

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Mrs. Elsie Mackie, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Robert Crockett; Mr. John Sparkman; Mr. Donald L. Hart, Jr.; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary. Due to Mr. Robert Martin's recent surgery he was unable to attend the meeting.

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

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of February 18, 2020.** On motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Minutes of February 18, 2020 were approved as written.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Fraud Report.** Mr. Crockett stated the report completed by Fraud Investigator Frances Bailey was a good job.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Director's Report.** Mrs. Weakley stated she attended three Bridges Poverty Planning meetings; a CPMT (Community Policy and Management Team) and an Emergency CPMT meeting; two Truancy meetings; a meeting with Atlantic Union Bank; a CPS (Child Protective Services) Appeal; an ACDSS Supervisor's meeting; a Regional Local Director's meeting; and a Professional Development Committee Member meeting.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – SNAP E&T.** Mrs. Weakley stated she wanted to bring the Board up to date on the SNAP E&T issue. It has definitely been a challenge. She further stated she got clarification that informed us we would be running the SNAP E&T program, which is education and training for folks who are receiving SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps). When you read the policy they were not giving us money or any kind of options to run this program. We have now had it clarified. We will be running the SNAP E&T program. That is modified for the ABAWD (Able Bodied Adults without Dependents). The definition of dependents is children under the age of six who are only receiving help with the food.

A lot of those people are already employed so we are supposed to help them get better employment or more hours. Mrs. Weakley stated she wanted the Board to see this as it is going to be an interesting challenge. They are giving us \$5,000 to run this program and informed us we can only use this money for transportation which is unusual. In the past they allowed us to purchase uniforms for people to go to work and steel toed boots; however, they are not allowing us to do that now. If you have someone in that circumstance, you can contact Central Office, put in a request and they will consider allowing a reimbursement. You cannot put it up front. It is going to be a huge challenge to pull this off. We will give it our best.

Mrs. Mackie stated as long as clients are doing what they are asked to do she assumed they would continue to receive SNAP past the six months. Ms. Major stated she administered that program at Northampton County DSS and Mrs. Weakley had explained it quite well.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 – CPS Case Purge.** Mrs. Weakley stated we have 184 cases that are ready to be purged according to the State guidelines. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, it was ordered the cases be purged. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Letter from the Commissioner.** Mrs. Weakley stated she wanted the Board to see the letter. This was something we had periodically discussed in a more formal form. This is a definite result of Rockbridge and gives the Commissioner permission and authority to come in and take over

an agency relative to foster care guidelines. He would have the authority to fire anyone and his staff would run the program until the agency is up and running. This is the first time we have had such authorities and at this moment it is only foster care.

Ms. Major inquired how this would affect the Board. Mrs. Weakley has not heard that addressed. The authority is only relative to foster care as they would only come in and run the program with their staff. They have hired three new people and she did not know how three people could run it. Mr. Crockett said if the State came in and took over, the Board Members would have to resign. Mrs. Weakley stated this would not be happening on her watch. She does not think we are in any danger of that occurring.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 9 – Services Appreciation Month**. Mrs. Weakley stated this used to be called Social Worker Month; however, now it is Services Appreciation month. The Governor did not send the Declaration like he did for Benefits Month; however, we are going ahead with it. Child Welfare has already been out to their luncheon. The Adult Services Unit has not done anything yet. She does not know how it will be done now with the COVID 19 virus. She was sure they would figure out something.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 10 – Local Board Training**. Ms. Jen Cooper of the Eastern Regional Office had stated April 13, 2020; however, Mrs. Weakley had not had any conversation with her since the virus hit. Mr. Crockett stated it probably would not happen. Mrs. Weakley will get in touch with her about a cancellation and when it would be rescheduled.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 11 – Building Bridges Summit**. Mrs. Weakley stated this would be on hold. We officially cancelled the April 1, 2020 meeting.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 12 – New Regional Director**. Mrs. Weakley stated a new Eastern Regional Director has been hired. She is supposed to take over the position March 25, 2020 in the middle of this epidemic. His name is Peter Gezzi; however, he prefers to be called Pete. He is currently employed with Prince William County Social Services. He has also worked in Maryland and Colorado. He also has a ranch or farm in Maryland and he goes back and forth. He might possibly see us more often. Mrs. Weakley stated she had not met him yet.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 13 – Local Agency Dashboard**. Mrs. Weakley stated she wanted the Board to know the dashboard is now being sent to County Administrator Mike Mason. They also said they were sending it to the Board Chair. Ms. Major stated she did not believe she had received anything. This is not the part that went to Mr. Mason; however, she wanted to inform the Board. For example, if you look down at the first column – last one on the bottom – MA applications processed on time; i.e., Medicaid – we are not meeting the mark. This is what was sent to Mr. Mason. The target area is 97% and we were at 94%.

Mrs. Weakley further stated if you look at us compared to other agencies, we are way above what they are doing. She wanted the Board to see this in case anything is said. Yes, we are not hitting 97%; however, we are above what other agencies are doing.

Mrs. Weakley stated we are doing well on other things. We are having issues in the Child Welfare Unit with timeliness of first contacts. She has spoken with Supervisor Sylvia Stanley and it appears workers are having issues with that. She is working with them about correcting that issue. We have some workers who are working hard on overdue referrals. She asked the Board to look at the top of Page 2 the CPS overdue referrals – we are at 19% and they want us at 5% but if you look

at the rest of the State they are at 30-some percent. We are not at the mark and working on it but we are better than most of the areas.

Mrs. Weakley stated she is proud of the Kinship Care piece. They want us at 25%; however, we are at 40%. Most agencies are between 4%-7%. We are doing an amazing job with this. She further stated this is a fairly new measure. Ms. Stanley is working with staff on seeing documentation is done in a timely manner.

Mrs. Weakley stated the last item on Page 3 is transcription usage. This is the new system where people call in their dictation. It is called in, someone types it and then it is mailed back to them. They have been pushing this for a while. Most of the State is transcribing around 12%; however, 36% of ours is being transcribed. We have been pushing this and putting up a chart at the end of the hall where service is located to show the names of the top three transcription workers.

Mrs. Weakley stated she just wanted the Board to see our percentages and even though we did not hit the State mark, we were well above other parts of the State. At that time Mr. Crockett requested Mrs. Weakley to see Mr. Mason was given the information she had provided. She stated she would submit same to Mr. Mason.

Mr. Hart inquired about certain areas where Accomack County did not show at all; i.e., congregate care and other areas. Mrs. Weakley stated congregate care is a residential facility and we currently do not have anyone in a residential facility so that is why it is not showing. Mr. Hart then stated so everything with nothing showing means we do not have any one there. Mrs. Weakley stated that was correct.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 14 – Adult Protective Services Information**. Mrs. Weakley we have had several disagreements about APS (Adult Protective Services). She is sure sometimes the Board gets questions about issues. She wanted the Board to know we receive more complaints about self-neglect cases. Unfortunately, financial exploitation is on the rise. However, Mrs. Weakley did not think it would rise to the level of self-neglect cases. We are having disagreements on how to handle financial exploitation with the banks. A couple of weeks ago the Legislature passed if banks put a hold on an account due to their thinking a customer is being exploited, they have to report it to DSS within five days so we will be aware of this. Previously, banks might have told us and then again, might not have told us. When we are contacted we immediately contact the Accomack County Sheriff's Office and start an investigation.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 15 – Agency Retreat**. Mrs. Weakley stated the Retreat had been scheduled for April 17, 2020; however, it now appeared it would have to be rescheduled due to COVID 19. Ms. Major stated we would have to pay that by ear.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 16 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager – Shirley Harmon**. Ms. Harmon stated for the month of February our Total Expenditures were \$320,258.94. Our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$400,071.94 and our Total Balance to Date is \$416,227.06. Mr. Crockett stated the numbers look great. We have been through 75% of the year and we have only spent 65% of the budget. He further stated she had done an excellent job.

Mrs. Harmon stated she had a couple of foster care programs that might be running low prior to the end of the year; however, she had the option to request money from the State. She will keep an eye on it.

Mr. Crockett asked Ms. Harmon if she had any plans on retiring. Ms. Harmon stated not at the present time. Ms. Harmon then stated she had been contacted

by Accomack County relative to our going ahead and doing our payroll in case something were to arise. She wanted the Board to know payroll was done without the Board's vouchers being prepared. The Board stated that was fine.

On motion by Mr. Sparkman, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Adoption Case #2070231 and Director's Consult – Reminder of April date change and Director EPPE, as permitted by the Code of Virginia Section 2.2.3712.

On motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board returned from Closed Session and confirmed the only items discussed were the ones listed on the Board Members' Agenda. Ms. Major called a vote (Mrs. Mackie – yes; Mr. Hart – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes; and Ms. Major – yes).

Ms. Major stated the next Board meeting will be held Tuesday, April 21, 2020, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the meeting adjourned at 10:08 A.M.

APPROVED: **C. Reneta Major**\_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: **Vicki J. Weakley**\_\_\_\_\_