

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Elsie B. Mackie; Mr. Robert Crockett; Mr. John Sparkman; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Director.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order. Mr. Crockett gave the Invocation.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Election of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.** Ms. Major stated it was time for the election of a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman. At this time Mr. Crockett stated he made a motion for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to remain the same. Ms. Major asked for a second motion and there was no response from Mr. Sparkman, Mrs. Mackie or Ms. Gordy.

Ms. Gordy stated she had hoped to be the new Chairman as this was probably her last year on the Board. She stated that was why she had voted No. Ms. Major then stated she was accepting nominations for the Chair person. At this point Mr. Sparkman stated he nominated Ms. Gordy as Chairman and Mrs. Mackie seconded the motion. He then stated he nominated Ms. Major as Vice-Chairman so it was a swap. At that time Ms. Major asked Mrs. Mackie if she seconded that and Mrs. Mackie stated she did. Ms. Major stated a motion had been made and properly seconded that Ms. Gordy become Chairman and Ms. Major become Vice-Chairman. She asked if there was any further discussion and hearing none she asked for everyone in favor let it be known by saying "I".

At that time Mr. Crockett asked Chairman Major whether he could have a discussion and Ms. Major stated he could proceed. Mr. Crockett stated "I was in a bad spot because I hated to vote against one of my fellow Board Members." Ms. Major stated it was not a vote against her. Mr. Crockett stated he appreciated that. He then asked Ms. Major to call the vote. Ms. Major then stated all of those in favor let it be known by saying "I". The motion carried.

Ms. Major stated Ms. Gordy was the new Chairman and she should assume her spot. Ms. Gordy thanked the Board Members and stated she had good backup.

Ms. Gordy stated she needed a motion to approve **Item 4- Approve Minutes of June 19, 2018.** On motion by Ms. Major, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Minutes were approved as written. Mr. Crockett stated he abstained as he was not present at the June 19, 2018 meeting. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Presentation by Office Supervisor Linda C. Rew: Front Desk/Customer Service Unit.** Mrs. Rew stated the Board Members knew her, she was the Office Supervisor and supervised the Front Clerical Unit. She handed out booklets containing information about the various programs her unit used and information about their duties. She stated they are the first people you see when you come into the Agency and Mrs. Rew stated they are the "Core of the Agency" because they are the ones who see everything; i.e., everyone entering the building, all the phone calls, take care of things and get all documents to the workers.

Mrs. Rew further stated when we get new workers; i.e., emergency or new workers, the first thing we try to do is train them on the switchboard. They are shown how to retrieve and forward calls to workers; trained In SPIDER (Systems Partnering in a Demographic Repository); and trained in retrieving barcode information from VaCMS (Virginia Case Management Systems) by social security number or name in order to locate the proper worker.

On occasion we have people who call and say my name is "John Doe" and I am calling for "John Smith" and he needs to know information about his

Medicaid or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). I trained my staff to never speak with anyone other than the client unless it is a community partner such as a nursing home, Eastern Shore Rural Health, hospital or other agencies who are working on behalf of the client.

CPS (Child Protective Services) and APS (Adult Protective services) calls are a different situation. If emergency calls come to the switchboard, we have a phone chain list for each unit and we start at the top and continue down the list until we find someone who can assist the caller with a complaint.

We have SNAP English and SNAP Spanish phone lines. When someone calls to apply for SNAP, we immediately tell them we have a SNAP line and we will be putting them through to it to listen about the SNAP program. If they are interested in receiving SNAP, he or she should hit "0" to return to the switchboard operator who will assist them. It is imperative we follow this procedure as the State randomly does test calls and if we fail the test we will be written up. We have been quite fortunate as we have passed the tests for numerous years. Emergency Office Associate II Lea Anna Cafferty is on the switchboard and we rotate workers at lunchtime.

Mrs. Rew further stated we have an I-Pad in the reception area and each person who comes into the Agency is directed to the I-Pad. The Board Members do not have to do this as our previous IT person Steve Niblett had set it up for the Board. They input their name, type of ID being used which is mostly driver's license; time punched; whether they are dropping off documents for workers; picking up documents; appointment; CPS or APS. All of the information is transmitted to the front window computer which is operated by Office Associate II Karen Charnock. This makes it so much easier for her to keep the clients in check as to who arrived first. She is also able to print out a daily report to show everyone who has entered the Agency that day.

Mrs. Rew stated clients can apply for benefits by completing a paper application, online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov or by calling a toll-free number. We try to encourage clients when they call or come to apply by either calling the toll-free number or going online to apply. However, we never turn anyone away if they want a paper application. Office Associate III Jessica Bennett - who is in charge in my absence - goes online every 20-30 minutes each day to see whether any online applications are pending - SNAP/TANF/MEDICAID/ENERGY ASSISTANCE or PLAN FIRST, which is for women and men who are not eligible for full benefits through Medicaid or FAMIS. If under the age of 19 an applicant could be eligible for full benefits through Medicaid or FAMIS. FAMIS is Virginia's health insurance program for uninsured children and FAMIS-PLUS is Virginia's name for children's Medicaid.

Ms. Bennett pulls and gets applications and documents ready for the next intake worker on the list to review and process. She also receives all applications placed in our outside drop-off box, by mail or by fax. Backup for Jessica is Office Associate II Fabiola Perez-Torres who has been with us for numerous years, as an emergency energy assistance worker. I finally was able to get her to apply for a fulltime position.

Clients are screened by one of the clerical unit for each SNAP application. They get their wages/salary/child support/unemployment/social security for the month the client applies. They are asked about resources; i.e., cash on hand/checking/savings/stocks/bonds, etc. They are also asked about what kind of shelter expenses they have; i.e., rent/mortgage/electric/cooling/water/trash pickup and phone. One of the front desk staff then determines whether it appears to be a 7 day application or a 30 day application; i.e., 7 days being an

expedited application due to expenses overpowering income. The applications are then turned over to an intake worker for review and determination.

Mrs. Rew further stated if someone is applying for Medicaid and he/she has disabilities, age 65 or over, all people, including children, in need of Long-Term Care Services (nursing home facility or community based care), or someone who is medically needy (has income greater than Medicaid limit or would like to be evaluated based on their income, resources and medical expenses – which we refer to as Spenddown) – we give them an APPENDIX D to be completed with the Medicaid application.

Mrs. Rew stated we have two bi-lingual workers – Office Associate II Fabiola Perez-Torres and Emergency Office Associate II Verence Pantaleon. Both ladies are fluent in English and Spanish.

Mrs. Rew stated we are also responsible for EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer Cards) or SNAP (previously called food stamps. Three workers, plus myself, are the only ones who can issue cards. A benefit worker determines whether the client is eligible and then gives us a form so we can complete the issuance of the card. We do the appropriate steps and speak with the client who then signs the back of the card and we give him/her a booklet explaining the EBT card and a sheet showing a toll-free number to get the card registered including a four digit code to use when accessing the funds on the card.

Mrs. Rew stated we are also responsible for transfer ins/outs. When a client moves to Accomack County or moves to another locality, a transfer of the case is involved. Office Associate III is my transfer in/out person and she does an excellent job working this into her busy schedule of processing applications. Emergency Office Associate II Verence Pantaleon is her back-up.

Mrs. Rew stated we are also responsible for voter registration forms. This is a State requirement. We have a wall compartment in the lobby for easy access to the forms. Also, the front clerical unit asks if a client is a registered voter or would like to register. Our benefit workers ask as well. We have not had any registration forms left a ACDSS for nearly a year; however, if they are, they have to be sent to the Accomack County Registrar's Office on a weekly basis. When election time begins to roll around, we are informed when we are supposed to start taking them to the Registrar's Office on a daily basis.

Mrs. Rew stated we also are responsible for seeing the mail is collected, metered and taken to the post office by 10 AM each morning and the same procedure is followed for the afternoon mail by 4 PM each day.

Mrs. Rew stated the clerical unit is also responsible for the agency car fleet of 10 vehicles. We keep sign-in/sign-out logs in each vehicle and at the end of the month they are removed and it is determined whether it is time for an oil change, tire rotation, inspection sticker, etc. I then call Shore Tire & Auto and schedule an appointment for service. If it is a new vehicle under warranty I have been taking them to Hertrich Ford in Pocomoke as some services are totally covered and of course, all recalls. A brief discussion followed relative to our purchases and the kindness they had shown us in handling recalls, etc.

Mrs. Rew stated the clerical unit takes care of all supplies needed and stocked. Ms. Bennett compiles the list of items, to me, brings it to me and I in turn go online and place the order. We also have a bi-monthly account with Shred-It. They come, open all of their containers, empty same and do the shredding on sight. One of the clerical staff goes outside and stands while everything is shredded, as this is a State requirement.

Mrs. Rew stated we are also responsible for the pouch which is deposited into a securely locked box on the outside of the benefit entrance. Anything being sent by a worker to the Richmond office, the Eastern Regional office or other social service localities in the Commonwealth are deposited in the pouch and placed in the locked box every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. The driver comes and picks them up later those evenings and leaves any envelopes for us and the following day everything is delivered to workers.

Mrs. Rew stated we assist the AICC (Accomack Interfaith Crisis Council) every Tuesday morning. There are normally two representatives of AICC who come to assist clients with their electric bills, rent, food medical and other areas. A clipboard is placed at the third window and they normally see the first 12 applicants. As a matter of fact Mrs. Mackie is on AICC now and has been coming to our agency a few times for the past few months. They also do the Members Helping Members to assist the clients.

Mrs. Rew stated we also do Safelink Wireless, which is free cellphones. When clients request an application we give them an application and they have to complete a certification stating they receive TANF, SNAP, SSI (Supplemental Social Security); Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8); low-income Home Energy Assistance; National School Lunch Program's (free lunch program); or Medicaid. Then, they date, sign and mail the application and the phone will be sent directly to them.

Mrs. Rew stated we open daily at 8:30 AM and close at 5:00 PM and when everyone departs the building, they are tired. She further stated when you put the duties of the clerical unit on paper it is unbelievable. However, they are the least paid workers in this agency and it is really sad. She further stated she had a hard time keeping workers as they move up to benefit positions when advertised, or move on to better paying jobs. The Agency recently advertised for two permanent Office Associate II positions and Friday, July 6, 2018, was the deadline for applying. She stated she had received approximately 25-30 applications and now she had to go through and pick out the highest rated participants. There will be a panel of three - Shirley Harmon, me and another worker will be doing the interviews. We will pick out the highest scorers and then turn them over to Mrs. Weakley who will conduct a second interview and make her decision on which ones to offer the position to.

Mr. Crockett stated Mrs. Rew's statement of clerical being the least paid is so true. It is the same thing with law enforcement dispatchers who are the first impression of your agency and they handle everything. Mrs. Mackie further stated they do a very good job; however, it is a thankless job.

Ms. Major stated Mrs. Rew had voiced the sentiments of all support staff throughout the Commonwealth. Ms. Major stated she agreed with Mrs. Mackie it is a thankless job; however, the first impression of our agency is the reception area and support staff. Mrs. Rew stated they are very professional with clients and treat them nicely. Ms. Gordy inquired how many workers are in the clerical Unit, to which Mrs. Rew stated she had five positions; however, three are permanent and two are emergency hires, which we are filling. She believed both of the emergency workers had applied for the fulltime positions.

On behalf of the Board Ms. Gordy thanked Mrs. Rew for her presentation.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 6 - Director's Notes**. Mrs. Weakley stated the previous month she had a Child Welfare Review, and we did fairly well; however, they identified some things that needed to be done, differently. She

also attended a Members Helping Members Board meeting and participated in doing a community awareness clip, which is run at their Member's meeting, as well as in their lobby. Mrs. Weakley further stated we conducted a quarterly staff meeting. She also attended a new work group which will be titled Trauma Informed work group and will attempt to encourage everyone to approach people in whatever arena you meet them, from a trauma sensitive perspective, as many people have had trauma in the past and it affects how they interact with people, how they ask for services, and how they respond when you offer services. Mrs. Weakley further stated she attended the CPMT (Community and Policy Management Team) meeting, and the VLSSE (Virginia League of Social Services Executives) Board meeting held in Charlottesville.

In order to keep the Board abreast Mrs. Weakley stated there are major changes going on in all of our program areas. Everyone is aware Medicaid expansion is happening but we still do not have an official date for it to start. We had anticipated early 2019; however, we have been quoted dates from the first of January, the end of January, to the first of February, etc. We anticipate we will be taking new applications sometime in the beginning of 2019. They are anticipating 2000 additional cases in Accomack County. Unfortunately, they are only giving us funds for two new workers and we are concerned about two new workers handling 2000 new cases. The State have given us a little extra funding to help with costs of having two part time workers. We are looking at bringing back two of our retirees to help with the new applications.

Mrs. Weakley stated we are in the process of hiring new workers and hopefully we can get them through the training before the beginning of the event. In addition we have had retirements and people who have left so we have a few experienced workers, but a majority of new staff. This will add to the challenge when we increase the caseloads.

Mrs. Weakley stated in Child Welfare they are implementing "Families First". We do not know the details of what changes will be transpiring, but the State has informed us it will completely redo the way we handle child welfare and be similar to the changes we had when we went to welfare reform. It will be a massive change. We have been informed there will be a large focus on evidence based research and the State is in the process of developing an evidence based library. Kingap which encourages families to take on children, related to them. In the past there has not been funding to help those families; however, that is changing with Kingap. Children have to be with relatives for a period of six months in order to become eligible.

Mrs. Weakley further stated the above change will also change the CSA (Children's Services Act). IV-E, which is Federal funding, pays for a lot of the foster care things including foster home payments and for a child to go into a residential facility. It is very limited to families who would have been eligible for the old ADC, if children stayed with their families. That is now being expanded to include others in other program areas and it will change how we do business in CSA as well as child welfare.

Mrs. Weakley stated in Adult Services DARS is changing the computer system. She stated she was sure Ms. Major and Mrs. Mackie could relate to this change. This will commence the beginning of this year as well. They are doing staff training and there will be massive changes in every program area.

At this point Ms. Major inquired whether they had thought about the CSA Coordinator position. Mrs. Weakley stated she had left a voicemail message for Northampton County DSS Director Mozella Frances to see whether they could meet and do the job description. Mrs. Weakley stated she anticipated doing

that fairly quickly and getting it advertised. The previous day Mrs. Weakley received the results from the CSA review and they are not particularly great; however, they are holding off on the official report until we send them a list of items that were not found in the case records. Ms. Major inquired whether we would be getting a penalty and Mrs. Weakley stated we did not know yet. We were given a preliminary verbal report when the reviewer left. Some of the documents she has already located and she has those to send to the reviewer.

Mr. Crockett stated the bad score we received should put a fire under Mrs. Weakley and Mrs. Frances to get the CSA Coordinator position filled. Ms. Major stated if there were a fiscal penalty attached, she didn't think either Accomack or Northampton County would want that to occur. Mrs. Weakley stated she totally agreed and she and Mrs. Frances had initially hoped they would have the person onboard before the review, so the Coordinator could start reviewing the records and have them in the proper order. Unfortunately, all of the approvals did not come through until after the reviewer came and reviewed the records. Mr. Crockett stated he wanted the record to be clear, Northampton County had not having signed off on it, in time.

Ms. Gordy continued to **Item 7 – Fraud Report**. Mrs. Weakley stated Fraud Investigator Frances Bailey had been out on maternity leave and we had others trying to cover fraud cases, but she is back now. Ms. Gordy stated it was a good report.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 8 – Library of Virginia (Certificate of Records Destruction) – Benefit Receipt Books**. Mrs. Weakley stated we have been working on records to be purged. We now have the Accounts Receivable Receipt Books that dated from 2002-2015 that were ready to be purged according to Virginia requirements. We also have some receipt books from benefit case records dating from 2002-2015 that are ready to be destroyed. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Ms. Major, we were instructed to proceed with the purging of cases. The motion carried.

