

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, July 16, 2019, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Chairman; Ms. Reneta Major, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Robert Crockett; Mrs. Elsie Mackie; Mr. Robert Martin; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary.

Ms. Gordy welcomed everyone in attendance. She further stated Mr. John Sparkman was not in attendance and was probably away. Ms. Gordy stated this was her last time to call the Board to order; however, she wanted to thank everyone for allowing her to serve as Chairman.

Ms. Gordy then called the meeting to order. Ms. Major gave the Invocation.

Ms. Gordy then proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of July 16, 2019**. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Minutes of July 16, 2019 were approved as written. The motion carried.

Ms. Gordy continued to **Item 4 – Chair and Vice-Chair Elections**. Mr. Crockett nominated Ms. Major as Chairman. The motion was seconded by Mr. Martin. Mr. Crockett made a motion to close the nomination. Ms. Gordy stated the nomination was closed. The motion carried.

Ms. Gordy and Ms. Major exchanged seats as Chairman of the Board. Ms. Major then entertained a motion for the selection of a Vice-Chairman. Mr. Crockett stated he had not cleared it yet with his nominee for Vice-Chairman; however, he nominated Mrs. Elsie Mackie as Vice-Chairman and the motion was seconded by Ms. Gordy. On motion by Ms. Gordy the motion be closed, seconded by Mr. Crockett. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Fraud Report**. Mr. Crockett stated Ms. Bailey was doing a good job and Mrs. Mackie stated a very good job. Ms. Gordy stated it was the best report and she is doing her work. Mr. Crockett further stated you can read her excitement in her report. Ms. Major stated she is a go-getter.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Director’s Report**. Mrs. Weakley stated she had attended the following meetings:

- 1) VLSSE (Virginia League of Social Service Executives) Board Meeting in Staunton, VA. Mrs. Weakley stated the major discussion there was the change in how we count success in the Employment Service program. She further stated effective October 1st we will be required to work with the SNAP population, to gain, or increase, employment. It is a voluntary program and we do not anticipate many volunteers, at this time. There are agencies across the State that currently run a volunteer program and have about one volunteer a month, so we do not anticipate a large influx of clients. Mrs. Weakley stated she would not be surprised if down the road it becomes mandatory.

At that time Mrs. Mackie inquired whether we had filled the position previously held by Mrs. Gail Godwin. Mrs. Mackie stated she knew we only had one VIEW worker at the present time. Mrs. Weakley stated at the moment she has not informed the final candidate; however, it would be done that day. Mrs. Mackie stated she agreed we would probably not have many volunteers for the new SNAP employment program.

Mrs. Weakley stated the biggest concern is that they are shifting what they count as a successful client. The focus has been on participation and whether or not the client participated in one of the State’s employment activities. The State will be shifting that focus to the ALICE Standard. ALICE was developed by

United Way and stands for "Asset Limited Income Constrained but Employed". Some of the DSS staff meet this definition.

Mrs. Weakley stated the State is pushing that we help our clients to earn more money than some of our staff makes. This will be difficult to accomplish. We have raised the issue as on the Shore the ALICE Standard is \$54,000 per year. Mr. Crockett inquired who made these decisions. Mrs. Weakley stated \$54,000 would be for a household of four. Mr. Crockett stated this is not good for the morale of our employees. Mrs. Weakley stated she brought it up at the VLSSE Board meeting and it was told they had considered that. Mrs. Weakley stated if they expect employees to get clients up to that level the State needs to get employees up to that level as well. Mr. Crockett stated he would call that being somewhat hypocritical. Mrs. Weakley stated they are still trying to raise minimum salaries for workers. As everyone knows it was taken out of the budget by Governor Northam at the last minute. There was a commitment it would go back into the budget next year. Mrs. Mackie inquired whether it could be broken down by region. Mrs. Weakley stated it had been broken down by locality and \$54,000 is the standard for Accomack County.

Ms. Major stated she thought Northampton County's was probably lower. We do not have any resources. They like to use the phrase "a living wage." Mrs. Mackie stated the standards are set so high that our workers are not going to be able to accomplish this. Mr. Crockett stated and then we would be penalized. Mrs. Weakley stated they have not talked about that; however, we have been penalized in the past, for not meeting participation rates. There has not been any discussion about consequences if workers are not able to meet this new standard. Ms. Major stated there are barriers with the program; i.e., lack of education and criminal backgrounds.

