

July 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; Commissioner Craig S. Turner, DSS Board Member; Mrs. Tyronna Hooker, 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; Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director; Ms. Virginia Hunker, Business Officer; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney; Ms. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager and Willie Smith, Child Support Supervisor were present.

Heidi Norwick, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda: Heidi Norwick, DSS Board Chair

May 2023 items on the consent agenda approved. Dr. Ernest Eason made motion to approve and seconded by Mr. Timothy Britt.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Virginia Hunker

| | MAY 2023 | % OF BUDGET | PRIOR YTD | % OF BUDGET |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| REVENUES | \$11,606,300.00 | 84% | \$12,577,445.84 | 87% |
| EXPENDITURES | \$18,224,420.00 | 70% | \$18,667,061.45 | 79% |

Discussions ensued regarding end of year spending with Expenditures and Revenues. We are aware of the overspending in two specific line items:

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------|----------|------|----------|-------|
| 431200 DAILY TRAVEL | \$5,500 | \$13,865 | 252% | -\$8,365 | -152% |
|---------------------|---------|----------|------|----------|-------|

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|------------------------------|----------|-----------|------|------------|-------|
| 497420 UNREIM APS & INDIGENT | \$85,000 | \$310,267 | 365% | -\$225,267 | -265% |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|------|------------|-------|

Director Gobble added we are looking to increase the line item for APS Services to support the overspending. We continue to maximize MAC coding to maximize services.

Director Gobble expressed Daily Travel is over spent due to contract staff are not allowed to drive agency vehicles due to insurance criteria.

Fraud: See report –

| Unit | May 2023 | May 2022 | Current YTD | Prior Fiscal Year |
|-------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Fraud | \$3,090.00 | \$1,938.62 | \$33,648.00 | \$66,862.48 |

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

Assistant Director Wellons reported the following:

Adult and Family Services -

Adult Services recently celebrated “World Elder Abuse” Day. DSS Board Members received Elder Abuse Awareness bags. The theme for this year: “The Power of Purple”:

- (P) – Prevention through Preparation
- (O) – Observation and awareness
- (W) – Work Collaboratively
- (E) – Education for Empowerment
- (R) – Report and Respond

Adult Services hosted an “World Elder Abuse” Event for staff on June 15, 2023. Educational resources and tools specific to APS, Guardianship and Adult Services were provided with popcorn, games, etc. The team also hosted a “Christmas in July” sign-up sheet for Persons Under Guardianship to sign up to foster a person under guardianship for Christmas this year.

For the Month of May – ACDSS received 88 reports alleging abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. The YTD:

| |
|----------------------------------|
| • 823 reports received |
| • 549 reports screened-in |
| • 140 Persons Under Guardianship |

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

| Unit | May 2023 | May 2022 | Current YTD | Prior Fiscal Year |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Child Support | \$975,480.89 | \$1,010,716.92 | \$9,812,955.59 | \$14,936,525.27 |

Child Welfare –

Assistant Director Wellons reported Child Welfare Work Study headed by State started two weeks ago. We have submitted a random sample – certain timeframes to respond.

Effective July 1, 2023 – Regional Abuse Medical Specialist will be assigned to Alamance County for child abuse criteria cases. This is mandatory for all 100 counties. This person will be available 24 hrs./7 days a week for staff to staff an abuse/neglect case. The criteria for all abuse cases for child under 3.

Economic Support: Ms. Danae Pickard

Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director reported on the Temp-to-Hire program with Prime Personnel. We currently have five temps on staff in Economic Services. We currently hired four temporary staff to FT from the program. We have three new temporary staff who started in June. We continue to interview for IMC II positions – we currently have 21 vacancies and 7 new staff are in the hiring process.

Ms. Pickard reported we have filled the two vacancies for Economic Services Program Managers with experienced staff: Ms. Michelle Poole and Ms. Katrina Jackson. They both have extensive backgrounds in Economic Services and Child Care.

Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of May 31, 2023

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| Vacancies | 42 |
| New Hires | 7 |
| Interagency Transfers | 2 |
| Resignations | 7 |

Mr. Ring reported since May 1, 2023 – we received 296 applications (160 qualified, 49 interviews and 17 hired).

As of June 27, 2023 – we currently have 39 vacancies.

Director Gobble reported she has met with County Manager York regarding coordination of meeting to discuss postings. Meeting to be determined.

