

November 22, 2022

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at United Way, 220 E. Front Street, Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Ms. Heidi Norwick, Chair, DSS Board Chair; Dr. Ernest Eason, DSS Board Member; Commissioner Pamela T. Thompson, DSS Board Member; Ms. Maria Hernandez, Vice-Chair; Ms. Candice Gobble, Director; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Jamie Hatfield, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Wendy Roberts, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Program Manager; Ms. LaPorscha McCullough, Adult Services Program Manager; Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director; Ms. Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager; Mr. Jason Cole, IT Director; Ms. Rebecca Lambert, Child Welfare Program Manager; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, Attorney and Commissioner Craig Turner 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 Maria Hernandez, Vice-Chair.

Chair Heidi Norwick announced to DSS Board members that Board Member Krista Knight has submitted her resignation from Alamance County Social Services Board due to potential conflict of interest. Ms. Knight thanked the board for the opportunity.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Ms. Candice Gobble

	OCTOBER 2022	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$3,120,768.00	26%	\$4,785,662.00	38%
EXPENDITURES	\$6,518,152.00	37%	\$5,753,570.00	25%

Director Gobble reported the 75/25 Medicaid Impact claim currently remains in the \$60k range. The State has agreed to bridge funding for the remainder of the FY.

Fraud: See report –

Unit	October 2022	October 2021	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$2,578.00	\$5,807.37	\$19,223.34	\$35,284.80

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

Adult and Family Services Program Manager: LaPorscha McCullough

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

Unit	October 2022	October 2021	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$835,720.00	\$845,851.35	\$3,480,405.02	\$3,496,739.38

Child Support –

Ms. McCullough reported there is one vacancy (supervisor position) in Child Support.

Adult Services –

Ms. McCullough reported Adult Services has the following vacancies:

- Adult Home Specialist – (1) supervisor and (1) staff
- Adult Protective Services – we are in the hiring process –
- Adult Services – we hired four new staff for a team of six – these staff are currently training. The training process spans to three to six months.

We currently have both supervisors who are working in the field to keep up with cases.

Ms. McCullough reported we are now in the Christmas Season for our P.U.G – Persons Under Guardianship. We have launched the email to the community for donations to purchase gift items for one of the persons under guardianship. If you are interested in giving, please see Ms. McCullough or Carmen Morrow.

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

Ms. Cole reported Child Welfare Supervisors continue to be in rotation to ensure cases are being worked. We currently have four assessors in rotation – all new staff will have to complete pre-service training before can work a case.

Ms. Cole reported we had two veteran supervisors resign this month due to the demanding caseloads and workloads. They both had over 10 years with Alamance Co. DSS. This is a huge loss to Child Welfare Unit. We are currently working with Vanguard Temporary Services to contract staff. It has been difficult to hire with Guilford Co. receiving \$7k pay increase.

Ms. Lambert reported we are gearing up for our annual Foster Care Holiday Celebration. We currently have 108 children in custody.

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

Ms. Hatfield reported we currently have 20 vacancies in the Economic Services unit. It's been very challenging with hiring. We continue to receive a small amount of job applications. The supervisors have revamped the interview questions and the interview process.

Ms. Hatfield reported we are in the middle of the FFM (Federally Facilitated Marketplace) Open Enrollment which has increased our applications for Medicaid.

Ms. Pickard reported we continue to see increase in Food & Nutrition applications. We continue to strategize for the end of the PHE (Public Health Emergency) as it will affect how we conduct business in Economic Services. We are not sure when the PHE will end.

Ms. Pickard reported the Low-Income Energy Assistance (LIEAP) Program will start on December 1, 2022 for customers over the age of 60 and/or disabled adults. We have seen an increase in applications for the Low-Income Water Assistance program as well as the Crisis Intervention Program. The State will roll out new payment portal for Energy payments. The State continues to meet with vendors and currently there are only 16 vendors registered with the new payment portal. Alamance County has 30 vendors.

Ms. Roberts reported we continue to gear up training materials for Economic Services staff with the PHE coming to an end. All Economic Services staff will need to be retrained with policies.

Operations – Ms. Candice Gobble, Assistant Director of Operations

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of October 31, 2022

Vacancies	42
New Hires	12
Interagency Transfers	2
Resignations	5

As of November 22, 2022, we have the following vacancies: 46 (22% of vacancy rate)

As of September 2022, we received 292 applications. Out of the 292, 167 were qualified by OSHR.

50 of the applicants were contacted:

- 3 – no response
- 3 – cancelled
- 1 – no showed
- 1 – declined

42 of the applicants were interviewed:

- 21 were offered job at Social Services
 - ✓ 13 started employed at DSS
 - ✓ 3 will start after Thanksgiving

- ✓ 3 will start in December
- ✓ 1 rescinded job offer
- ✓ 1 declined job offer

Question: Did the pay raise help at all to hire new staff?

It did get Alamance Co. DSS in the ball park when hiring; however, other Counties have increased the pay and bonuses which takes us back to where we were before the pay raise.

Director Gobble added she met with County Manager, Heidi York regarding to have the ability to negotiate pay for experienced staff willing to come to Alamance Co. DSS. The County Manager agreed.

Child Care: Candice Gobble

No Report.

IT Report: Mr. Jason Cole

Mr. Cole reported the County has added their own Learning Management System to offer training for staff. Alamance Co. DSS will utilize this system as well.

