

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, January 17, 2017, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Elsie B. Mackie; Mr. Robert Crockett; Mr. John Sparkman; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Acting Director.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order. Mrs. Mackie gave the Invocation.

At this time Ms. Major stated our previous Director Mary E. Parker, who retired on December 31, 2016, had sent a Thank You note to the Board for their gift to her at her retirement party. Ms. Major read the note, as follows: **"Dear Board Members: Thank you for the beautiful gold earrings that were presented to me at the retirement party and the kind words that were spoken. I will wear them with pride and always remember the great group that you are. Also, thank you for choosing to be a Board Member. The work experiences you bring in making decisions about the agency and individuals to be served are often difficult to reach. Thank you for valuing the work we do. Fondly, Mary E."** Ms. Major circulated the note to the Board Members.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of December 30, 2016.** On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Minutes were approved as written. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Introduction of Meghan Gaffney, Promotion to Human Services Assistant III – Eff. 1/1/17; and New Employees: Elena Zavala – Human Services Assistant III – Eff. 12/16/16; Anna Olandez – Office Associate II – Eff. 1/1/17; and Cielo Crianza – Office Associate II – Eff. 1/9/17.** All of the above workers were introduced to the Board except Meghan Gaffney who was unavailable that day. The new workers were welcomed to ACDSS.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Fraud Update.** Mrs. Weakley stated Fraud Investigator Jack Thomas continues to do an excellent job. Mr. Crockett stated he looked at the bottom line of \$215,640 and Mr. Thomas did a good job. Mr. Thomas has been with the agency around 20 years. Mrs. Weakley stated we are looking at having him train someone, who can back him up and be familiar with the fraud investigator program and the duties involved, when Mr. Thomas is not available. Mrs. Weakley further stated Mr. Thomas is currently supervised by Benefit Program Supervisor Linda Spence; however, we are looking at possibly moving him under the ACDSS Director because there is a perception that his job is primarily for Ms. Spence's unit. Mrs. Weakley has talked with Richmond and they have stated this is a common issue when the fraud workers are supervised by a benefit supervisor and a lot of agencies have resolved the problem by moving that position under the director. In this manner staff realizes that the person handles fraud for the entire agency. We are currently under discussion about this.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Acting Director's Update.** Mrs. Weakley stated this was a short month due to the holidays. She attended the Eggs and Issues Legislative breakfast in Eastville, one Truancy meeting and the CPMT regular meeting. She further stated we had a Christmas reception at the agency for staff. No one had time to do an actual meal so we did a reception in order to take a break. We also had our first bi-monthly Child and Family Services Review. We did fairly well; however, we did have some minor issues to be corrected, which has already been done. The review team will be coming bi-monthly to review cases. Ms. Major inquired how long this would be done. Mrs. Weakley stated the Federal review is in June so they are definitely doing it until June. There has been discussion they will continue to do it after that. Part of the reason for the Federal IV-E review which is connected to foster care is because Virginia failed that review the first time to the tune of \$21 million dollars. The first

thing the State did to address this issue was to have the reviewers come every time an agency got a new IV-E case, to be sure all T's were crossed and I's were dotted. During 2016 Accomack County DSS was pulled for the Federal review. Across the State four mistakes were allowed and Virginia only had one mistake, so they feel that review system worked so well, that they have expanded it for the rest of Child Welfare. They will come bi-monthly to all agencies. The review is also connected to addressing deficits that have been identified across the State.

Mrs. Weakley further stated our reviewer is the same person who has done our IV-E reviews and she has no services background. The first review was rocky, because she did not understand the different policies and staff had a different interpretation of what the policy said. The reviewer went back to get clarification. It is going to be a little rough for a few months until she gets a better handle on child welfare policies.

Mrs. Weakley stated we have very strict requirements on how soon we have to get out on a CPS (Child Protective Services) case; i.e., either 24 hours, 72 hours or five days. Sometimes it is a little hard to comply with this when we have to go to Tangier due to bad weather, etc. The State has identified some of those cases on Tangier as not having been responded to in the required timeframe. We are probably the only agency in the State which has this as an issue and it has not been a high priority for anyone to come up with a solution or waiver. This was one of the things they identified in the review, as we had a couple of cases on Tangier that we could not get to in the appropriate timeframe. We are trying to find a solution to this problem.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 – Local DSS Profile Report, SFY 2016**. Mrs. Weakley stated she thought the Board Members would like to see the current profile. She further stated the percentage of people living in poverty went up from 19% to 20%, which represents a little over 300 people. There was a reduction of approximately 20 children living in poverty in 2016. Mr. Sparkman asked about the financial cutoff. Mrs. Weakley stated she did not know the answer but she stated she would look it up. Ms. Major stated she did not know whether they based it on a full person household and she did not know the threshold number. Mrs. Weakley stated on Page 4 the number of CPS complaints towards the bottom went up by 20 complaints this year. The APS complaints only went up by 4 complaints. She predicts the APS numbers will continue to go up, just like CPS is increasing.

Ms. Gordy asked Mrs. Weakley whether we work with the ANPDC (Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission) relative to homeless children. Ms. Gordy stated she had received phone calls about children they declared as homeless and where they lived. Mrs. Weakley stated typically we do. She stated two of the ACDSS staff just completed the training for the homeless count which is scheduled for January 27, 2017. We have one representative and we are looking for an alternate on the community group that is looking at this. People will call us and we do work with particular family. Last year we had a lady living in a car with a handicapped child. We worked with them regarding shelter issues. Unfortunately, like in every other county there is no emergency housing. Mrs. Weakley stated there is a Rapid Response Team, comprised of representatives from different agencies. They meet monthly to try and find solutions to housing issues; however, it is not a quick process. They generally have to be put up in a shelter or a hotel, until they can get to the top of a waiting list for more permanent housing.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Thanksgiving Food Basket Brochure**. Mrs. Weakley stated she wanted the Board to see the various projects workers did.

We helped 24 families with the Thanksgiving Food Baskets. This represented 33 adults and 29 children, for a total of 62 individuals.

Mrs. Weakley continued with **Item 9 – Back to School – Project 2016**. This project provided school supplies and back to school clothing. We helped 11 families - comprised of 13 children - and with school clothing there were 8 families which represented 23 children and 6 foster children.

Mrs. Weakley then proceeded to **Item 10 – 2016 Toy Drive Campaign**. She stated we purchased most of the toys this year from Roses. In previous years we used Wal-Mart; however, for the past two years Wal-Mart told us they forgot us and did not give any discounts, although we applied for it in August. We went to Roses this year as they gave us the Senior Citizens Discount, which gave us an additional \$1,000 worth of toys to purchase. For the first time in many years we had toys left over. This year we had to move toys to the Agency shed for storage. In previous years when we had the Toy Closet on the second day we did not have many toys left for distribution. This year we did not have as many people come on the second day, possibly because they had previously heard we did not have much on the second day. However, this year we had lots of toys left.

This year we asked all of the ACDSS employees – not just the Child Welfare staff – if they would like to participate in the Toy Closet; i.e., shopping for toys; assisting with bringing the toys into the agency; setting up the tables with the various age groups; assisting clients with obtaining toys for their kids, etc. We had 22 workers who volunteered. It went much faster and was much more efficient, as a result.

In previous years when the workers wanted to take a lunch break, they had to tell people to stand in line until they returned. This year because we had so many helpers, at lunchtime we had everyone who had come that day, already through the process.

Mrs. Weakley then proceeded to **The Angel Tree Project 2016**. She stated this was normally done by the Adult Services Unit and since they were so short staffed, Mrs. Weakley, together with her daughter, did the Angel Tree located at Peebles in Onley; i.e., decorating the tree and making numerous trips to Peebles to pick up gifts. We served 105 children this year and the adult population – basically age 60 and over, and some handicapped people between 18 and 60. This is the first year we did not have to go out and purchase any additional items as everything was covered. These groups contributed: Broadwater Academy, Edward Jones, Grace United Methodist Church, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Accomack County Building and Zoning and Tangier Combined School have participated every year. This year Market Street United Methodist Church participated as well.

Mrs. Weakley continued to **Gail Walker's Adopt-A Family Project**. Mrs. Weakley stated this assisted 30 adults and 53 children. We usually have an excellent turnout for that. On the second sheet Ms. Walker had a summary. There were 13 foster children who received gifts through that project - 52 adults and 142 children. Ms. Gordy stated people do not realize how much is done for the children in our community.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 11 – Financial Statement - Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon**. Ms. Harmon stated for the month of December our Total Local Expenditures were \$315,966.80. Our Total Local Adjustment was \$315,791.71 and our Total Local Balance to Date is \$440,055.29. Mr. Crockett stated our percentages looked good.

Ms. Gordy stated after reading the reports concerning what we have done for families in Accomack County, it makes you feel good and she needed that this morning. Ms. Major requested Mrs. Weakley to thank staff for what they do for ACDSS. She further stated it was nice to include all staff in the Toy Closet Project as it helps morale.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 12 – Resolution for Retired Director Mary E. Parker**. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, Mrs. Weakley was instructed to proceed with obtaining a resolution for Mrs. Parker. The motion carried. Ms. Major inquired when we could present it to Mrs. Parker. Mr. Crockett stated maybe Chairman Reneta Major or Acting Director Vicki J. Weakley could take it to her. Mrs. Weakley stated they could do it together.

On motion by Mr. Sparkman, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing ASAPS Guardian and Conservator Deceased Clients (Case #1724256 and Case #1501468); Personnel (Termination Promotion and New Employees), as permitted by the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3712.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board returned to Open Session.

On motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board confirmed the following ASAPS Guardian and Conservator Deceased Clients discussed in Closed Session (Mrs. Mackie – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes):

- I. ASAPS Guardian and Conservator Deceased Clients:
 - a. Case #1724256 – In ACDSS Care: 12/06/2010
Date of Death: 01/09/2017
 - b. Case #1501468 – In ACDSS Care: 06/22/2000
Date of Death: 01/01/2017

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Board confirmed the following Personnel (Termination; Promotion and New Employees) discussed in Closed Session (Mrs. Mackie – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes):

- II. Personnel:
 1. Termination:
 - a. Emergency Office Associate II – Anna Olandez – Eff. 12/31/16
 - b. Emergency Human Services Assistant III – Elena Zavala – Eff. 12/15/16
 - c. Meghan Gaffney – Office Associate II – Eff. 12/31/16
 2. Promotion:
 - a. Meghan Gaffney – Human Services Assistant III – Eff. 1/1/17
 3. New Employees:
 - a. Elena Zavala – Human Services Assistant III – Eff. 12/16/16
 - b. Anna Olandez – Office Associate II – Eff. 1/1/17
 - c. Cielo Crianza – Office Associate II – Eff. 1/9/17

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Sparkman, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 A.M.

APPROVED: **C. Reneta Major**_____

ATTEST: **Vicki J. Weakley**_____