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

Director Gobble reported on approved budget. She recently met with County Manager to discuss DSS portion of the approved budget. The County Commissioners approved 4:1 to approved the budget. The following was approved:

- The property tax rate will be 43.2 cents per \$100 of valuation, this is a decrease of 21.8 cents from the current tax rate
- Capital spending for county facilities increased to \$1.6M
- *All County Employees will receive a 4% Cost of Living Adjustment on July 1*

- *The Pay-for-Performance/Merit Pay has increased to a potential 3% for exemplary performers*
- The Compensation Study for market pay will be implemented on the first 1/3 of the employees (to be determined) on November 1 at a cost of \$889,000
- No positions were cut nor were any new positions added

Director Gobble reported she recently met with County Manager York to discuss the cost savings in the budget for DSS. As of July 1, DSS has 12% unfunded positions – we have 224 FT positions with 55 vacancies = 26 positions unfunded.

Director Gobble reported when we get close to 30 vacancies we will need to contact Graham to go back to County Commissioners for permission to utilize the unfunded positions.

Director Gobble reported on Medicaid Expansion. We will submit two budget amendments in July for County Commissioners meeting. We have received notification that NCDHHS has provided front load funding to offset counties administrative costs associated with implementing expansion. The funding will be allocated in one-time lump sum payment. The allocation will be \$130,377.68.

Director Gobble reported NCDHHS has identified funding for a second straight fiscal year to fill the gap created by the anticipated decrease in federal Medicaid match available to local DSS agencies as a result of the reclassification of certain expenditures for 75/25 to 50/50 federal county share. The allocation received to offset the county costs for Medicaid claiming is \$420,938.84. Economic Services are uncapped funding services – all other services are capped.

Director Gobble reminded board members once we are able to hire Medicaid expansion staff we will get reimbursement of 100% for staff. Currently we are not hiring staff specifically for Medicaid Expansion, but we will be able to utilize the funds for equipment and/or supplies. We have until 2026 to utilize these funds.

Director Gobble reported the State still has not released any Medicaid Expansion policies as of yet. We will begin the process of training all staff in NC FAST due to certification will have to be completed before any applications can be processed.

Question: How many staff can you hire with \$550k?

We could possibly hire 6 staff (Supervisor, Trainer and 4 IMC II). We will need to spend the money, if not, we will have to return to the State.

Question: Will there be an education piece for the County in regards to Medicaid Expansion?

We can definitely work on training – we currently have terminals set up in the building to help customers complete applications. We have worked with the Library and continue to do outreach within the community.

Question: School is out – what's the status of the blue cottage?

We currently have no children in the blue cottage.

Question: With 224 FT positions and 26 unfunded – how will you go about hiring?

When we get to 13, we will need to request the County to go before the Commissioners.

Question: Do we still do Employee Appreciation events for staff?

We recently hosted a Juneteenth Event with Alamance Co. Health Department. We hosted a County Government breakfast for staff and Director Gobble hosts monthly birthday events for all staff “Cake with Candice”. There is no budget for any employee events – all events are paid for by Management and Leadership Team staff.

Tim Britt, DSS Board Member asked his fellow board members if they would be willing to host an employee appreciation event in the near future. Board Members agreed!

New Business:

Energy Programs Outreach Plan – Danae Pickard

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded block grant program that is comprised of three different programs:

1. Crisis Intervention Program (CIP)
2. Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)
3. Weatherization

These are also non-federal Crisis Intervention Programs: Energy Neighbor, Share the Warmth, Wake Electric Round Up and Helping Each Member Cope.

To maximize the success of this program, outreach to County residents through key community partner stakeholders, each county department of social services is required to develop and implement an Energy Program Outreach Plan (EPOP). This plan is a framework to assure that eligible households are made aware of the assistance available through these programs.

Each county must have an outreach planning committee that creates the opportunity for county level collaboration to discuss and plan how to effectively reach county residents to inform them of the services provided by the energy programs. The committee must meet at least twice yearly; September for outreach planning related to LIEAP and April to review the outcomes related to LIEAP and to plan for outreach activities for summer weather.

Alamance Co. Committee Membership consists of the following partners:

- Salvation Army
- Allied Churches
- Burlington Housing Authority
- Alamance County Library
- Centro La Comunidad
- Meals on Wheels
- United Way (added)

The Committee will address the following:

- Explanation of Programs
- Identify Outreach Activities related to Elderly, Disabled and Children Under 5 population
- Identify Off-site application locations
- Increase Community Awareness of all energy programs
- Eligibility Criteria
- Referrals
- Marketing Tools

Media Outlets that will be used to promote:

- Burlington Times News
- Alamance News
- Mebane Enterprise
- Spectrum News

Question: Share the Warmth – Is this program a part of the energy programs?

Yes – Share the Warmth is funded by donations from the community. The amount of funding increased last year, but we typically exhaust these funds quickly.

Action: Board Member Tyronna Hooker made motion to approve with revision and seconded by Board Member Dr. Ernest Eason. Board Members unanimously approved this plan with revision to add United Way of Alamance County as a community partner.

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, July 25, 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 1:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date Approved: _____