

Unit	July 2023	July 2022	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$21,931.00	\$6,364.00	\$21,931.00	\$6,364.00

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

Assistant Director Wellons reported the following:

**Adult and Family Services -**

Adult Services is preparing for on-site audit for all services encompassed within Adult Services.

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

Unit	July 2023	July 2022	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$859,814.92	\$860,791.60	\$859,814.92	\$860,791.60

Child Support Unit completed the following events for Child Support Awareness Month:

- Handed out 168 backpacks for back-to-school event
- Child Support Proclamation presented at County Commissioners meeting
- Attending Child Support Annual Conference in Raleigh

**Child Welfare –**

Assistant Director Wellons reported Child Welfare gears up for back to school. We typically receive an influx of reports.

Assistant Director Wellons reported we continue to receive applications and interview for SW positions. We are receiving applications from more qualified individuals. We have new supervisor in Foster Care Unit who comes to Alamance from Guilford County.

Assistant Director Wellons announced Child Welfare will continue with Federal Audits in the month of August and September. In Home/Foster Care successfully completed MAC coding audit – no finding and no paybacks.

Assistant Director Wellons reported we will start back up with “Handle with Care” process once school starts. Assistant Director gave a brief history of the purpose and mission of Handle with Care.

**Economic Support: Ms. Danae Pickard**

Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director reported on the following:

### **Temp-to-Hire Program –**

- 12 temps working towards the goal of permanent hire
- 4 of these temps are at their contract hours or close to the 500 hours required; applied for permanent positions and interviews are being scheduled
- We are looking to pause temps with Prime Personnel and will be rolling out a posting for County PT hire – this would allow DSS to train staff to determine eligibility to meet the demands of our work. We are unable to train Prime temps to determine eligibility due to State merit requirement.

### **Program Updates -**

#### **Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) –**

- EBT Card Skimming has led to increase of stolen benefits. NC has finally received approval from USDA to reimburse some of stolen benefits. We used ARPA FNS funds to give small gift cards for Emergency Situations before the USDA approval. There are strict limits placed on the amount that can be replaced
- Fiscal Act – (This is the federal budget bill to avoid default on the debt ceiling)
  - Work requirements are increasing and some are being eliminated for some groups
  - The changes expected are to result in a net national increase in people eligible for SNAP benefits

#### **Medicaid –**

- We continue to wait for the State to pass the budget for Medicaid Expansion
- If passed by August 31, 2023 the timeline is still to go live October 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Energy –**

- LIHWAP (Water Program) – the State has approved one-time supplements for individuals who received this benefit in the past. The supplements should go out soon and paid out of ARPA balances at the State level.

#### **Fraud –**

- We promoted internally for supervisor for this unit (Brittany Duncan)

#### **Child Care –**

- We promoted internally for supervisor for this unit (Michelle Mendez)

## **Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble**

### **Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring**

See Statistical Report – as of July 31, 2023

<b>Vacancies</b>	37
<b>New Hires</b>	13
<b>Interagency Transfers</b>	1
<b>Resignations</b>	7

Director Gobble reported as of August 22, 2023 – we currently have 42 vacancies. We have 9 in the hiring process. Director Gobble we have added a new process of 3-month check-ins with new staff. They will meet with Program Managers at 3 months instead of Human Resources. We are hopeful this will create dialogue regarding training needs, etc.

Director Gobble added we have created a new goal for Performance Management that will track retention rates for each service area to identify trends to assist in targeting department improvements.

Director Gobble reported she has met with County Manager regarding the vacancies and lapse salary. Director Gobble agreed to share vacancy information monthly and status of hiring patterns to determine if positions will need to be added.

**Question: As we approach the 26 unfunded positions – what is the plan? Are the 26 positions identified?**

- *The plan is to meet with County Manager as we approach the threshold of the unfunded positions. And with Medicaid Expansion on the horizon, we will need more positions – not sure of how many? Yes – the positions are identified (SW III, SW I/A&T and IMC II).*

**Question: How much do we have in lapse salary?**

- *We have approximately \$110k.*

**Director’s Report – Candice J. Gobble, Director–**

Director Gobble reported she will continue to provide a “heads up” with County Manager as we get close to the number of the 26 unfunded positions.

Director Gobble reported we will continue to receive the 4% increase for the high turnover positions of SW I A&T, SW III and IMC II as discussed at July Board meeting.

Director Gobble discussed Medicaid Expansion process – Alamance County has approximately 11,000 citizens that could be impacted with benefits. There are 600,000 citizens statewide.

