

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2019**

Board Members Present

**Mr. Richard Wagner; Mrs. Karen Watford; Mrs. Jane Murphy;
Mr. Todd Yates; Ms. Minnie Dukes**

Others in Attendance

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Mrs. Elizabeth Huff; Mrs. Susan Craig;
Ms. Katrina McMasters; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Ms. Sheri Woodyard; Mr. Casey Smith**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Mr. Richard Wagner. An invocation was offered by Mr. Wagner.

Oath of Office

Ms. Minnie Dukes was sworn in on the Davidson County Board of Social Services. Mr. Keith Bidy from the County Attorney's office presided over the giving of the Oath of Office. Ms. Dukes was welcomed to the Board by Chairman Wagner.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Moorefield asked that the agenda be amended by having the Closed Session removed and asked that DSS Director Recruitment Item H.2. and PBB Bonuses as H.3 be added. Old Business G.2. will include a follow up provided by Mr. Casey Smith to the Pay Study discussed at the August Meeting.

Mr. Todd Yates made a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Mrs. Karen Watford seconded the motion. The amended Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Todd Yates made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2019 meeting. Mrs. Karen Watford seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address. Mr. Moorefield took an opportunity to introduce our new Board Member, Minnie Dukes and have those present introduce themselves.

Management Report

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick provided the expenditure report for expenses as of August 31, 2019. Seventeen percent into the fiscal year the Department has expended 12% of the total budget compared to 13% for the same period a year ago. Areas of overspending were reviewed. The budget amendment presented at the last meeting was approved at the September 10, 2019 Board of Commissioner's Meeting and IT Director, Joel Hartley, has ordered desktop computers to replace the virtual units.

Mr. Dale Moorefield shared the vacancy report. There are a total of 15 vacancies on the report; however, offers have been accepted for some positions and there 10 vacancies as of today. Director Moorefield discussed the filled positions. An offer was made for the full-time CSST position; however, the applicant declined the offer. Mr. Moorefield shared that we have recently had more quality applicants and he has been pleased with the applicant pool in the Services area. Some employees have left recently due to higher pay in surrounding counties.

Ms. Elizabeth Huff gave the Medicaid/Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)/Fraud report. She explained that second party reviews of work and case actions determine accuracy scores and this helps to identify trends prior to audits. Processing and accuracy rates are above the standard set. The State's Cohen v. Hankins lawsuit is causing timeliness issues with completing Medicaid recertifications. Overtime has been approved for the Medicaid Review Unit to help with processing recertifications due to the workload and vacancies in the unit. Position shifts have taken place to assist with these workloads. July FNS applications increased and this directly correlates with the increased benefits seen for August. Claims and reimbursements in the Program Integrity area are staying about the same each month, until tax intercepts begin again in early 2020.

Ms. Huff shared that the Work First Family Assistance Program (WFFA) applications dropped for August while other statistics remained steady. They were able to help two individuals gain employment and approved one Benefit Diversion. No participation rate was available in July from the State and we are at thirty-three percent participation rate for all parent cases.

Ms. Huff shared that we are at an 85% spending coefficient for Child Care Subsidy; however, the County continues to be on a statewide freeze/mandatory waiting list due to the State spending coefficient being over 100%. There are currently 899 children being served and 330 on the waiting list as of the end of July for our County. The number of daycare centers and registered homes on our report represent the number of providers Davidson County pays with subsidy funds, not the number of centers in the County. Day Care vouchers are not accepted by all day care providers in the County.

Emergency Financial Programs were reviewed by Mrs. Huff. General Assistance funds have not been used to date. This fund is all county money; however, the Agency sets aside \$17,000 annually for use. Uses for this fund were shared with the Board. Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) funds are used for heating and cooling emergencies and when used during a time when temperatures are not life threatening, the need must be related to a medically related crisis. The spending decreased during August, which is most likely due to temperature

declines. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) will begin in a few months. AFDC-Emergency Assistance was also explained to the Board.

Mr. Scott Craver shared the Child Support Collections report. At the end of the day, the amount collected is what Child Support is all about as we strive to promote monetary support for our children in Davidson County. The State establishes five goals for Child Support. The numbers of cases have remained steady. Child Support has two units; one in Lexington and one in Thomasville. Collection on Arrears is for past due money and is a cumulative total for each month on the report. Court procedures were also discussed.

Ms. Katrina McMasters shared the Child Protective Services (CPS) Report. CPS has 6 units and includes intake to services. 208 reports were received for the month of August; 52 of these reports were not accepted due to not meeting established criteria. Family Outreach procedures were shared. Physical and sexual abuse cases are investigated by the forensics unit, which operates at our satellite office at Family Services of Davidson County. The Dependency category is the children that do not have a parent or other caretaker willing and able to care for them. The teams closed 88 cases during the month of August. Ms. McMasters shared that approximately 85% of CPS cases are related to the drug epidemic and most of the remainder are mental health related; both of which are more complex and require more worker time to navigate with families through the issues. The teams are currently working on assessments for a total of 233 children and monitoring 11 cases for other counties.

Mrs. Susan Craig provided an update for Permanency Planning. There are 192 children currently in care/in custody of Davidson DSS. The youth who receive LINKS services are children who are no longer in DSS custody and this fund helps children to gain independent living skills. Most of the children in DSS custody are in foster or adoptive homes. Thirty-three of the 34 children in facilities are due to mental health problems. The numbers of parents with severe mental health issues have increased greatly over the past 6 months. We have 17 children awaiting adoption. Some children are on the NC Kids site and this site is used to recruit adoptive parents. 380 children are currently receiving adoption assistance funding at this time and close to half of the children in agency custody are under 5 years old.

