

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, at 9:30 A.M. Present in person were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Mr. Donald L. Hart, Jr.; Mr. Robert Crockett; Mr. William D. Henning, Jr.; Mr. Robert B. Martin; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary. Vice-Chairman Elsie B. Mackie was unable to attend.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order and welcomed the Board Members. Mr. Hart gave the Invocation.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Introduction of Elena Zavala (Family Service Specialist II); Latasha Banks (Family Service Specialist II); and Keith Moody (Family Service Specialist I)**. Mrs. Weakley introduced Ms. Zavala to the Board and stated she had been with the Agency for four years as a Human Services Assistant in the Child Welfare Unit. She earned her Bachelor's Degree and is now a new Family Services Specialist II – in foster care.

Mrs. Weakley introduced Ms. Latasha Banks and stated the Board had met her just a short time ago when she was hired as a Human Services Assistant in the Adult Services Unit. She recently accepted a Family Service Specialist II position with the Adult Services Unit. Mrs. Weakley stated Ms. Banks is currently working on her Master's Degree.

Mrs. Weakley finally introduced Mr. Keith Moody who was previously with Therapeutic Interventions. He was recently hired to take the Family Service Specialist position vacated by Mr. Whitesey Banks in the Child Welfare Unit.

On behalf of the Board Ms. Major welcomed all three to ACDSS.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Approve Minutes of September 15, 2020**. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Hart, the Minutes of September 15, 2020 were approved as written.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Fraud Report**. Mr. Crockett stated Fraud Investigator Frances Bailey continues to do good work.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Director's Report**. Mrs. Weakley stated she had attended the Members Helping Members Board meeting; the CPMT (Community Policy and Management Team) meeting; the CPMT Annual Retreat (where they updated policy items); participated in interviews (we had anticipated we would hire four Family Services Specialist positions; however, we were only able to hire three); phone meeting with Mike Mason, County Administrator and ANEC (discussed using CARES funds to assist with utility bills through ACDSS with staff here doing Members Helping Members); the State VLSSE (Virginia League of Social Service Executives) Board meeting in Williamsburg; the Eastern Shore Disaster Preparedness Committee meeting; two Supervisor meetings; and one full staff/appreciation event.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 – Addition to Accomack County Website**. Mrs. Weakley stated the County has added ACDSS to the Accomack County website and wanted to share it with the Board Members. At that time Information Systems Support Specialist II Troy Greenley came into the meeting. He stated we are now under the Departments of Accomack County on the website. We have a short description of all programs provided by DSS and at the very end we have a section showing what people need to bring to a shelter, if emergency shelters are activated.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Policy Update (SNAP Replacement)**. Mrs. Weakley stated we discussed this at the previous meeting. She further stated she had a

benefits supervisor research the policy. Mrs. Weakley stated the policy guidance states do not have to replenish EBT cards for the people requesting emergency EBT replacement funds after a power outage; Policy/guidance states, we have to be prudent in how much, if anything we replenish them. Asking questions to verify the legitimacy of a loss, is appropriate to determine what amount, if any, should be replenished.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 9 – Performance Indicators Monthly Report (PIMR) and Item 10 Quarterly Dashboard**. Mrs. Weakley stated both items say basically the same thing, but in two separate formats. **Item 9** is the VSSS Performance Indicators Monthly Report. Mrs. Weakley stated the two things she wanted to call to the Board's attention are both related to the timeliness of the Medicaid application process and the Quarterly Local Agency Dashboard shows that as well.

We had a system in place to catch certain applications prior to the pandemic; i.e., the aide for the benefit units pulled the point-in-time report on a daily basis, and had put a copy in each worker's mailbox if his/her case appeared on the list. However, when everyone started working from home and not coming to the office to access his/her mailbox, the process was stopped. We did not realize until the reports came out that we had an issue, with some applications being processed late. Some applications – depending on the client's choice - go through Common Help which is the State entity to process applications. When the State sends what they have done on the applications to us, they generally send it to Office Associate III Jessica Bennett, as she is the point person. She then assigns the application to a worker. When a case is already open to another worker for another program, instead of sending it to Ms. Bennett, Richmond sends it to that worker's Point in Time report. The worker does not realize it is assigned to them, so the case ends up on the overdue list. We have returned to our previous system where the aide is pulling the point in time reports and emailing the supervisor and worker assigned to the case. Mrs. Weakley stated it only takes a few to put us out of compliance. The system is now in place so hopefully this will fix the problem we are having with Medicaid applications, although, since the reports usually run a couple of months behind, it may be a couple of months before we see improvement. At the end of August there were 377 overdue Medicaid renewals. She further stated because of the pandemic we were not allowed to touch them. We were told we could not close cases as long as the State of Emergency was in place. Many of those overdue cases should be closed or have some adverse action, like a reduction in benefits; however, we are not allowed to act on them. Everyone is worried about how many we will be dealing with when the pandemic is over.

