

Durham County Board of Social Services
Monthly Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2020

The Durham County Board of Social Services monthly meeting was held on Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19 the DSS Board Meeting was virtual.

The following DSS Board members were in attendance:

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, Board members Janice P. Paul, Jacqueline Beatty-Smith and Charles I. Mitchell.

Vice-Chair Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman received an excused absence.

The DCDSS Department was represented by the following:

Director William Rose, Deputy Director Catherine Williamson-Hardy, Chief Operations Officer Kelly Inman, Assistant Directors Krystal Harris, Jovetta Whitfield, and Rhonda Stevens. DSS staff attending included LaToya Chambers, Candice Leathers, Meghan Russ, Nancy Santos, Kalindra Ellerbe, Lee Little, Quannah Jackson-Brown, Sharyn Flood, Quanesha Archer, Shontelle Smith, Lynn Thomas, Darlene Whitfield, and Montrella Springfield.

Danielle Briggs, Senior Assistant County Attorney had to leave the meeting early.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs called the December 16, 2020 regular meeting to order.

Dionne Greenlee-Jones, Community Engagement Manager NCCARES360 presented at the DSS Board meeting.

Public Comments

No public comments

Approval of the Agenda

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs asked board members to review the agenda. Board member Janice P. Paul offered the motion to amend the agenda and Board member Charles I. Mitchell seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously by voice vote.

| Board member | Yes | No | Abstained |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs | Yes | | |
| Board member Janice P. Paul | Yes | | |
| Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith | Yes | | |
| Board member Charles I. Mitchell | Yes | | |

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from November 18, 2020 regular meetings, were approved with a unanimous vote by the DSS Board. Board member Janice P. Paul offered a motion and Board member Charles I. Mitchell seconded.

| Board member | Yes | No | Abstained |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs | Yes | | |
| Board member Janice P. Paul | Yes | | |
| Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith | Yes | | |
| Board member Charles I. Mitchell | Yes | | |

Chair Report

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs congratulated staff on accomplishments and thanked Director William Rose for keeping the DSS Board informed. Concerns were expressed on current COVID-19 cases, the impact on staff and the community.

Chief Justice Beasley submitted an executive order which suspends in-person court cases. Chair Commissioner Jacobs noted the request from Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield to suspend in-person family visits due to multiple staff having to quarantine. Director Rose reported the breakrooms have been closed to staff sitting eating lunch.

During the BOCC meeting Public Health Director was asked where all the cases were coming from. Cases have increased since Thanksgiving up 30% in the State. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs emphasized safety for the holiday and inquired about DSS staff being vaccinated when it arrives at Public Health.

Congratulations to Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield and staff for referrals to Hope Learning Center. There are over 300 students getting supported.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs attended a NACCO conference and the report was alarming relating to the impact on Black, Latino and single parent families. Senior's food needs are being addressed and the County has approved additional money for program that will end in March. Chair Commissioner Jacobs would like to discuss later how to keep seniors on the radar to make sure they are receiving services available in the community.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs welcomed Dionne Greenlee-Jones to DSS Board Meeting.

NCCARE360 – Dionne Greenlee-Jones, Community Engagement Manager

Dionne Greenlee-Jones gave a brief introduction and proceeded with the NCCARE360 presentation.

NCCARE360 is the first statewide network that unites health care and human services organizations with a shared technology that enables a coordinated, community-oriented, person-centered approach for delivering care in North Carolina. NCCARE360 helps providers electronically connect those with identified needs to community resources and allow for feedback and follow up. The partners include NCDHHS, Foundation for Health Leadership and Innovation, Unite Us, United Way, NC 2.1.1 and Expound. The program is connected to Medicaid Transformation which was passed by State in September 2015.

The vision is built on connecting people to the right service, having providers view, coordinate and collaborate on the services and track data to improve access to services.

The process includes:

- Build collective vision
- Connect residents to quality care and resources
- Track outcomes delivered across network
- Evaluate gaps in services and outcomes
- Direct resources to fill gaps and combat inequities
- Increase equity for all can thrive

People will be connecting to care through screening, referral, resolution and feedback. Unite Us provides sensitive organizations features to protect individuals.

NCCARES360 protects information through HIPPA, FERPA, FIPS and 42 CFR Part 2-complaint platform.

North Carolina 115 waiver specifies services covered which include housing, food, transportation and interpersonal violence.

Mrs. Greenlee-Jones provides training for the NCCARES360 .

There were questions regarding confidentiality. Only the referred providers can access individual's information.

The DSS Board thanked Dionne Greenlee-Jones for the presentation on NCCARES360.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs requested feedback from DSS staff regarding NCCARES360 at a later meeting.

Medicaid Transformation

Director William Rose suggested tabling Medicaid Transformation until January due to time and move forward with reports. The DSS Board agreed to include Medicaid Transformation on the January agenda.

Director Report

Director William Rose submitted a written report.

Director William Rose informed the DSS Board about the continued collaboration and partnership with the housing community and with COVID providing rental assistance.

The conversation is continuing with partners and stakeholders because the problem will be happening in 2021. There are two bills which were initially \$25B for new COVID Relief for housing assistance, and hopeful more federal dollars will be available. There was a housing issue before COVID-19 and the problem continues. A meeting was held with the City of Durham and Chamber of Commerce to seek potential private and public partnerships.

There was a meeting with the City of Durham discussion regarding potential donations for disenfranchised and specific demographic areas. Director Rose would like to meet following the holidays to discuss marketing plans and foundations to secure additional legal service and other services for those with housing issues. Director William Rose will keep the DSS Board informed as this moves forward.

The agency is working on required exercises by County Budget for proposed 3, 5 and 7 percent cuts to County funds within DSS budget. The Executive Leadership Team met several times to review budgets. Concerns were discussed with County Budget about reexamining the levels due to federal and state revenues. The proposed cuts are due to County Budget by January 8, 2021. More information will be shared at the January DSS Board meeting.

Pandemic EBT has been approved through the school year. The State is working with the Department of Instruction to look at covering going forward and backward. The State is also looking at covering children back to August. This priority one to the State and covered by the State not DSS, however the State reports out to the counties.

Director Rose pointed out the COVID-19 surges in the State and cases within the agency both in staff and client population. Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield reported another foster child tested positive. There is a surge from Thanksgiving and DSS is doing everything possible to protect clients and staff.

Vaccines were discussed in the Department Head meeting and hopefully start to see the distribution which will probably begin with essential workers, prioritizing social workers in the field. The agency has changed access to the breakrooms for refrigeration and utilizing microwaves. Staff are minimal within the agency. Adult and Child Protective Services staff are exposed to COVID-19 in the field.

Durham DSS had an interesting meeting with Cumberland county regarding malware attack. They were looking at Durham for best practices and prevention regarding the malware attack. COVID-19 became a part of the discussion and the impact. Information Technology staff from both counties were on the call to assist with questions. Durham takes pride that we have a good partnership with Cumberland County.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked Director William Rose for keeping the DSS Board abreast on information. Chair Commissioner Jacobs asked about the proposed budget submission to the County. Director Rose stated the proposed budget is due to the County around January 9, 2021 for review. DSS has negotiated with the County relating to budget cuts because of federal dollars. Chief Operations Officer Kelly Inman has worked closely with the County.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs commended Director Rose for organizing the meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders. Director Rose took the lead on a conversation from Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs at a Board of County Commissioners meeting. Chair Commissioner Jacobs conveyed it is unacceptable as a community to throw up hands and say we don't have money to help people, and they just get evicted. There has to be a solution, because housing is the most fundamental thing and we can't talk about public health crisis when people don't have anywhere to live. Director Rose took this among himself to organize the meeting with the Chamber of Commerce. The DSS Board applauded Director William Rose for taking the initiative.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs requested talking with the PHP for Medicaid Transformation. Plan for them to come and present at the board meeting about who they are and what they are providing to the community.

Vacancy Report

Director William Rose forwarded the savings from the hiring freeze to the DSS Board.

Family Economic Independence (FEI) – Rhonda Stevens, Assistant Director

Assistant Director Rhonda Stevens submitted a written report.

Board member Janice P. Paul had an issue with opening encrypted emails.