Mrs. Weakley stated she is concerned what consequences might be for not meeting the ALICE standard with clients. New policies have not been issued so we do not have any idea what the consequences might be. Ms. Major stated the name has changed for the program. Mrs. Weakley stated it is no longer Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare. It is now the Virginia Initiative for Education and Work. Mr. Crockett stated the State is changing names of programs all the time.

Mrs. Weakley reported the State is working on creating an academy model for training, versus the training model we now have, which sometimes takes two years to complete all of the trainings. They want to move to an academy model so we can send people away for a specified number of weeks in order to complete all of the training they need. This is particularly useful for Child Welfare. Often, by the time the workers commence trainings, they already have caseloads. Trainers complain people are calling trainees and pulling them out of trainings to discuss those caseloads, and they are missing out on some of the training, as a result. The State tried this several years ago and some agencies like Virginia Beach complained about it so they did away with it. Agencies did not like their workers being gone for that period of time. The State realizes now that they should have stayed with that model and now they are trying to shift back to it. Mr. Crockett stated he is pro academy training as they have it in law enforcement. He further stated the advantage is when you determine the academy training dates you can base your hiring around the academy trainings. For example, if you have a vacancy in January and the academy has training in the spring, you can base your hiring around the time of the training. It is more disciplined and more organized. There is a \$4 million dollar price tag on the training academy, and an \$11 million dollar price tag on salary increases.

2) Mrs. Weakley stated she went to Court relative to the No Trespassing

against a client. Mrs. Weakley stated he was very humble in Court. He has now moved to Northampton County.

3) Mrs. Weakley attended the regular CPMT (Community Policy and Management Team) meeting and she also the CPMT Retreat.

4) Mrs. Weakley also facilitated a full staff meeting at ACDSS. We reviewed all of the safety protocols in case we ever had an active shooter in the building.

Mrs. Weakley then reminded the Board Members our Agency Picnic & Team Building activity was going to be on July 30, 2019 at 12:30 PM. She invited them to attend the luncheon and activities.

At that time Mr. Crockett inquired how the CSA Coordinator is doing. Mrs. Weakley stated he is doing great. She further stated he has taken the bull by the horns and from everything she has seen everything seems to be in order. He did face a resistance from some people. Mr. Crockett inquired the name of the CSA Coordinator and Mrs. Weakley stated Rudy Zavala and that he had facilitated the CPMT Retreat the previous day. He is currently preparing contracts for all of the CSA vendors.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 – FPM (Family Partnership Meeting) Funds**. Mrs. Weakley stated we were awarded another \$1,500 as a result of the Family Partnership meetings that occurred at our agency during the period from December 1, 2018 – February 28, 2019. She further stated the State is encouraging us to increase these meetings. She stated the money can only be used for other Family Partnership meetings, which could include transportation or child care for family member to attend family partnership meetings.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon**. Mrs. Harmon stated we have just started a new Fiscal Year. For the month of June our Total Expenditures were \$337,392.30. Our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$37,035.00 and our Total Local Balance to Date is \$779,264.00. Mr. Crockett stated "good work" and Mrs. Harmon stated it is the start of a new year.

On motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Foster Care Return of Custody Case #1078799 and Director's Consult, as permitted by the Code of Virginia Section 2.2.3712.

Mr. Crockett made a motion that they move into Open Session and that they discussed only the following matters listed on the Agenda for Closed Session, seconded by Ms. Gordy. Ms. Major called a vote (Mr. Martin – yes; Mrs. Mackie – yes); Mr. Crockett – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; and Ms. Major – yes).

1. Foster Care Return of Custody Case #21078799
2. Director's Consult

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Gordy, the meeting was adjourned.

Mr. Martin stated before the meeting was adjourned he would like to make a statement. He wanted to thank everyone for their concerns during his recent illness. He thanked Mr. Crockett for accepting his calls. Ms. Gordy stated they were glad to have him back. Mr. Martin requested the Board continue to keep him in their prayers.

Ms. Gordy mentioned the Minutes had stated something about a background check and Mrs. Weakley talking with Accomack County Administrator Mike Mason. Mrs. Weakley stated Mr. Mason had not called her back. He was researching the issue.

The meeting ended at 10:05 AM

APPROVED: Laura Belle Gordy

ATTEST: Vicki Weakley