Mrs. Craig shared that Adult Protective Services received 28 reports in August and we have 87 adult wards currently in DSS Custody/Guardianship. There are a high number of wards who receive mental health services. This area also helps to connect families with resources and monitors facilities in our County. The Agency is responsible for paying cremation expenses for unclaimed bodies and we have 10 days to make a determination. Mr. Moorefield shared the demographic change from when he first started serving as Director in Davidson County. In 2010, there were 23 adult wards who largely had outlived their families and the Director was their guardian; whereas now more mental health or substance abuse issues have created an increase in the number of adults assigned to DSS Guardianship.

Discussion was held regarding an undocumented child in Permanency Planning as well.

Old Business

Social Worker III Work Against

At the end of fiscal year 2017, the County Manager and Human Resource Director at that time had given approval for Social Worker III's in Permanency Planning/Adult Services and CPS to be at the same pay due to the difficulty of decisions warranting the same pay grade. In early June of 2019, County HR informed us that this was not intended to be a permanent change.

Mr. Casey Smith interjected that this needs to go to the Board of Commissioners, but first he needs to review both job descriptions and discuss with Mrs. Cashion, HR Director. The SW III positions in Permanency Planning and APS are at a pay grade 69 and the Social Worker I/A/T positions are at grade 70. There are approximately 25 employees that could possibly be affected. Mr. Smith suggested that the Agency complete a list of filled and vacant position numbers in the Social Work III job class along with a business explanation. DSS would need to originate the request back to HR and County Management and directed the Director to go back through HR where he began months ago. Assistant County Manager Casey Smith indicated he would need to look at who is currently above minimum. The goal is for all social workers at SWIII and CPS I/A/T to be equivalent to the same pay grade of 70 as their responsibilities and decisions rendered are similar; and this can give DSS recruitment advantage moving forward.

Employee Pay

Mr. Casey Smith gave an Employee Pay presentation in follow up to the pay study discussions at the August DSS Board meeting. 1/5 - 1/10 has not been given since 2005 which on average was a 4% increase. In 2006, the County started "straight" pay raises, such as 2%, 3%, etc. The minimums of the salary grades also increased by the same percent of the raise given. Our County employees saw three years with no increases at all. Raises started again in 2013, giving 2%; in 2014, 1.5% was given as well as in 2015. In 2016, the County began giving \$500 to each employee plus the 1.5% increase to deal with salary compression for ongoing staff. This began the process of slowing down salary compression. On a horizontal plane, the \$500 is the only thing helping to keep a distance from the bottom of the scale for employees. The 1/5-1/10 pay increase module moves employee pay up quickly in the first 5 years, then it slows down after year 5 when the employee would begin receiving 1/10 and it also costs the County more than a flat percentage. If flat percentages were used, the employee would meet mid-point around year 15, then a maximum pay in the last 5 years of a 30-year career.

Mr. Smith addressed employee health insurance specifically and the costs involved for each employee that the County pays. Much of the increase in health insurance has been taken care of by the County in recent years, and not been passed along to employees who have seen minimal increased cost for their coverage. Each person adds 30% more in benefits for insurance alone. The next steps are to continue discussions in February at the BOCC Budget Workshop. Any changes to pay grades and raises would be across the board for the County.

Mr. Smith also shared that there is a misunderstanding of wellness discounts stopping. They are not stopping, but are being done differently. The County runs a \$12 million insurance fund. Case management for insurance is run through BCBS. Mr. Smith shared that while we have provided incentives, claims have increased.

Mr. Wagner clarified that the DSS Board is not responsible for approving pay increases and can only make recommendations.

New Business

Record Destruction

We have 552 out of date Child Welfare Services records, 24 Foster Care files, and 22 Problem Pregnancy records have been identified for destruction. Mr. Moorefield requested approval for these records to be destroyed per Retention policy.

Mr. Todd Yates made a motion to approve the destruction of records and Mrs. Jane Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PBB

Performance Based Budgeting bonuses were discussed with Department Heads on September 23, 2019. Mr. Moorefield shared our PBB balance of \$935,081.00. We must have a list to Finance by October 17, 2019 of those that are eligible for a bonus and how much they are to receive. Overall, Department PBB bonuses are estimated to be under \$80,000. \$500 is the maximum bonus that an employee can receive. Employees eligible for a PBB Bonus for FY2018-2019 performance will be issued a check on October 25, 2019.

DSS Director

The DSS Board will be responsible for interviewing candidates for the DSS Director position. The Board will need to review the job description for the position and make revisions as needed and then present to Mrs. Kathy Cashion, HR Director, for posting the position. Job descriptions from 2007 and 2016 for the DSS Director and the Health Department Director from 2016 along with samples from other counties have been collected by Mr. Wagner. Upon review and any revisions, the Board will forward the completed description to Mrs. Cashion and the position will be posted as soon as possible for recruitment of a new director upon Mr. Moorefield's retirement.

Date of Next Meeting

The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 22, at 4:15 p.m. on the first floor of the Governmental Center in Lexington, Conference Room D.

Adjournment

Mrs. Watford made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:56 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield