

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 9:30 A.M. Present in person were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Mrs. Elsie Mackie, Vice-Chairman; Mr. David Whalen; Mr. Jackie H. Phillips; Mr. Robert Martin; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary.

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

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Introduction of New Employees**. Employees were in training so the introduction is postponed to the next regular meeting.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Approve Minutes of September 20, 2022**. Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whalen, to approve the Minutes as written. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Fraud Report**. No questions or concerns were raised.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Director’s Notes**. Mrs. Weakley stated that since the last Board meeting, she attended a Network Table meeting, Open Table meeting (the grant was approved. The plan is to start accepting referrals in February 2023), a full staff meeting that included training on professional dress and active shooter training, regional Director’s meeting, CPMT (Community Planning and Management Team) policy retreat (The retreat was mostly in reaction to the CSA audit. The audit went well. The only concern raised was about the wording in the Eastern Shore policy manual.), a Supervisor’s meeting, staff appreciation, and numerous staff interviews.

Mr. Phillips raised the question if Accomack County Sheriff’s Department provided the active shooter training or if the State had someone come in. Mrs. Weakley stated that the Accomack County Sheriff’s Department with Lt. Fisher conducted the training. Mr. Phillips stated that they do a good job with the training. Mrs. Weakley agreed.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 COVID Update**. Mrs. Weakley stated that the PHE (Public Health Emergency) has been officially extended until January 2023. The Commissioner continues to hear that it will be approved until April 2023, but there is no official word at this time. Emergency SNAP benefit allotments for September were distributed in October. In addition to the P-EBT issues stated at the last meeting, it has been discovered that there is now a scam occurring. The State is trying to get a handle on it telling users to do their best to protect themselves.

During COVID, VIEW (Virginia Initiative for Education and Work) participation was voluntary for clients. It will return to being mandatory on January 1, 2023. The State is affording workers six months to have clients assigned to an activity. The Commissioner stated that the sanction count will start at zero and any previous sanctions would not be recognized. Sanctions for noncompliance will only apply to actions occurring after January 1, 2023. Mrs. Mackie asked for clarification if the guidelines remained as three sanctions and then the person was permanently removed. Mrs. Weakley stated, yes. Mrs. Mackie stated that it used to be a person would get sanctioned the first time for three months, then they were sanctioned a second time for six months, and finally sanctioned a third time permanently. Mrs. Mackie asked if a person was only sanctioned twice pre-COVID; they could come back. Mrs. Weakley stated, yes. Mr. Phillips asked what a sanction entails. Mrs. Mackie stated that the worker will request that the client perform job searches, go to school, or some other activity. If the client does not comply, they lose their financial assistance for the allotted sanction time. Mrs. Weakley stated that the VIEW twenty-four month clock will start effective January 2023 and anything prior to that will not be considered on the VIEW clock. The State will evaluate for hardship extensions for the federal sixty month clock. Virginia structured the VIEW program so a client can receive the TANF benefits for two years, be off two years, come back for two years, off for two more years, and return for one final year. The federal government allows a total of sixty months. With the State removing the twenty-four month clocks for Virginia residents, they are unsure how it will impact the federal sixty month clock unless they are all granted hardships. The details are still unclear.

Mrs. Weakley added that she left off of the agenda that the agency opened a shelter on October 3rd due to the effects of Hurricane Ian. Staff came in on Sunday, October 2nd for a mini refresher training on operating a shelter. The shelter was open for 9 hours and closed because no one came in.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Approval of the COOP and SOP Operations Plan for Disaster Services**. Mrs. Weakley stated that the auditors request a copy of this plan every year and it needs to be approved by the Board. Mr. Phillips inquired if there were any updates made to the plan. Mrs. Weakley stated, yes, a few procedures in the policy were streamlined to make logical sense. On motion by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mr. Whalen, the COOP and SOP Operations Plan for Disaster Services was approved. Ms. Major called a vote (Mrs. Mackie – yes; Mr. Whalen – yes; Mr. Phillips – yes; Ms. Major – yes). The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 8 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager – Wendy Linton**. Ms. Linton stated that the beginning budget was \$864,543.00. The Year-To-Date Local Expenditures were \$175,161.98, and the Total Local Balance-To-Date is \$689,381.02. Ms. Linton stated we are running about 7% below budget. A couple of the project lines, specifically, Chaffee Independent Living and Chaffee ETV, are funds received from leftover COVID funds from last year to help our Fostering Futures. Sixteen thousand dollars was received with a small window in which to use it or lose it. Ms. Linton continued that in next month's budget those funds will no longer appear because any unused portion was returned to the State for other agencies to use.

Closed Session - On motion by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing items stated on the Agenda (Employee Separation, Employee Evaluation, Director's Consult) as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2.3712.

On motion by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mr. Whalen, 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. Whalen – yes; Mr. Phillips – yes; Mr. Martin – yes; Ms. Major – yes). The motion carried.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2022, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Whalen seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the meeting adjourned at 10:47 A.M.

APPROVED: **Cassandra Reneta Major**

ATTEST: **Vicki Weakley**