

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, 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; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary.

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

Ms. Major continued to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of January 17, 2023**. Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, 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 4 – Introduction of New Employees**. Mrs. Weakley introduced Lanequa Washington. Mrs. Washington was promoted from a Benefit Programs Specialist II to a III. Brayon Portillo and Noel Weakley have been in emergency positions as Office Associates and are now full-time in the same positions. Tatsiana Salazar and Kelley Teabo began employment on February 16, 2023, as Office Associate II in the clerical unit. Samantha Coulbourne was promoted from Office Associate II in the clerical unit to Human Services Assistant III in the benefits unit. Ms. Major congratulated all new employees and those promoted into new positions. The Board in unison expressed the same.

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

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 6 – Director’s Notes**. Mrs. Weakley stated that since the last meeting she attended a VLSSE (Virginia League of Social Services Executives) meeting, Open Table meeting, two Office Associate interviews, two Truancy meetings, Community Planning and Management Team (CPMT) meeting, Virtual Meet and Greet for new Regional Consultants (SNAP, TANF, Child Care), PHE unwinding meeting, a Supervisors meeting, a Benefit Program Specialist interview, and an Agency Retreat.

Mrs. Weakley informed the Board that the agency had an overnight and late night with a foster child. The hospital where the child was receiving treatment decided they wanted the child removed immediately and, because there were no foster homes appropriate and available at the time, the only option was for the child to remain at the agency with the Child Welfare staff. A foster parent agreed to have the child reside with them on the second evening until the child could be placed at a residential facility on the following day. Mr. Whalen inquired if the agency had a special room that a child could be kept overnight. Mrs. Weakley stated, no, the building is not set up for overnight stays. An air mattress was used from a shelter kit for the child’s bedding and staff rotated through the night until at such point the child was able to go to the foster home. This situation is happening across the state. Most of these children have behavioral issues and there are no facilities available for them. Mr. Phillips inquired if there is a policy in place for coverage with a child or if it is on a voluntary basis. Mrs. Weakley stated that it was on a voluntary basis. The Child Welfare Unit is staffed with a good team of workers who stepped up to help out. At the recommendation by the State, there is a task force that will come and assist

us. Mr. Phillips inquired why this is being seen across the state. Mrs. Weakley stated there are a few reasons. One, is due to the changes Medicaid has made. In the past, facilities could charge the maximum that Medicaid would allow for a service. If a facility charged \$15.00 for a service and Medicaid said they would pay up to \$25.00, the facility would bill Medicaid for \$25.00. Medicaid put a stop to facilities charging the maximum amount in these instances. Facilities, in turn, began removing children from their facilities and denied entry to others because they felt they were not being reimbursed enough. Secondly, the State went to the QRTP (Qualified Residential Treatment Program). This program required facilities to go through a rigorous process and get a special license in order to continue to receive funding. Agencies can use facilities that are not part of the QRTP, but they are limited. This agency and other smaller agencies using just one non QRTP facility will put us in non-compliance. Some facilities chose to close rather than become a QRTP facility.

Mrs. Weakley stated that she also attended a virtual meeting with the Commissioner. The Attorney General stated that appeals will not have to be completed if the appeal is only for the reason of the PHE supplements ending. If a case is made that there was a miscalculation or information was not considered then the client is entitled to an appeal.

The State IT department is performing upgrades to agency systems. It is anticipated that the T1 lines will be upgraded sometime between June and October 2023. The Commonwealth of Virginia approves new staff email addresses and the process is taking about two weeks to go through. New employees are unable to access any trainings until the email address has been approved.

The scamming for EBT cards has gone up. The State has decided to allow us to replace the lost funds with federal funds. This will not include the PEBT; only the regular SNAP benefit will be replaced. This agency experienced a higher volume of applications this month since the PEBT has ended.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 7 - COVID Update**. Mrs. Weakley stated that the last extra SNAP supplement was sent out this month. April 1, 2023, the agency will begin the massive project of reviewing the overdue Medicaid cases. The State will send a list each month of which cases are to be processed. Cases will be divided up over a 12 month period. The State has not provided information if funds will be sent for overtime to the localities or if those funds will only be provided to DMAS.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 8 – Birthday Leave Policy**. Mrs. Weakley stated that the birthday leave policy has been in place for some time now, however; the official record approved by the Board remains unfound. Mrs. Weakley asked that a new birthday leave policy reinstating the old policy be signed to become a part of the Standard Operating Procedures for this agency. Mrs. Weakley stated that there may be other instances that this may occur until at such point the Standard Operating Procedures are complete.

Mr. Whalen made a motion, seconded by Mr. Phillips, to reaffirm the birthday leave policy. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 9 – Purge Cases Records**. Mrs. Weakley stated that there are 130 benefit cases from 1973 to 2016, automotive files which consist of operation summary sheets, usage logs, record logs, and gas allocations from January 2012 – December 2019, and monthly vault EBT card authorization, EBT issue log, and vault card manifest files from January 2018 – December 2019 that need to be purged in accordance with State policy.

Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whalen, that the aforementioned items be purged. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 10 – Benefits Appreciation Month**. Mrs. Weakley stated that February is Benefits Appreciation Month. As a reminder, in appreciation for the benefit program staff, the agency pays for them to have lunch at the restaurant of their choosing.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 10 – 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 \$373,416.10, and the Total Local Balance-To- Date is \$491,126.90. Some of the funding allocated for various programs will be depleted when the unused portion of those funds are returned to the State for use by other agencies.

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 (Board Acceptance – Foster Care Case #21202559 & #21212860, Director’s Consult, and Director EPPE) as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2.3712.

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

Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whalen, that the Board accept Foster Care Case #21202559 & #21212860. Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 20, 2023, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Whalen, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 A.M.

APPROVED: Cassandra Reneta Major

ATTEST: Vicki Weakley