Mrs. Weakley stated **Item 10** – the Quarterly Local Agency Dashboard – mirrors the same thing, with Medicaid applications. The Dashboard, unfortunately, shows that although we made improvement from 22% in our CPS referrals being overdue to 7.5%, we dropped in the timeliness with contacts measure. Mrs. Weakley stated she had spoken with Child Welfare Supervisor Sylvia Stanley, regarding this issue.

Mrs. Weakley further stated if the Board Members would look at the next to last page of the Quarterly Local Agency Dashboard the 7.5% of the overdue contacts is showing. However, when we are compared to the entire Eastern Region – they are out of compliance by 40.4% and Eastern Region Level II agencies, like Accomack, are 19% overdue. We are doing better than other agencies in our region, but have not yet met the State goal. We have had a couple of issues with the Child Welfare Unit; i.e, two vacancies which have now been filled and some conflict within the unit, which Ms. Stanley is working with the unit members on. Mrs.

Weakley stated she wanted the Board to know when we are doing good and when we are not doing well.

At that time Ms. Major stated the reports are sent to County Administrator Mike Mason, to our Board Members and to the Director.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 11 – Rollover of Annual Leave**. Mrs. Weakley stated as of October 15, 2020 the State Board approved for local boards to make a decision on whether or not employees could roll over more annual leave than they normally do if there is an issue, such as the pandemic, which prevented them from using their leave.

Ms. Major inquired what the current cap is. Mrs. Weakley stated it depends on the years of service the worker has. Mr. Crockett stated there is a cap. Mrs. Weakley said the State has recommended that in situations like the pandemic – when people cannot use their leave time – the board can approve staff would be able to carry over more than the cap to the next year.

Mr. Crockett then asked in a situation like this do we follow County action or do we follow State action. We need to be consistent. Mrs. Weakley stated normally we follow the State; however, in this instance the State referred it back to the local boards to decide.

Mrs. Weakley then stated she and Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon had looked at how much time we were talking about for staff in our agency. She further stated their recommendation to the Board was to allow staff to roll over, above and beyond the usual maximum, up to 100 hours. Some workers will still have to use between 30-50 hours before the end of the year.

At that time Mr. Crockett inquired if we approved Mrs. Weakley's proposal, would it affect someone who is retiring. For example, if someone decided to retire in January, would those hours be going to give her more buy-out time. Mrs. Weakley stated this would not affect the cap on leave pay out.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Hart, the Rollover of Annual Leave was approved. Ms. Major called a vote (Mr. Crockett –yes; Mr. Hart – yes; Mr. Henning – yes; Mr. Martin – yes; Ms. Major – yes). The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 12 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager – Shirley Harmon**. Ms. Harmon stated for the month of September our Total Expenditures were \$307,918.86; our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$165,749.36 and our Total Local Balance to Date is \$650,549.64. Mr. Crockett stated we are 7% below budget. He also inquired whether there were any money concerns and Ms. Harmon stated there were none.

On motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing CPS Release of Custody – Case #21174899 and Director's Consult, as permitted by the Code of Virginia Section 2.2.3712.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Henning, 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 (Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Hart – yes; Mr. Martin – yes; Mr. Henning – yes and Ms. Major – yes).

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Henning, the CPS Release of Custody – Case #21174899 was approved. The Board Members accepted same by saying Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major stated the next Board Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, 2020, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Henning, the meeting adjourned at 10:58 A.M.

APPROVED: **Cassandra Reneta Major** \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: **Vicki Weakley** \_\_\_\_\_