

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 9:30 A.M. Present in person were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Mrs. Elsie Mackie, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Robert Martin; Mr. David Whalen; Vicki Weakley, Secretary, and Nadine Greenley, Assistant Director.

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.** Mrs. Weakley introduced Marissa Thomas who was a student intern. She graduated in December and has accepted the position of Family Services Specialist I with the APS Unit. Nadine Greenley, who has been with the agency for numerous years, has accepted the position of Assistant Director. Ms. Major welcomed Ms. Thomas and congratulated Mrs. Greenley on her new position. The Board, in unison, expressed the same.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Approve Minutes of January 16, 2024.** 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.** Mrs. Weakley stated that the Fraud Investigator position is still vacant, but the fraud supervisor has stated that interviews are taking place next week. Unfortunately, it has been discovered that numerous things for fraud were not being done and documentation records were not what they should have been.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Director’s Notes.** Mrs. Weakley stated that since the last meeting, she attended a CPMT (Community Planning and Management Team), a Truancy meeting, regional director’s meeting, several HR meetings, three interviews, Supervisor’s meeting, full staff meeting (staff were educated on how the realignment is calculated because of concerns and rumors), a CPS appeal, and a supervisor retreat (the HR attorneys presented dos and don’ts and things to look out for).

A student intern from Walden University was supposed to start, but she has backed out. This is the second intern from Walden University that has backed out prior to their start date.

The Governor has recommended a 1% cost-of-living raise, but the legislatures have recommended 3%. Mr. Phillips inquired if it was stated as cost-of-living or a bonus. Mrs. Weakley stated that it was recommended as a cost-of-living raise.

Ms. Major stated that childcare staff hosted a community event. Mrs. Weakley added that Accomack hosted on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and Northampton hosted on March 10<sup>th</sup>. The community seemed pleased with both events. Mrs. Greenley stated that eight families participated. Families were educated on services offered through the childcare program and eight community partners joined with information and goody bags for them. Ms. Major stated that she received a compliment from an attendee that stated Northampton and Accomack County went above and beyond their expectations.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 – February – Benefits Appreciation Month.** Mrs. Weakley reminded the Board that, in the past, staff were allowed to choose where they would like to get lunch and the agency will pay for it. Staff are also given an extra 30 minutes added to their lunch time to factor in service time and delays.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Medicaid Unwinding Update.** Mrs. Weakley stated that the State deadline for Medicaid cases to be completed was originally set for May and now they are saying April. This is not going to be possible for the agency to complete. The State is a month and a half behind on sending out statistics; therefore, the last information received was for December 2023, at which time we had 2,445 cases left to process. This may be feasible to accomplish if there were no other work to be done. Most of this work falls onto the adult benefit unit and unfortunately that unit also has four vacancies. Ms. Major inquired if there will be a penalty if the cases are not completed by the new deadline. Mrs. Weakley stated there has been no mention of a penalty, but there may come a time when we begin receiving stern emails to have it done. It seemed to be an impossible task from the start. When the pandemic started and we were not allowed to close any cases unless the person passed away, requested we close their case, or they moved out of

state, we continued to do as much as possible. In order to keep everything as up-to-date as was possible, when a renewal came due, we would go ahead and start the process. If the case was going to stay open and was to be approved, the worker would do that. If it was going to be closed, we left the case alone. Other agencies were doing the same. At some point, DMAS told us to stop and not to touch the cases anymore which meant all the cases would multiply exponentially. We were in this situation for two years, but the State wants us to take one year of getting out of the situation during a time when, across the state, there are staff vacancies. The State's solution was to offer people overtime, which is great, but there is only so much you can ask of people to do who are already working hard all day long. In speaking to other Directors, we are finding the same thing of overtime being used and then abruptly stops. Staff were going back to only their 8-hour workday. It seemed when they were rested and refreshed the overtime would begin again.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 13 - Update per diem amount for lunch**. Mrs. Weakley proposed that the per diem amount for lunch be raised as prices continue to increase.

Mr. Phillips inquired what the amount for dinner is now. Ms. Linton stated that the current per diem amounts are \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch, and \$30.00 for dinner. Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whalen, to change the per diem amount for lunch to \$20.00. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 12 – Financial Statement**. Ms. Linton stated that the local budget was \$944,084.00. The Year-To-Date Local Expenditures were \$454,253.04, and the Total Local Balance-To-Date is \$489,830.96. Ms. Linton pointed out to the Board that there are a few changes. The local only funds that are usually around \$4,000 was increased for payment of the carpet. A review took place that showed funds were not going to be used and those were sent back to the State that could be distributed to other agencies. Also, TANF, budget line 808, is in the negative because of funds that were recouped.

**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 EPPE – Rudy Zavala and Director's Consult) as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2.3712. Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

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

Ms. Major stated that the minutes needed to be revisited. Mr. Whalen made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, to approve the Minutes of January 16, 2024, as written. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Mr. Whalen made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Mackie that the Board accept the EPPE of Mr. Zavala. Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 9:30 A.M. Ms. Major stated that she will not be present during that meeting.

Mr. Whalen made a motion, seconded by Mr. Phillips, to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 A.M.

APPROVED: Cassandra Reneta Major

ATTEST: Vicki Weakley