

DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Minutes
December 19, 2012

The Durham County Board of Social Services held its regular meeting on Wednesday, December 19, 2012, 9:00 a.m., at 220 East Main Street in conference room 609 Right. The following DSS Board Members were in attendance: Chairman Newman Aguiar, Vice Chair Dr. Tara L. Fikes, Commissioner Michael Page, Jane Volland and Helen J. Berry.

The DCDSS Department was represented by the following: Director Michael Becketts, Cynthia Cason, Pinkie Davis-Boyd, Shelia Dorsett, Linda Hicks, Betty Hughes, Marie Johnson, Melanie Johnson, Victor Isler, Toni Pedroza, Lynn Thomas, Rhonda Stevens, Catherine Williamson-Hardy, Bob Wallace, Darlene Whitfield, Jovetta Whitfield and Montrella Springfield.

Deputy County Attorney Cathy Moore, Assistant County Attorney Danielle Briggs and Assistant County Attorney Kathy Everett-Perry attended the Board meeting.

Board Chair Newman Aguiar called the meeting to order.

Agenda

The Proposed Agenda was approved as written.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Board member Jane Volland moved to approve the November minutes with corrections on page five under the DSS Board Report. Remove Board member Jane Volland will contact Commissioner Page about the Board Retreat. Board member Helen Berry seconded. The minutes were approved with noted corrections.

Director's Report - Michael Becketts

Director Becketts provided a written report with highlights and challenges over the past month.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was submitted to Public Health requesting consultation with medical officials at Public Health. The language is being reviewed by Public Health nurses.
- Director Becketts and staff met with older foster youth to discuss what DSS can do to better support them while they are in foster care. An agency supported Youth Advisory Board will be developed under Victor Isler, Program Manager in Child Placement and Permanency Services. The Board suggested connecting with Evelyn Scott at the Youth Council.
- The Values Celebration Committee coordinated the All Staff Meeting. Staff were given three weeks to submit questions to the Director in boxes located at each facility. Staff volunteered to ask the Director questions and the Director asked the staff questions. Questions and answers from the Fireside Chat will be posted on the intranet. The questions that were not asked will be answered individually and posted as well. A form will be developed and placed on the DSS intranet for staff to ask questions Director Becketts will meet with DSS IT about granting the DSS Board access to the DSS Intranet.
- Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) is changing across the State and there is causing a computer system shift. A memo was sent to the Board, Assistant Director and management staff in FNS notifying them of the problem in FNS. There have been discussions with the County Manager's office, Budget Director and the Board Chair to discuss the department's plan. A community roundtable discussion will be planned to bring community partners and poverty in Durham together to discuss the changes and possible impact. A marketing firm was recommended by the County Manager's Office to aid with alerting the community of the changes in Food and Nutrition Services. Durham Public Schools, Public Health and others have committed to helping too. A meeting has been scheduled with the Herald-Sun Editorial staff to establish a Social Services column.

The proposal included temporary full-time employees to assist with caseloads. It was suggested that the DSS Board draft a recommendation to the Board County Commissioners (BOCC) to advise them of the transition.

Lapsed salaries will cover the nine workers salaries for six months. Chair Aguiar asked the Board's approval to draft a letter of support BOCC. Director Becketts will draft the letter for review by January 3, 2013. The conversion date for NCFAS is January 18, 2013.

Director Becketts developed an action control document for the DSS Board meetings. The action control document will be used to focus on what needs to be completed.

DSS Board Report - Chair Newman Aguiar

a. Board Retreat

Chair Aguiar is awaiting John Stephens from the UNC School of Government confirmation about facilitating the retreat. Commissioner Page may not be appointed to the DSS Board next year.

b. Fireside Chat

Chair Aguiar attended briefly. Board member Jane Volland spoke on behalf of the DSS Board. Board member Helen J. Berry attended as well. The questions and answers will be emailed to the DSS Board.

Assistant Directors' Update

a. CSE, Finance and Facility Support-Antonia Pedroza

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

The budget process is beginning for the fiscal year. A budget work session will be scheduled for the DSS Board. Child Support Enforcement continues to excel in collections.

b. Family Economic Independence-Rhonda Stevens

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

Rhonda Stevens commended the assistant directors for assisting with preparation for the Work First Audit. The reviews went very well.

c. Customer Accountability and Program Development-Catherine Williamson-Hardy

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

d. Family Safety and Permanence-Jovetta Whitfield

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

Share Your Christmas went well and 1100 referrals received help. A Press Release will be drafted thanking the community for supporting Share Your Christmas.

LEIAP for the elderly will be opened to the public February 1, 2013.

The Board requested outcomes included in management reports and provide agency data to the Board before the retreat. Director Becketts will contact Human Resources about vacancies and report back to the Board.

Chair Aguiar inquired about additional questions or concerns requiring the DSS Board attention.

Vice Chair Tara Fikes moved to adjourn to closed session 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, pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) and to consult with the County Attorney's Office regarding the matter of Gerri Robinson vs. County of Durham et. al pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3). Jane Volland seconded and the board moved into closed session with a unanimous vote at 10:16 am. The Board returned to open session, no action taken. The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 am.

Respectfully submitted

Chairperson

Date

Secretary to the Board

Date