Ms. Gordy continued to **Item 9 – Local Board Member Training (10/25/18)**. Mrs. Weakley stated our Eastern Regional Director JoAnn Wilson-Harfst did this training at Eastville last year. Ms. Major inquired whether we would be returning the favor and having it in Accomac this year. Mr. Crockett said he hoped so, as it was a shorter drive. Mrs. Weakley inquired whether the Board wanted her to come to Accomac this year. All Board Members were in agreement. Ms. Mackie stated it is closer for most of the Board if she comes to Accomac County. Mrs. Weakley stated she would contact the Regional Director.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 10 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon**. Ms. Harmon stated with the month of June we started our new Fiscal Year. Our Total Expenditures were \$290,009.91. Our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$34,615.53 and our Total Local Balance to Date was \$751,683.47. Mr. Crockett stated the numbers looked good as on balance would be 8.2% and we have only spent 5.78% - we are in good shape.

Mr. Crockett stated that was the last item in Open Session; however, he would like to add one comment before we closed. He wanted to thank Ms. Major for the job she had done as Chair – an excellent job, Also, for the record he wanted to say it then, instead of in Closed Session, that the election was held in Open Session which would be in the Minutes. He would like for the Board to come to an agreement that there is no doubt that Ms. Gordy would do a super job as Chair, but in the future if the Board saw there was a majority leaning for a change in leadership, he thought they needed to contact the current Chair, who would like to remain Chair, and let them know the votes are not there. That

way we do not have a contested election on the Minutes. If we can do that, he would appreciate it as that is how he would want to be treated. If he was the sitting Chair and the votes were against him, he would like to get a phone call and simply say "Robert, you have done a good job but we want a change – not because you haven't done a good job, but we think a change is in order." Mr. Crockett stated he would back out and say sure that is no problem.

Ms. Major stated she did because of the reasoning that Ms. Gordy wanted to become Chair. Mr. Crockett stated it was a very legitimate reason and he had no problem with it. However, a phone call would have been in order. Mr. Crockett stated he wanted it on record.

At that time Ms. Gordy stated "Robert, I have never been called when someone wanted to take over a place I had, but it never hurt my feelings as I felt I have done the job the best I could." Mr. Crockett stated "This was how he would like to be treated if he was on a board and he was seeking reelection and not made aware a change was being put forward. Just give me a chance to say I would support the person – just give me a chance to back out. Then, you don't have an official vote that is recorded on the Minutes that the current Chair was defeated - that was all he was saying."

Mr. Sparkman then stated "You need to appoint someone to make that call." Mr. Crockett stated he would be more than happy to make that call. Ms. Major and Ms. Gordy know he is business. In the future; for example, if Mrs. Mackie is Chair and Mr. Sparkman and I or Ms. Major are still here and we three think a change is in order, I would make that call in a heartbeat.

Ms. Gordy stated it would not bother her to say "Ms. Major, as this is my last year and I have served on the Board I would like to become Chair." Ms. Major stated to Ms. Gordy "Since I knew her so well she wasn't surprised and she had no hard feelings against anyone because I am not like that – life is too short for that. However, it would have been a smoother transition."

Mr. Sparkman stated "That was why I reversed it so you could go back to Vice-Chairman – okay?" Mr. Crockett stated he was on the record as to how it should be done in the future. Ms. Major stated thank you so much.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Ms. Major, the Board went into Closed Session, for the purpose of discussing Adoption Consent Case #14516081983, Employee Evaluation: Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon and Director's Consult, as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3712.

On motion by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board returned to Open Session. On motion by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board confirmed the matters discussed in Closed Session (Ms. Major – yes; Ms. Mackie – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes).

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board approved the following (Ms. Major – yes; Mrs. Mackie – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes):

1. Adoption Consent Case #14516081983

On motion by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board approved the following (Ms. Major – yes; Ms. Mackie – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes):

2. Employee Evaluation: Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon

Ms. Gordy stated the next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 21, 2018, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Ms. Major, the meeting adjourned at 10:52 A.M.

APPROVED: C. Reneta Major

ATTEST: Vicki J. Weakley