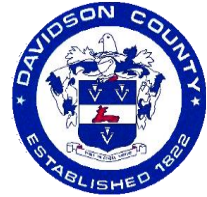


**DAVIDSON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*Patricia Baker, Director*



Lexington DSS Office  
P.O. Box 788  
913 Greensboro Street  
Lexington, North Carolina 27293  
336-242-2500  
FAX: 336-249-7588

Thomasville DSS Office  
211 W. Colonial Drive  
Thomasville, North Carolina 27360  
P.O. Box 788  
Lexington, North Carolina 27293  
336-474-2760  
FAX: 336-472-6635

Lexington Child Support Office  
P.O. Box 788  
913 Greensboro Street  
Lexington, North Carolina 27293  
336-242-2242  
FAX: 336-242-1236

Thomasville Child Support Office  
211 W. Colonial Drive  
Thomasville, North Carolina 27360  
P.O. Box 788  
Lexington, North Carolina 27293  
336-474-2609  
FAX: 336-474-2620

**Davidson County Department of Social Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
March 23, 2021**

**Board Members Present via Video Conference and in Person**

**Mrs. Karen Watford; Mrs. Minnie Dukes;  
Ms. Jane Murphy; Mr. Ed Dawson**

**Others Present and via Video Conference**

**Ms. Trish Baker; Mrs. Susan Bryan; Ms. Elizabeth Huff; Ms. Katrina McMasters  
Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Sheri Woodyard; Mr. Jason Hicks; Mr. Tony Dill; Mr. Casey Smith**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. by Mrs. Karen Watford.

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

Mrs. Watford asked that Personnel Matter be added to K. during Closed Session.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. Ed Dawson made a motion to adopt the amended Agenda for the meeting. Mrs. Minnie Dukes seconded the motion. The amended Agenda was unanimously approved.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Closed Session minutes were reviewed by the DSS Board only for the period of October, 2020 through February 2021 and March 2, 2021. Mrs. Minnie Dukes made a motion to approve the Closed Session minutes. Ms. Jane Murphy seconded the motion. The Closed Session minutes were approved unanimously.

The minutes from regular meeting held on February 23, 2021 and the called meeting held on March 2, 2021 were reviewed. Ms. Jane Murphy made a motion to approve both sets of meeting minutes. Mr. Ed Dawson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Public Comments**

There was no public comment.

## **Board Member Comments**

There were no Board comments.

## **Management Reports**

Mrs. Watford thanked all staff for the submission of the narrative for each respective area of the Agency.

Mrs. Susan Bryan shared the monthly management report. Overall, we are at 67% spending. The things that have been spent at 100% are due to having paid out all funds in those line items.

Ms. Trish Baker shared information about the vacancies in the Agency. We have 23 full time vacancies and 1 part time vacancy. Mrs. Lexa Eagle provided data to Ms. Baker regarding how the vacancies came about, whether someone left the Agency for another job in another DSS, in private industry, health reasons or if they were promoted from within. The breakdown was provided for each vacancy. 8 of the vacancies were due to promotions or transfers from within and teleworking is a draw for some of the people leaving the Agency.

In the Income Maintenance area, Ms. Elizabeth Huff reported that as a whole, the area is doing well with their numbers. Information regarding Emergency Assistance trends was shared, showing increases in the average bill paid for eligible individuals. As the moratorium for individuals begins to end for not having to pay rent, utilities, etc., due to COVID, it is anticipated that these averages will continue to rise. An example was provided as to how one utility provider was handling the end of the moratorium for their Agency. There was discussion about the increased processing time for Work First Cash Assistance.

Mr. Scott Craver shared that Child Support is on track to meet all five of the State assigned goals for the year. The collection goal has been set \$100,000.00 more than the State goal and it appears this goal will be met. There was discussion regarding the drop of cases in our County as well as State wide.

Ms. Katrina McMasters shared that February was a short month, so lots had to be done in a shorter period of time. The interview process continues for the vacancies in the Child Protective Service area; however, two offers have been made and accepted and they will have three new workers in three weeks. Even with the vacancies, the teams have made great strides in getting the work done and keeping our children safe. Only one petition had to be filed for removal in February. There was discussion about reorganization of the teams to help in the areas where the work is so heavy.

Ms. Baker shared that two children entered the custody of the Agency in February. Eight children found permanence and we are at 141 children in care, which is much lower than it has been in a while.

Mr. Craver shared that the numbers in Adult Protective Services have remained steady, except the number of wards we now have guardianship for has increased by three. There are currently two vacancies, one due to promotion from within the Adult Services area and another for a supervisory position that was vacated in January. He also shared the new supervisor's ability to deal with the closing of three family care homes in the County. There was discussion about how we get guardianship assigned to the Department of Social Services.

## **Old Business**

Ms. Baker reported last month during discussion of the 2021-2022 budget that the money for the new car would probably be taken from Performance Based Budget funds. After review and negotiation with Mr. Casey Smith, County Manager, a revised draft of the DSS budget was submitted to the DSS Board via email. The car was eliminated from the budget completely and will definitely be purchased with our PBB savings. All of the line items have been revisited and some have been changed. Ms. Baker shared that she feels very good about our new budget and that our funding will remain intact. Ms. Baker also shared information regarding how reimbursement for children in congregate care will change. The reclassification of three positions that are currently vacant are being considered. The three brand new positions were removed from the budget, but the reclassification of three current positions will be considered.

Ms. Baker also shared updates about Cardinal Innovations. The liaison has been a good thing for our Agency. We are still struggling with the needs that should be met by Cardinal, but are not being met. Long standing issues are not being resolved timely. Ms. Nicole Six will be providing information regarding the care that kids in Davidson County custody are receiving through Cardinal. The State officials are now involved and hearing the complaints.

## **New Business**

### **New DSS Attorney Introduction – Sheri Woodyard**

Ms. Woodyard introduced the new DSS attorney as Mr. Jason Hicks. He began work for the County on March 8, 2021 and he comes to us from Tennessee where he practiced for 10 years as a GAL attorney and Parent attorney in civil cases. Mr. Hicks will be doing Termination of Parental Rights cases.

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

We are down two judges in this County and for the District. We are currently awaiting appointment of judges by the Governor. We have had emergency judges coming in, but they are not always available.

### **Director Updates**

March is Social Worker Appreciation Month; however, we wanted to show appreciation to all staff. Every staff member will receive a goody bag like the ones provided to the DSS Board. This is in recognition of the hard work that is being done through the Agency. There will be a coffee and muffin breakfast for Social Work staff next week to recognize them in their special month.

Ms. Baker also shared Mr. Tony Dill and his staff will be helping our Agency with some staff development. He has been sitting in on meetings and will kick off a staff development program with CPS supervisory staff. Ms. Baker is excited to have the input and assistance of Human Resources and Mr. Dill.

Mr. Casey Smith continues to keep us on track for our budget.

The Families First legislation continues and Ms. Baker will continue to keep the Board up to date on the progress of things.

Ms. Jane Murphy made a motion to move the meeting into closed session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ed Dawson. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting moved into closed session at 4:47 pm.

### **Closed Session**

No Action was taken during Closed Session. The meeting returned to open session at 5:25 pm.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 4:00 pm at the Governmental Center, fourth floor, Commissioners Meeting Room, Lexington, North Carolina.

### **Adjournment**

Mrs. Karen Watford made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Minnie Dukes. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 pm.

Minutes submitted by Patricia Baker