

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
November 26, 2019**

Board Members Present

**Mrs. Karen Watford; Mrs. Jane Murphy;
Mrs. 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; Mrs. Lexa Eagle;
Mrs. Kim Craver; Mr. Ezekiel Gump; Ms. Margaret Graham-Muhammad**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:16 p.m. by Mrs. Karen Watford. An invocation was offered by Mrs. Watford.

Mrs. Minnie Dukes made a motion to excuse Mr. Todd Yates from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Jane Murphy. The motion was approved unanimously.

Adoption of Agenda

Mrs. Watford asked that the Agenda be amended, adding G.4 to New Business – Closed Session - Personnel Matter (N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6)). Mrs. Murphy made a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Mrs. Dukes seconded the motion. The amended Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2019 meeting. Mrs. Dukes seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address. Mr. Dale Moorefield, Director, reported on Mr. Rick Wagner's progress as to his medical condition. Mr. Wagner will be back to serve on the DSS Board if he gets a clean report. Mr. Wagner also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. The Angel Tree was mentioned and there are four Adult Wards left for which Christmas needs could be provided. The Board members were given an opportunity to "adopt" a ward and share in the giving for them.

Management Report

The Management Report was condensed to mention the 11 vacancies in the Agency. Mr. Moorefield informed the Board that the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) will begin December 2, 2019 and for the month of December applications can be taken for the priority population of households with individuals over 60 years of age or someone in the home is disabled and receiving DAAS services.

Old Business

Social Worker III Work Against Follow-up/Solutions

Mr. Moorefield shared a spreadsheet that was completed to offer a solution for this issue. He acknowledged that Mr. Casey Smith, Assistant County Manager, had offered several solutions, but those solutions were more involved than what was trying to be accomplished in bringing equality to identified Social Worker III (SW III) positions that handled similar work to Social Worker Investigative/Assessment and Treatment (SW-I/A/T). This spreadsheet correctly identifies and attempts to correct the problem that moving away from the June 2017 County Manager decision for bringing this equality into place in the first place. Mr. Moorefield explained the spreadsheet in detail. Compression issues were also discussed. The breakdown for reimbursement was discussed. There were questions regarding why these positions were not classified properly at the time of the job study. Mr. Moorefield explained again that they would have likely been corrected had our Agency had the chance to review the job study before it was presented to the Board of County Commissioners. The Social Worker III positions do not need to be reclassified, as such; however, due to the complexity of the work, the specified group shown on the spreadsheet does need to have their pay increased to the equivalent of the Social Worker – I/A/T positions because they are doing the same type of work. Not all Social Worker III positions are involved in this change, only those who work out in the field. Mrs. Watford asked if this was an emergency and Mr. Moorefield stated it was not, but we were trying to fix the issue and present a solution that was asked for by the Board. Director Moorefield reminded the Board that any such change must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners and that we are trying to provide them with the opportunity to fix this issue.

Mrs. Dukes made a motion to send the presented spreadsheet to HR for their approval with the understanding that the DSS Board has given approval for the increases. The recommendation that lapsed salary moneys or whatever line item it should come from be used to cover this expense. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Murphy. The motion was approved unanimously.

New Business

Record Destruction

Our Agency continues its process of identifying records that can be destroyed. We have identified 81 Child Protective Services records for destruction per State retention policy.

Mrs. Watford made a motion to destroy the records as introduced. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Dukes. The motion was approved unanimously.

Stipend for After Hours Social Work Supervisors

With the increase of Protective Services workloads over the last three years, the demands for After Hours Social Work and Supervisor have increased exponentially. The memo written by Ms. Katrina McMasters requesting the possibility of a stipend for Supervisors was shared with the Board. The short version of the request is that business is booming, additional workers were hired and placed in the CPS and Permanency Planning areas and only one supervisor was added in Adult Protective Services. Social Work supervisors cover on-call (after hours, weekends, and holidays) supervision from 4:30 in the afternoon until 8:00 am in the morning. Social Work supervisors that cover on-call are also trying to work their regular job hours during the day. We try to allow them to flex the time off, if they are able to do so. Most are not able to do so because of the demands of their workload during the day and supervision responsibilities to their own staff. Social Work supervisors are exempt employees and receive no overtime pay. We are trying to come up with a way to reward these exempt employees for their extra hours of work for which they are not compensated. Ms. McMasters checked with surrounding counties to find out how they handle such situations and that information has been shared in the memo from Ms. McMasters. The issue was discussed with Mrs. Kathy Cashion, Human Resource Director and she pointed out that the new Personnel Resolution addresses Special Projects for employees and a way for them to be compensated. An example of how that would work was provided to the Board. Mr. Moorefield introduced two of the Social Work Supervisors who were present to give comment. They were Mrs. Kim Craver and Mr. Ezekiel Gump.