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

Director Gobble reported on the recent State NC FAST outage that occurred on October 13, 2022, the Division of Child & Family Well-Being (DCFW) approved FNS payments to be sent directly for our EBT vendor for cases with issuance date of October 14, 2022. This was done to ensure that clients FNS benefits were not impacted despite the challenges with the system outage. All these FNS payments were based on September allotment amount regardless of their case status. Once the system was available on October 16, 2022, NC FAST updated and reassessed these cases to reconcile the payments made through the EBT vendor system.

During this process, there some FNS cases that received an additional prorated September allotment as well as their normal October month allotment which caused the cases to be overpaid. These FNS overpayments are a result of a system error and will be considered State Agency Error (AE) claims. According to FNS policy, agency error claims are federal debts and must be collected.

Our Fraud Investigators will begin to work reports for those cases who received over issuances. The claims will be based on overpayment period from 09/01/2022 – 09/30/2022. The benefit issuance date is 10/15/2022 for most cases.

Director Gobble reported the Director's Association trying to figure out the cost of Medicaid Expansion for Counties. If Expansion occurs this will impact Alamance Co. DSS – staffing patterns will increase as well as technology needs, etc. We will need 8 new staff. The estimated costs for Alamance County will be \$600k if Medicaid Expansion is approved.

Director Gobble added Medicaid services creates at 75% reimbursement rate for all cases.

New Business:

Adult Home Specialist: Scott Hunsaker

Mr. Scott Hunsaker, Adult Home Specialist Supervisor presented the following:

Adult Care Homes in Alamance County -

Adult Care Homes are assisted living facilities licensed by the Division of Health Service Regulation are enrolled by NC Medicaid as a provider of basic or enhanced person care services and non-emergency medical transportation.

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

Alamance County has 50 Adult Care Homes – the breakdown is as follows:

- 32 – Family Care Homes
- 18 – Assisted Living Facilities
- 3 – Adult Daycare Programs

All 50 Adult Care Homes are monitored by Adult Home Specialists, who are Social Workers trained by the State. The training is provided by the Division of Health Service Regulation.

Adult Care Homes are divided into two categories depending upon their size:

Family Care Homes	Assisting Living Facilities
2 to 6 beds	7 to 100+ beds
Least restrictive	Often a “step up” from a Family Care Home
Normally a house or home converted into a facility	Residents are able to receive some assistance to get out of the facility in case of a fire
Residents must be able to ambulate out of the home on their own in a case of fire	

Division of Health Service Regulation -

DHS oversees medical, mental health and adult care facilities, emergency medical services and local jails. DHS check to see that people are receiving care in these facilities are safe and receive appropriate care.

Adult Home Specialist –

- Monitor the facilities in all areas of regulation
- Investigate all complaints received by DHSR or Alamance County DSS
- Provide support and consultation in reference to the Resident Bill of Rights

- Alamance County DSS employs 2 AHS who monitors all 50 homes on a quarterly basis and investigate all complaints.

Resident Bill of Rights – Policies/Procedures – Regulations –

- Adult Home Specialists use all of these to address issues & complaints in adult care facilities throughout the county.
- Adult Home Specialists must know & understand the regulations and resident bill of rights as it pertains to adult care homes.
- Adult Home Specialists have the ability to cite facilities when they are not following regulations or if they substantiate a complaint allegation

Monitoring Facilities –

- Personal Care/Supervision
- Medications
- Food & Nutrition
- Staff Qualifications
- Staffing
- Personal Spending
- Housekeeping
- Resident Rights

Complaint and Death Investigations in Facilities –

- Both complaints and death investigations can come from the State or the County level
- Adult Home Specialists are given 60 days to complete investigation
- Adult Home Specialists use observations, interviews and record reviews to investigate the complaints and/or death investigation
- Depending upon the findings, a facility can be cited for violating regulations or the Resident Bill of Rights
- There are four types of violations: Type A, Type A2, Type B and Standard Violation
- The Adult Care Licensure Section will impose financial penalties if violations are not corrected over a 30-day period
- License suspension and revocation of license can also be imposed depending upon the violations

Level of Violations:

- "Type A1 Violation" means a violation by a facility of applicable laws and regulations governing a facility which results in death or serious physical harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a resident.
- "Type A2 Violation" means a violation by a facility of applicable laws and regulations governing the licensure of a facility which results in substantial risk that death or serious physical harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation will occur.
- A "Type B" violation means a violation by a facility of applicable laws and regulations governing a facility which is detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of any resident,

but which does not result in substantial risk that death or serious physical harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation will occur.

How do I make a complaint?

- NC Division of Health Service Regulation Complaint Intake Unit – 1-800-624-3004 or 919-855-4500
- An Intake Form can also be faxed or mailed to the complaint intake unit
- For all Alamance County complaints – please call DSS Intake Unit at (336) 229-2908 and/or contact Scott Hunsaker at (336) 513-4762

Question: With only 2 AHS staff – how do you monitor all 50 facilities?

The facilities are split evenly between the two staff (25 each) – we monitor them 4x a year. We normally cite for food & nutrition issues.

Question: How many investigations do you normally conduct?

In Alamance County, we average about 3 – 4 complaints a month.

Question: Do you participate and meet with Ombudsmen?

Yes

Announcements:

Happy Holidays from DSS Board.

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, January 24, 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.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date approved: _____