The encrypted emails are due to HIPPA.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs glad to see new positions are being filled and the Medicaid Report was cleared up from the State.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs acknowledged FEI staff hard work.

Customer Accountability and Talent Development – Krystal Harris, Assistant Director

Assistant Director Krystal Harris submitted a written report.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked Public Information Office Pamela Purifoy for nominating Alecia Smith for NCGAIO-NC Government Association of Information Officers, and she was the winner.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs inquired about Microsoft Challenges; Assistant Director Harris spoke with COO Kelly Inman about extra functionality needed for training. She will talk to County IS&T about the software availability and cost. Chair Commissioner Jacobs thanked Assistant Director Krystal Harris and staff for the training being provided to staff in the agency.

Child and Family Services – Jovetta Whitfield, Assistant Director

Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield provided a report to the DSS Board.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs acknowledged 840 people served for Thanksgiving and 1523 individuals served for Christmas.

Aging and Adult Services - Lee Little

Assistant Director Janeen Gordon submitted a report from Aging and Adult Services.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs pointed out the increase in APS reports, and if there is a comparison from last year. Comparison approximate 10% increase from last year.

Program Manager Lee Little indicated AAS staff have seen several COVID-19 cases and staff have not had been positive. There hasn't been issues with timeliness. Chair Commissioner Jacobs noticed the wait list dropped for Meals on Wheels, and asked if there is assistance for the elderly through COVID Relief? There are possible opportunities, two supervisors, program manager and assistant director serve on community committees which include food insecurity. Social workers are aware of some of the events and reach out to seniors to see if they need help.

The Coordinated Entry staff have taken the training on NCCARES360 and are setup to make referrals. NCCARES360 is not able to make referral to DSS currently.

Congratulation from DSS Board members to Aging and Adult Services.

Business Operations – Kelly Inman, Chief Operations Officer

Chief Operations Officer Kelly Inman emphasized DSS is on target with expenditures at 41%. Revenues are one month behind, target at 33% currently DSS is at 31%. There are no big concerns, eviction diversions come in later.

DSS was originally at \$2.4M in HOPE dollars amended by \$5.2M totaling \$7.7M. Fifteen percent is administrative dollars \$1.5M and 6.5M direct to clients. Hoping to fund 2300 applications and the December 31 deadline has been extended which gives more time to process to March 1, 2021.

Director Rose emphasized that additional applications will not be taken, the funds will be used to apply to applications received.

Chief Operations Officer Inman mentioned working to complete single audits and will bring information next month.

State changing the way they calculate penetration rate and will reduce reimbursement from IV-E. COO Kelly Inman will follow up for next month.

New Business

An Executive Session regarding confidentiality was added to the DSS Board Proposed Agenda.

Unfinished Business

COVID Update

COVID was covered in the programmatic reports.

Board Action Items

The Board Action Items were updated.

Medicaid Transformation will be added to the agenda.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs wished DSS staff a safe, peaceful, and restful holiday season and inquired about additional items requiring the DSS Board attention.

Board member Janice P. Paul offered a motion to go into second executive session to 143-318.11 (6)

To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. General personnel policy issues may not be considered in a closed session. A public body may not consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, appointment, or removal of a member of the public body or another body and may not consider or fill a vacancy among its own membership except in an open meeting.

Final action making an appointment or discharge or removal by a public body having final authority for the appointment or discharge or removal shall be taken in an open meeting.

Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith seconded.

| Board member | Yes | No | Abstained |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs | Yes | | |
| Board member Janice P. Paul | Yes | | |
| Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith | Yes | | |
| Board member Charles I. Mitchell | Yes | | |

Board member Janice P. Paul moved that the DSS Board move into executive session to confidential pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(1) To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. Deputy Director Catherine Williamson-Hardy will join the executive session. Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith seconded.

| Board member | Yes | No | Abstained |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs | Yes | | |
| Board member Janice P. Paul | Yes | | |
| Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith | Yes | | |
| Board member Charles I. Mitchell | Yes | | |

The DSS Board returned to regular session by declaration.

The DSS Board Regular Meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted

Chairperson Date

Secretary to the Board Date