Ms. McMasters led off the discussion and addressed the Board regarding after hours worked, not just on-call; i.e. filing petitions, sitting with a child until placement can be found, beginning an investigation that warrants a child's removal after hours. Supervisors are being asked to work around the clock. Supervisors do the on-call supervision and whatever is necessary to keep the children safe in the County. This is not all about money, but it would be good to be compensated for the work that is done after hours. The salary that exempt employees receive is based on a five day a week, 8 to 5 day, but the nature of their work is not as indicated. It entails many more hours and much stress dealing with the safety of our County's children.

Mrs. Kim Craver addressed the Board, letting them know that in October, she began tracking the hours that she worked over and above the 40 hours per week. She indicated that she worked 25 to 30 hours of overtime for which she was not compensated and will not be able to flex off due to the nature of the job. In November, as of today, she will have worked 40 hours of overtime for the month, again with no compensation. Ms. McMasters gave an explanation about how the after-hours team works and how no one person decides about a case and seeks supervision from the on-call supervisor before making a decision. After-hours workers are, for the most part, seasoned workers doing the after-hours jobs; however, they cannot decide about a case without consulting with a supervisor. The responsibilities for on-call supervisors were discussed in detail. Mr. Gump explained numerous examples in detail for the Board as to what the expectation might be and how the Agency handles each situation. Mrs. Craver also shared specifics about how it is almost impossible to flex time off. There was mention of the fact that social workers are being compensated more than the supervisors are, as social workers are non-exempt and receive overtime pay for overtime worked, while the exempt supervisors do not.

Mrs. Watford offered a suggestion to table this discussion for the January meeting as the Board needs to continue thinking about it.

Security – Panic Buttons

Our Agency began considering security measures in December of 2018. Panic Buttons were recommended for our Agency by the Davidson County Sheriff's Department in February of 2019. This was presented at the February 2019 DSS Board meeting and cost discussed. Mr. Moorefield was directed at that time to continue working with County staff to put these measures in place. In April 2019, David Everhart of First Defense was prepared to install Panic Buttons at a cost of \$4,686 for numerous locations in our Governmental Center and Colonial Drive locations. At that point, County Manager Zeb Hanner gave direction that Panic Buttons should be considered by the Davidson County Facilities Committee. After several discussions and considerations, the Facilities Committee indicated the need of Panic Buttons for DSS due to the nature of our business. Mr. Moorefield met with Alton Hanes (EMS Director), Rob Wilson (911 Communications Director) and Casey Tarleton (Safety and Risk Assessment Manager) and it was agreed that DSS should contact Mr. Everhart, now with Electrical Communications and Security Solutions (ECCS) again. A quote of \$4,475.16 for installation and monitoring was given for three locations, as we now have staff in the Davidson House location as well. This item has been supported in our meetings several times and has been discussed in County Facility Committee meetings on numerous occasions. DSS works with highly-emotional situations that could warrant the need to have a panic button available. We are asking that the entire Board to be in support of the use of panic buttons and it is well understood that calling 911 is still the best option for security/emergency response, but it is also recognized that in some situations a discreet use of panic buttons is a better alternative for requesting assistance. The buttons come with a \$480/year monitoring fee per building. It is recommended that funds for these panic buttons would come from our Department's PBB savings.

As the Assistant County Manager wants to make sure the Commissioners on the DSS Board were on board with this before the Facility Committee moves forward at their 12/10/2019 meeting; Mrs. Murphy made a motion for Mrs. Watford to speak with Mr. Todd Yates on it, and if he agrees with the installation of panic buttons for DSS, that we move forward with presentation to the Commissioners. Mrs. Dukes seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mrs. Dukes made a motion to go into closed session at 5:26 pm. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Murphy and approved unanimously.

Closed Session - Personnel

No action was taken during closed session.

Mrs. Murphy made a motion to go back into Open Session at 5:54 pm and was seconded by Mrs. Dukes. Motion was approved unanimously.

After coming back into Open Session, Mrs. Dukes made a motion to schedule interviews the first two weeks of December, 2019 and the Board will decide if an Interim Director needs to be named or how to proceed. Mrs. Jane Murphy seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Date of Next Meeting

The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 13, 2019 at 11:30 am at 822 West 5th Avenue, Lexington, North Carolina.

Adjournment

Mrs. Watford made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Dukes seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:57 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield