

Durham County Board of Social Services

Regular Session Minutes

November 26, 2024

The Durham County Board of Social Services monthly meeting was held on Wednesday, November 26, 2024. The DSS Board Meeting was hybrid, in-person attendance in Conference Rooms 2421/22.

The following DSS Board members were in attendance:

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith, Charles I. Mitchell, Wendy Sotolongo and Dionne Moore.

The Durham County Department of Social Services was represented by the following: Director Maggie Clapp.

Assistant Directors: Margaret Faircloth, Jovetta Whitfield, Travis Williams, Latoya Chambers (Interim), Kimberly Lincoln (Interim) and Senior Operations Officer Kelly Inman.

DSS staff attending included: Felicia Cameron, Jackie Proctor, Meghan Russ, Nancy Santos, Quannah Jackson-Brown, Shontelle Smith, LaVelle Chesney, Lynn Thomas Pamela Purifoy, Tonia Gay, Carole Trimble, James Hart, , Anthony Sturdivant, and Montrella Springfield.

DSNAP staff attended for special recognition

Danielle Briggs, Senior Assistant County Attorney was present.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs called November 26, 2024, regular meeting to order followed by the reading of the decorum.

Public Comments

Sheryl Smith, and Amanda Wallace were present. Attendees were given five minutes to voice their concerns.

Approval of the Agenda

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs asked board members to review the proposed agenda for approval. Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith offered the motion to approve the proposed agenda and Board member Wendy Sotolongo seconded.

The agenda was unanimously approved.

Board member	Yes	No	Abstained
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs	Yes		
Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith	Yes		
Board member Charles I. Mitchell	Yes		
Board member Wendy Sotolongo	Yes		
Board member Dionne Moore	Yes		

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October regular meeting were unanimously approved. Board member Wendy Sotolongo offered the motion for approval of the minutes followed by the second from Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith.

Board member	Yes	No	Abstained
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs	Yes		
Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith	Yes		
Board member Charles I. Mitchell	Yes		
Board member Wendy Sotolongo	Yes		
Board member Dionne Moore	Yes		

The DSS Board members applauded staff for assisting with DSNAP to help provide food for people in Western North Carolina. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked staff for their commitment to citizens in the Durham Community along with Western North Carolina. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs suggested a photo with staff for public information.

Chair Report

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs wished everyone Happy Thanksgiving and expressed gratitude to DSS staff

Board member	Yes	No	Abstained
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs	Yes		
Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith	Yes		
Board member Charles I. Mitchell	Yes		
Board member Wendy Sotolongo	Yes		
Board member Dionne Moore	Yes		

Director's Report- Director Maggie Clapp

Director Maggie Clapp submitted a written report.

One highlight, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services was a recipient of the National Association of Medicaid Directors' 2024 Spotlight Award. Approximately, 570,000 people have enrolled in Medicaid Expansion since December 1, 2023. The enrollment was suppose to be over a two year period.

Director Maggie Clapp congratulated staff on the Adoption Gala held on November 2, 2024. Families' feedback was rewarding and the keynote speaker delivered an a exceptional speech.

Director Clapp acknowledged Shewanda Edwards for helping with the lecture at the University of North Carolina School of Government on contract services.

Director Maggie Clapp attended the Medicaid Division Meeting on November 20, 2024. Two Let's Chat with staff were held in October.

The City of Durham notified DSS about the pledge to Eviction Diversion. The City of Durham conveyed they were not aware of the \$650,000. 00 pledge for the Eviction Diversion Program. The County Manager notified DSS at the BOCC Budget Meeting. The issue is being discussed and hopefully resolved. This would be a huge loss for DSS. If the issue is not

resolved soon, Director Clapp plans to request a joint meeting to advocate for the funding.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs stated the joint meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2024. Chair Commissioner Jacobs will follow up with the County Manager about the agenda. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs mentioned the concerns of safety net programs for people. There are discussions about cutting SNAP, Childcare, Medicaid and other programs.

Family Economic Independence (FEI) – Latoya Chambers, Interim Assistant Director 26.19

Interim Assistant Director Latoya Chambers submitted a written report.

The Wait List Policy has been updated for priority groups for child care. Three months were added for teens to complete high schools. The Housing Authority Jobs Plus Program was renewed.

Interim Assistant Director Latoya Chambers highlighted staff assisting with the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. FNS Recertification passed timeliness the month of October. Work First Cash recertifications and applications passed timeliness with 100% which exceed the State's expectation. Work First Employment Services reported five individuals established employment. Vacancies continued to be filled.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs inquired about child care wait list. Program Manager Tonia Gay conveyed there are 121 families on the wait list. One hundred thirty eight have been approved but unable to locate a provider. Two hundred sixty five children are waiting.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs pointed out the impact on the workforce due people unable to find child care. The issue should be raised at the State level, report states \$6.9 billion worth of economic impact due parents unable to find child care. The BOCC have considered economic incentive

agreements with companies to provide a subsidy or child care on site. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs suggested discussing the issue at the Joint City/County Meeting.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked FEI staff assisting with DSNAP and other accomplishments.

Board member Wendy Sotolongo asked about the 121 and 138 number. Those are two separate groups of children. Families actually approved are 138 and the wait list went into effect September 17, 2023 which is 121. According to the policy if a provider is not located in 30 days a manual wait has to be provided.

Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith works closely with Dress for Success which is a large program in the community for women. Vice Chair Beatty-Smith thanked staff for their service to the community.

Director Maggie Clapp acknowledged FEI staff for working in the community along with normal job responsibilities.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs entertained a motion to approve the changes to the Wait List Policy. Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith moved to approve the Wait List Policy for Durham County Child Care Services with changes. Board member Wendy Sotolongo seconded the motion.

Board member	Yes	No	Abstained
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs	Yes		
Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith	Yes		
Board member Charles I. Mitchell	Yes		

Board member Wendy Sotolongo Yes

Board member Dionne Moore Yes

The Wait List Policy for Durham County Child Care Services with changes was approved.

Medicaid –Assistant Director Cynthia Cason

Assistant Director Cynthia Cason submitted a written report.

Program Manager Nancy Santos reported the Medicaid Division Meeting was held with included a presentation from CCR Consulting and Public Health presented on wellness.

Open Enrollment began November 1, 2024 and continues to January 15, 2025.

Medicaid passed the report card in October with a timeliness rate of 98%.

Approximately 15,000 families for Medicaid Expansion in Durham County and 577,000 families statewide.

Program Manager Jackie Proctor highlighted last year for open enrollment in the month of November 458 applications were received and as of November 25, 2024, 851 applications have been received through the marketplace.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked Program Managers Nancy Santos and Jackie Proctor for the report.

Customer Accountability and Talent Development (CATD) – Kimberly Lincoln, Interim Assistant Director

Interim Assistant Director Kimberly Lincoln submitted the CATD report.

Program Manager Lynn Thomas represented Customer Accountability and Talent Development.

Program Manager Lynn Thomas recognized staff for participating in Western North Carolina.

Aging and Adult Services program is working to transition Medicaid Transportation.

Other QAT staff are reviewing policies for programs and working on legal training in collaboration with County attorneys.

The Child Welfare QAT vacancies have been reposted three times due to the knowledge required for Child and Family Services.

Child and Family Services (CFS) - Jovetta Whitfield, Assistant Director

Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield submitted a written report.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs inquired about the Thanksgiving Dinner Holiday Program meals provided. Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield is waiting for the final number from the Volunteer Center.

The DSS Board requested adopting a family for Share Your Christmas. Program Manager Shontelle Smith will check because the deadline has passed.

Board member Wendy Sotolongo asked about the SaySo Event and the ages of youth. There are 32 youth 18 to 21. Seven youth participated in SaySo. This is the first time the event was hosted in Durham, they go to different counties. Board member Sotolongo thanked staff for having them hosted the event in Durham.

Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield mentioned that a Director Letter was received regarding the fingerprint process for prospective foster and current foster care resource parents. It is a process so the state can be in compliance. Webinars were cancelled, training has to be provided due to the effective date December 2, 2024.

Assistant Director Whitfield followed up on Families First tracking, this will be lead by the consultant. Durham has been invited as one of 14 counties across 7 region to participate in a pilot. The pilot will be for Families First County Level care. They will be assessing the referral process, successes, barriers and other processes. The Division of Social Services is spearheading this process.

Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith touched on the challenges, barriers, concerns and limited therapeutic resources. What will be done or proposed in these areas of concern. Assistant Director Whitfield is not aware of the outcome or full plan and will review the documentation. DSS continues to work with Alliance Health which has developed several homes but not PRT.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs inquired about meeting with RYSE center. Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield has not met with staff at the center.

Aging and Adult Services (AAS) - Assistant Director Travis Williams

Assistant Director Travis Williams submitted a written report. 56.57

Assistant Director Travis Williams highlighted AAS had a state audit and no findings, Durham is in good standings.

The Home Centered Care Team had their annual audit, there were no compliance findings requiring a corrective response.

Adult Protective Services Guardianship is beyond standard at 90%.

Program Manager Lee Little and Supervisor Contessa Sawyer attended the HOPWA conference. They had an opportunity to speak with other leaders and one item discussed was case improvement within case management, issues and priority program. A meeting will be scheduled with the City to discuss improvements in those areas.

Tammie Tate has been hired as APS Treatment Supervisor. The team will provide APS and Home Centered Care units more sustainable structure to manage increased workload..

Program Manager Lee Little has accepted a position in Wake County and his last day will be December 13, 2024. Lee Little brought expertise and knowledge to AAS will be missed.

The DSS Board sent gratitude to Lee Little for his work at Durham County.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs inquired about the accessing additional funding for the HOPWA program. Assistant Director Williams stated the information was received about additional funding and will meet with the City, more information will be provided in December. Additional information was requested regarding the APS Treatment.

Assistant Director Travis Williams conveyed the APS program currently is doing both intake and start participants treatment in the program. The APS Treatment staff will focus on the treatment only, making sure the plans are created correctly.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs Mentioned Familiar Faces Initiative which focuses on adults with severe mental illness and substance use disorder getting them help and how the APS Treatment can assist. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked Assistant Director Williams for the AAS report.

Finance - Assistant Director Margaret Faircloth

Assistant Director Margaret Faircloth submitted the Finance Report.

Assistant Director Margaret Faircloth asked if there were any questions.

Assistant Director Faircloth conveyed there are multiple audits in process and currently no findings. Finance is preparing for the new budget season, the kickoff invitation has been sent. Finance is working with the Budget Office to rectify the eviction diversion. An agenda action has been submitted to the BOCC, to make them aware of the funding update.

Board member Wendy Sotolongo inquired about the non-emergency medical transportation. According to Assistant Director Faircloth, the trips are down. When the tailor plans went into effect in July there was a slight fluctuation. Now with Medicaid Expansion numbers may increase or return to before the tailor plans went live. As listed in the report the number is around 6000. Transportation is funded which is billed through the NC TRACKS. DSS will have some bills coming up for payment, but will be reimbursed 100%.

Director Maggie Clapp communicated a position is on hold in Finance due to the decrease in non-medical transportation that can be reclassified if the numbers do not increase.

Finance has been short staffed for over a year and the last position was filled.

LIEAP program has additional funds and will begin December 2, 2024.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked Assistant Director Margaret Faircloth for the Finance Report.

Operations – Senior Operations Officer Kelly Inman

Senior Operations Officer Kelly Inman submitted the Operations Report.

Several items highlighted included Child Support Services continuous commitment to outreach in the community. Staff attended three events in October along with retirements and staff accepting other positions.

Anthony Sturdivant, the new IT Manager was introduced to the DSS Board and gave a brief summary relating to his knowledge and past venues. DSS Board members welcomed Anthony Sturdivant to Durham County DSS.

DSS staff in conjunction with the County received donations for Western North Carolina Nakia Johnson was recognized for going over and beyond assisting with loading trucks.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs recognized several events including Hispanic Heritage Month and thanked staff on behalf of the DSS Board.

Program Manager Quannah Jackson-Brown sits on several committees in the community which keeps her abreast of different events.

The DSS Board expressed gratitude to staff for participating in community outreach.

Vacancy Report – James Hart

James Hart submitted the Vacancy Report.

The vacancy rate has averaged out at 11%. Management has made significant progress in working through vacancies. James Hart, Program Analyst recognized additional resources in Human Resources for assisting with the hiring process. Divisions were recognized for assessing and reallocating resources. A report was created for each division to provide more clarity within the program and supportive areas.

Montrella Springfield, Sr. Administrative Officer to the Director was recognized for managing payroll the last three months due to staff out of the office.

Board member Dionne Moore mentioned Tatiana Graham-Robinson attended a professional collaboration event between the Department of Social Work and Community Partners. Recruitment was discussed and other programs understand opportunities are available for interns. Students will be graduating and students from other programs will be attending fairs. Board member Moore will include James Hart in the email group. Board member Dionne Moore conveyed holiday aspirations to everyone.

Board member Charles I. Mitchell expressed Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

Vice Chair Jacqueline Beatty-Smith articulated DSS staff does great work even with challenges and rise to the occasion. Vice Chair Beatty-Smith wished everyone Happy Thanksgiving.

Board member Wendy Sotolongo supported the expression of Board members and wished everyone Happy Thanksgiving.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked management for attending the meeting and concluded the meeting with Happy Thanksgiving expressions.

The DSS Board unanimously adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairperson

Date

Secretary to the Board

Date