

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 30, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its January Board Meeting on January 30, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Betsy Wells - Chair
Mary Accor
Rev. William Thompson

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Jane Shooter, Attorney, Chuck Wilson, Pam Bright, Alison Clark, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Tanya Glenn, LaSandra Pearson, Mary Eppers and Melissa Hawk.

New Staff Members: Phillip Polaski, Renee Carroll, Jessica Conley, Melenia Lowe, Mariah Ashe

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Betsy Wells called the meeting to order. Chuck Wilson led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and Rev. William Thompson led the group in a moment of silence. Mary Accor read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Reverend Thompson made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Reverend Thompson and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the December 9, 2016 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. Bitsy Greene, "Great job" phone call received from a client boasting on her great customer service skills and always going above and beyond to ensure she gets the help she needs.
- b. Ryan Avery "Thank you" card from client thanking her for the assistance to her family.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Crisis Intervention Program

– Lasandra Pearson, Program Manager

Low Income Energy Assistance Program

Ms. Ellis advised it is the time of year when the weather gets cold and the agency gets very busy implementing our energy programs. Ms. Ellis introduced Program Manager, LaSandra Pearson. Ms. Pearson stated that the Agency administers two energy programs, the Low Income Energy

Assistance Program (LIEAP) and the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP), which provide great services to our clients. She explained the LIEAP program is for heating assistance only. It is a one-time payment that is made directly to the client's heating source provider. Applications are taken from December thru March of each year. She advised the CIP program is used when the loss of heat or cooling would create a life-threatening emergency. Applications are taken when the temperatures are low or high enough to create a life-threatening emergency and are available until funds are exhausted. An eligible household has a maximum benefit of \$600/year.

Ms. Pearson provided an in-depth presentation concerning the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). Handouts, including program descriptions, vendors and income limits were also furnished to the DSS Board and staff.

Ms. Pearson advised the Board that both energy programs will be launched in NCFAST in July 2017. Ms. Wells questioned if there are Pilot Counties that volunteered in this region of the State. Ms. Pearson advised that she was not aware of any in our area. Typically, the western part of the state has a need for CIP funds in the winter and summer seasons. Due to these counties funds being exhausted, they would not be eligible to be a Pilot County. Rev. Thompson, referring to the income limit chart, ask if there were households of 26 members or more in our county. Ms. Pearson responded that she was not aware of any families that size in our county. However, the energy applications must include all members living in a home. Ms. Accor questioned if these programs would be available ongoing due to receiving funds from a Federal Block Grant. Ms. Pearson has advised that she has not heard of any conversation to stop these programs. She was informed that there will not be any additional Administration money available to help with the conversion of Energy Cases into NCFAST. Ms. Accor stated she hopes these programs remain available because there is a great need, especially in rural counties. Ms. Wells thanked Ms. Pearson for a great presentation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Ellis discussed the following items related to the Executive Summary. There was a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls to the agency for the month of December. The agency issued 15 Work Permits.

99 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. Ms. Ellis stated this number usually decreases as a result of school being out for Christmas break. However, 25 children were taken into DSS custody in December. 2 children were referred to In-Home Services. We increased the number of our Licensed Foster Homes to 76. There are 208 children currently in the department's custody. We have 23 children cleared for adoption and all but 2 children have identified adoptive placements.

11 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 3 of these reports were substantiated. We received 1 Adult Care Home Complaint and there were 2 Nursing Home complaints. There were 0 recoveries for the month of December. Ms. Ellis advised that if we receive a case that is a conflict of interest, it is sent to another county for investigation to avoid any suggestion of our agency being biased in our social work assessment.

Ms. Accor questioned the reasons and causes that children are taken into custody. Ms. Bright explained children are often removed for substance abuse and/or domestic violence. Some cases can also include mental health issues.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support collections decreased slightly for the month of December. Child Support is almost fully staffed.

Day Care numbers remain fairly consistent. The Daycare unit will be completing work in NCFAST this week.

In Economic Services, the number of applications remain stable. There was a slight decrease for the month of December.

3 Work First participants went to work in month of December. There were no clients referred for drug screening.

Program Integrity staff continue to work hard processing fraud claims and collections.

Ms. Shooter advised Medicaid Transportation information has been updated. There had been a previous delay with our Medicaid Transportation numbers, as we depend on our vendors to supply data to the agency. Rev. Thompson acknowledged an increase in Medicaid Transportation since last year. He asked if there had been more Marketplace applicants approved for Medicaid. Ms. Pearson advised that there has been a rise in applications since the Marketplace opened. She stated that historically, 80-90% of those applications are not eligible for Medicaid. However, these applications must be processed fully for Medicaid benefits. There are also clients approved that do not stay on the program. She advised that the ongoing number of recipients remain fairly stable. Ms. Pearson advised that Medicaid Transportation is also going live in NCFAST this week.

Ms. Wells asked Ms. Pearson if she remembered the number of people that would be covered if we received Medicaid expansion. Ms. Ellis responded that about 600,000 people would be covered statewide.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. On-Site Fiscal Monitoring Report, Charles Robertson, Fiscal Compliance Monitor

Ms. Ellis stated we were monitored October 19-20, 2016 for Economic Services and Block Grant Programs. There were no findings and no adjustments were needed. Angie Clark, Cheryl Barnett and Kay Howell are to be commended for their hard work in our financial unit.

b. DSS and Cleveland Community College enters Partnership to increase competence of IMC applicants

