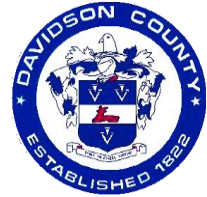


**DAVIDSON COUNTY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*Patricia Baker, Director*



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**December 11, 2020**

**Board Members Present via Video Conference and in Person**  
**Mrs. Karen Watford; Mr. Todd Yates; Mrs. Minnie Dukes**

**Others in Attendance via Video Conference**  
**Ms. Trish Baker; Mrs. Susan Bryan; Ms. Elizabeth Huff;**  
**Ms. Sheri Woodyard; Mrs. Lexa Eagle**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. by Mrs. Karen Watford.

**Review of the Agenda – Additions/Modifications**

No changes to the Agenda.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. Todd Yates made a motion to approve the Agenda for the meeting. Mrs. Minnie Dukes seconded the motion. The Agenda was unanimously approved.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Mrs. Minnie Dukes made a motion to approve the regular session minutes of the November 24, 2020 meeting. Mr. Todd Yates seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Public Comments**

There was no public comment.

**Board Member Comments**

Mrs. Karen Watford made several comments about the pieces of the Management Report that were shared with her, giving praise to the Adult Services area, Permanency Planning area and Child Support area. We are having a lot of give and take with Cardinal Innovations. Ms. Trish Baker will address this more during the meeting. The information now appears to be a tone of compromise from Cardinal and we will truly be receiving help in the areas we are most concerned about.

## **Old Business**

### **COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Program - Update**

Ms. Baker shared that \$54,500.00 had been spent in this program. This included 434 applications, of which 109 were approved. This program was closed out 12-1-2020. We were able to assist 109 families with these funds.

### **Cardinal Innovations Update**

A meeting was held this week with Cardinal, called by Rep. Larry Potts. Attendees reviewed the Action Plan that Cardinal has sent and discussed a revised agreement for them to pay us, referred to as Sub-Capitation Payments, for the children we have in care with serious needs. Mr. Chuck Frye and Mr. Mike Newby have worked tirelessly in completing revisions to the Sub-Capitation Payment Agreement submitted by Cardinal. Meeting attendees included Mr. Casey Smith, County Manager; Mr. Jason Martin, Assistant County Manager; Mr. Chuck Frye, County Attorney; Mr. Mike Newby, County Attorney; Ms. Trish Baker, Mr. Trey Sutton, CEO of Cardinal Innovations; and Rep. Larry Potts among others. Mr. Frye did a very good job of letting Cardinal know that we have heard the same story from them for eight to ten years but have seen no resolution to the issues. The Agency is still working with Cardinal in regards to the children the Board heard about in Closed Session last month. However, new cases are coming in daily and they will require special attention as well. Ms. Baker has to get involved every time there is a need and this should not be the situation. It is very hard to get movement on the part of Cardinal even when Ms. Baker gets involved.

Mrs. Minnie Dukes voiced her appreciation for what Ms. Baker is doing, but is concerned about what she is not able to do because she has to be so involved in the Cardinal processes. She agrees with Mr. Frye in that we have heard the same story over and over for the past 10 years, with no changes.

Ms. Baker shared that Rep. Larry Potts is very invested in this issue and wants the best for the community. She expressed her gratitude for his presence at the table and his initiative to call the meeting.

Ms. Baker also shared that other Counties are experiencing the same issues with Cardinal. She also stated that this is not isolated to Cardinal, but they appear to be less able to work out a crisis need quickly.

There will always be issues in placing children with severe problems, be it physical, mental, emotional or any combination of these. The number of children in care in Davidson County with serious needs is part of the issue as well. The State is aware of the problems with Cardinal Innovations and they appear not to be holding Cardinal accountable as they should.

## **New Business**

### **Court Updates – Sheri Woodyard**

Ms. Sheri Woodyard shared that this has been a bad week. There have been issues with people testing positive for COVID. The Court situation changed dramatically on Monday and we are back to not being able to be at full capacity. We have heavy dockets and are working hard to catch up from lost time due to conferences and the Clerk of Court offices moving. We also lost a day of Court due to the Veterans' Day holiday and will lose several days due to the Christmas Holidays. COVID is wreaking havoc again and there could be more shut downs in the Courts.

## **Director Updates**

Ms. Baker shared that Mr. Ed Dawson has been appointed to our DSS Board by the North Carolina Commission of Social Services. We are happy to have him and he will be present for the January meeting. He has lots of history working with DSS and expertise in working with those who are dealing with Mental Health issues.

Also, Ms. Baker will have more information about Cardinal at the next meeting, hoping to have our Plan of Action fully vetted and signed. Budget time for the County is coming up and the Board will begin to hear specifics from Ms. Baker during the January and February meetings for next Fiscal year.

Mrs. Dukes is excited about Mr. Dawson becoming a member of our Board, stating he has been very involved with the community and Mental Health for many years.

Mr. Yates asked questions about the court hearings, how they will be held and if there is a way to have the hearings in another fashion. Timeframes for hearings were discussed by Ms. Woodyard. Webex is the only other secure option for hearings and these must be set up by the Clerk's office. There is no specific back up plan for court right now except to be in the court room. She explained what Webex is and how it is used.

Mrs. Minnie Dukes made a motion to move the meeting into closed session at 11:23 am. The motion was seconded by Mr. Todd Yates. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **Closed Session**

No Action was taken during Closed Session. The meeting returned to Open Session.

## **Date of Next Meeting**

The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 4:00 pm at the Governmental Center, fourth floor, Commissioners Meeting Room, Lexington, North Carolina.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting returned to Open Session at 11:35 am.

Mrs. Minnie Dukes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Todd Yates. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.

Minutes submitted by Patricia Baker