**Question: What is a timetable for Medicaid application?**

- *There is a 45-day application process for any Medicaid application – it takes at least 45 minutes with a client to gather information.*

Director Gobble announced at the September Board Meeting she and Assistant Director Wellons are scheduled for NCACDSS Personnel Conference and will not be able to attend September Board Meeting. Director Gobble asked Board Members if they would like to move date or if Danae Pickard, Economic Services Director will be able to facilitate the meeting.

*Action: DSS Board Members voted to continue with the regularly scheduled September meeting with Danae Pickard facilitating.*

## **New Business:**

### **Trauma Informed Journey – Mary McGinty Shaw, CW Trauma Specialist**

Ms. McGinty Shaw presented the following:

#### **What WE Know?**

- Effects Everyone
- An Event, Series of Events, Set of Circumstances (Toxic Stress)
- Trauma Impacts Development
- We all Age
- DSS Soothes & Generates Trauma

#### **Weight Loss & Trauma – 1998 & 2010 Adverse Childhood Experiences**

This was a collaboration between Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kaiser Permanente HMO in California.

This was the largest study ever that determined both the prevalence of traumatic life experiences in the first 18 years of life and the impacts on later well-being, social function, health risks, disease burden, health care costs and life expectancy 17,000 adult members of Kaiser Permanente participated.

The study focuses solely on prevalence of ACEs in a population-based representative sample from multiple states stratified by demographic characteristics, including sex, age, education and race/ethnicity. There were 26,229 adults surveyed.

#### **What WE Learned:**

- Trauma Impacts EVERYONE
- An Event, Series of Events, Set of Circumstances Triggers are REAL
- “What happened to you?”

By 2015, ACDSS were becoming more aware of the ACE studies information and became apparent as to be prevalence of Trauma, the impact of trauma on health & well-being outcomes along with the cost of trauma to communities and countries.

ACES studies were replicated in 5 different states via the CDC and Health Departments with correlating outcomes in 2010, it began to really shift our understanding of people and how we looked at and understood trauma.

WE really began to understand that even though trauma is part of our shared human experience, it's also a very individualized experience. We decided to come from a strength based, non-judgmental, un-biased position and asked "What happened to you"? and listen.

Since that time DSS invested in educating staff on trauma and its impact along with look at our programs, protocols to see how and where they needed adjusting to operate from a trauma informed perspective.

### **2015 – DSS Trauma Informed Agency**

To begin the process, we developed and completed an agency wide trauma informed assessment following an All Staff Kickoff, which began educating staff on the 4R's of being trauma informed:

1. **Realize** - the prevalence of trauma, along with the different kinds of trauma and to realize the impact of trauma developmentally, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually or existentially
2. **Recognize** – how the impact of trauma within individuals, groups of people and families. Helps us to recognize the impact and symptoms trauma has on the here & now in each of our professional encounters.
3. **Respond** – discuss alternative strategies to adjust work processes to respond to trauma's impacts as they work alongside individuals. We also raise staff awareness as to the prevalence of trauma within our service delivery systems and to challenge staff to identify and take steps, when possible, to avoid RETRAUMATIZING the persons we serve.
4. **Resist** -

These 4R's have become the mainstay of our on-going staff training and conversations.

### **Key Principles:**

1. **Safety** – Trauma disrupts Sense of Safety; Trauma is opposite of Safety of Customers, Community & Staff.
2. **Trustworthiness & Transparency** – When providing services to the community, we're serving people who have experience with relational trauma.
3. **Peer Support** – Increases empowerment, connections & safety. Decreases aloneness, isolation, weightiness and parallel process – support, empathy and successes.
4. **Collaboration & Mutuality** – This principle is more related to addressing the power dynamics between customers, workers, direct staff and management. This is where we began/begin forging mutual relationships with collaborations and co-creating processed, coming together with respect and both individual and group agency. (We changed our dress code, goals of reflecting & explaining versus correcting & directing and CFTs)
5. **Empowerment, Voice & Choice** – This principle addresses listening, giving choices and highlighting autonomy.

6. **Cultural, Historical & Gender Issues** – This final principle is about respecting and acknowledging difference in issues related to culture, history, gender, race, sexuality and all the other socially ascribed marginalized identifies.

At DSS, we changed our lobbies to become Trauma Informed Agency. We placed seats against the wall, added new children area, removed County seals from our agency vehicles, etc.

**We're Here to Help:**

**Contact:**

Mary McGinty Shaw, MA  
Child Welfare Clinical Services/Trauma Specialist  
Office: 336-229-3854  
Cell: 336-516-4303

Member: Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers  
Committed to Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC Infant & Toddler)  
Motivational Interviewing, Triple P – Level 4, Awkward to Awesome & The Coordination of our Trauma Informed Agency efforts.

**Announcements:**

None

**Adjournment -**

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, September 26, 2023** at DSS – Professional Board Room located on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Carmen L. Morrow*

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Date Approved: 9/26/2023