

DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Minutes
July 24, 2013

The Durham County Board of Social Services held its regular meeting on Wednesday, July 24, 2013 9:00 a.m., at 300 North Duke Street in conference room 2120. The following DSS Board Members were in attendance: Chairman Dr. Tara L. Fikes, Vice Chair Newman Aguiar and Helen J. Berry.

Commissioner Wendy Jacobs and Board member Jane Volland received an excused absence.

The DCDSS Department was represented by the following: Director Michael A. Becketts, Cynthia Cason, Pinkie Davis-Boyd, Mary Flounoy, Linda Hicks, Victor Isler, Toni Pedroza, Robyn Riley, Nancy Santos, Shauna Shaw, Rhonda Stevens, Lynn Thomas Bob Wallace, Catherine Williamson-Hardy, Darlene Whitfield, Jovetta Whitfield, and Montrella Springfield. Nathan Farrior, student intern in the Director's Office.

Assistant County Attorney Danielle Briggs attended the Board meeting.

DSS Board Dr. Chair Tara L. Fikes called the meeting to order.

Proposed Agenda

The proposed agenda was approved as printed.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Dr. Tara L. Fikes informed board members the minutes from June 26, 2013 regular meeting and July 11, 2013 work session required approval.

Vice Chair Aguiar offered a motion for approval of the minutes from June 26, 2013 regular meeting. Board member Helen J. Berry seconded. The minutes for the June 26, 2013 regular meeting were approved. The minutes from the July 11, 2013 work session were approved with a motion from Board member Helen J. Berry and seconded by Chair Tara L. Fikes.

Public Comments

No public comments.

DSS Board Report - Chair Dr. Tara L. Fikes

DSS Board did not have a Report for July.

Director's Report - Michael Becketts

Director Becketts provided a written report with highlights and challenges over the past month along with the DSS Action Items and DSS Vacancies Reports.

Multiple changes are taken place in regards to NC FAST, the Affordable Care Act along with the move to the new complex in October.

Changes on July 15th in NC FAST caused problems statewide which include clients benefits not posting on EBT cards. Staff have made changes in the systems to assist clients, however, this can cause overpayments that will burden clients when the overpayment has to be refunded. Due to system failures, applications and re-certifications are behind two days. A plan is being executed to rectify the backlog. The State emailed instructions and County IT is working to help resolve issues. Reports from the old system are not available. Director Becketts called the State and staff have not been available. Every county is experiencing problems with NC FAST.

A meeting was held with Bi-lingual staff to better understand how to communicate NC FAST changes in the Hispanic Community. A standing committee will be established to assist with the needs of the growing Hispanic population. The service directory will be translated in Spanish.

There is an opportunity for DSS to receive data through the City's Neighborhood Compass Project. The project collects data from various agencies in the community.

With Progress Energy and Duke Power merger, DSS will receive a merger settlement of \$157,000. The funds are separate and cannot be mingled with other resources.

Director Becketts requested revisiting the child care priority before submission to the State. Information will be available at the work session in August. The Memorandum of Understanding is in process.

Assistant Directors' Update

a. CSE, Finance and Facility Support-Antonia Pedroza

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

The external audit continues and results should be available in six months.

The move to the Human Services Complex is moving forward. The lease on the Duke Street facility is a challenge. There will be a public auction for the furniture in the facilities. Move details will be available at the August meeting.

b. Family Economic Independence-Rhonda Stevens

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

Challenges include NC FAST system problems and increase in Medicaid applications. Family Economic Services moved to a new model. One bright spot is the creativity of staff.

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

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

The move from face-to-face has impacted the Customer Information Center. Over one million documents have been scanned.

Bright spot is DSS Leadership Academy which included management at all levels. UNC Jordan Institute partnered with DSS to develop and facilitate the training.

Supervisors participated in SWITCH training in June.

Lynn Thomas reported staff working hard due to the transition to NCFAST.

d. Family Safety and Permanence-Jovetta Whitfield

Bright spot positions are being filled in CPS. Partnership with the Volunteer Center in regards to Backpack for Kids which will be held on August 10th. Three hundred children were referred to the program.

Unfinished Business

Board Action Items were updated.

Staff vacancies list was distributed and reviewed.

DSS Board Policies and Procedures were reviewed and forward to Assistant County Attorney Danielle Briggs.

New Business

- Web Portal Presentation - Shauna Shaw
Ms. Shaw will forward instructions on how to access board information on the DSS website.

Chair Tara L. Fikes inquired about additional concerns or questions requiring the DSS Board attention. Vice Chair Newman Aguiar offered a motion to move to closed session, "The Board will 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)". The motion was seconded by Board Member Helen J. Berry. With a unanimous vote the meeting moved to closed session at 10:45 am.

The meeting was re-opened with no action taken. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Chairperson

Date

Secretary to the Board

Date