Ms. Ellis stated that we are launching the first class of a Partnership between DSS and Cleveland Community College on January 24 – March 16, 2017. Ms. Pearson advised the collaboration between DSS county agencies, DHHS State agencies and NCFAST recognized that training is the biggest need for staff to be successful. The course builds skills and provides a training environment to learn the basics of the NCFAST system as well as an overview of the agency. This course targets individuals interested in working for the agency and will be effective in increasing the potential applicant pool for Income Maintenance staff. Ms. Ellis advised Ms. Pearson is the course instructor.

c. Cleveland County Employee Recognition Event – February 14, 2017 at 11:45, LeGrand Center

Ms. Ellis extended invitations to Board Members for the Cleveland County Employee Recognition Luncheon at the LeGrand Center on February 14, 2017 at 11:45 a.m. This event recognizes employees for years of service, work accomplishments, innovative ideas, healthy achievements, etc. The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners and the County Manager sponsor this event.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Community Child Protection Team Update

Ms. Bright stated the team discussed runaways within our community, particularly Foster children. There was a subcommittee established to continue to examine this issue and develop possible solutions that could aid with children that are running away. The remainder of the team meeting was devoted to Partnering for Excellence. This is an initiative that brings common services to this community and a stronger collaboration between DSS and Partners while focusing on implementing trauma based services.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Wells stated that NCACBSS met on January 20, 2017 in Burlington. They approved the 2017 Consortium Legislative goals. She advised that Michael Beckett, DSS Director in Durham, contacted her regarding a new Board Member training which is scheduled for February 15, 2017 at Durham County DSS 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. She stated they also approved terms of three board members to continue until the next Social Services Institute scheduled for October in Hickory.

Ms. Wells stated that Ms. Accor has continued to ask counties for articles to be added to the NCACBSS Newsletter. Ms. Ellis stated that there will be several staff members receiving awards at the Cleveland County Employee Recognition event who could be included in the next publication.

Ms. Accor read an email from Rowan county stating, “On a personal note, your DSS Director, Karen Ellis represents Cleveland County very competently and professionally at the State level and we certainly enjoy her insight and experience at our NCACDSS meetings.” Ms. Accor stated she thought it was awesome to receive such a great compliment about our Director. She believes that when you can celebrate the success of someone else, it is worth mentioning.

Ms. Wells advised that their next NCACBSS meeting will be at The Cutting Board in Burlington on March 17, 2017.

Ms. Wells asked Attorney Wilson if there was anything Board Members could do to help him. Ms. Ellis advised that she was asking for a clerical position for Attorney Wilson this budget year. She stated that he is very dedicated, takes his own notes, writes his own court orders, etc. but he needs a devoted clerical person to assist him. Ms. Ellis informed the DSS Board that she would need their support at the March Budget retreat with helping the department receive critical DSS positions that she would be asking for in this year’s 2017-

2018 DSS Budget. The DSS Board overwhelmingly agreed that assistance is needed and they would support the request for a new position to assist Attorney Wilson.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Rev. William Thompson to *adjourn* the *meeting at 4:59 p.m.*

Denise Wright, Vice-Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa M. Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 27, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its February Board Meeting on February 27, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Denise Wright – Vice-Chair
Mary Accor
Rev. William Thompson

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Jane Shooter, Attorney Chuck Wilson, Pam Bright, Alison Clark, Denise Harrill, Tanya Glenn, LaSandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Mary Etters, Rebecca Johnson, Melissa Hawk, Kerry Rice, Ryan Avery, Julie Kale, Debra Watson, Gregory Grier, Patty Lynch, and Lana White.

New Staff Members: Jada Warren **Promotion:** Lindsey Allen

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Denise Wright called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and in a moment of silence. Denise Wright read the agency’s mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by, Rev. William Thompson and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by, Rev. William Thompson and unanimously adopted by the Board, to, *approve the minutes of the January 30, 2017 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. *“Trauma Training Kudos”* email recognizing trainers and their great skills with Trauma 101.
- b. Wendy McDaniel, Energy Worker, *“Thank You Card”* for helping with energy bill.
- c. Shea Carpenter, IMC II, *“Thank You Voicemail”* stating appreciation for helping family.

Ms. Ellis stated that she was proud to recognize DSS staff who were Finalist or Award recipients at the Cleveland County Employee Recognition Event held at the Legrand Center on February 14, 2017. Each award Finalist/Recipient briefly stated their reason for nomination and winning their award.

- d. Kerry Rice, Lead Worker/IMC III, Cleveland Strong Opportunity Award
- e. Lana White, Greg Grier, Patty Lynch, Social Work Supervisor III’s, Cleveland Strong Networking Award

- f. Misti Merritt, IMC II, Cleveland Strong Silver Teamwork Award**
- g. Ryan Avery, IMC II, Cleveland Strong Bronze Respect Award**
- h. Julie Kale, Lead Worker/IMC III, Cleveland Strong Bronze Opportunity Award**
- i. Debra Watson, Lead Worker/IMC III, Cleveland Strong Bronze Getting Healthy Award**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Ellis discussed the following items related to the Executive Summary. There was an increase in the number of telephone calls. There was also an increase in the number of incoming clients to the agency for the month of January. The agency issued 10 Work Permits.

97 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 3 children were referred to In-Home Services. 6 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 213 children currently in the department's custody. Currently we have 77 Licensed Foster Homes. We have 22 children cleared for adoption and 2 children who do not have identified placements.

18 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 4 of these reports were substantiated. We have 24 adult care homes. We received 3 Adult Care Home Complaints and 3 Nursing Home complaints. There were no recoveries for the month of January.

Ms. Shooter advised that Child Support continues to work hard at collections and locating absent parents. Ms. Ellis noted the department had an increase in collections and established 42 new orders.

Day Care numbers remain consistent.

In Economic Services, the numbers of applications stay relatively consistent. However, there was a slight increase for the month of January.

2 Work First participants went to work in the month of January. There were no referrals for drug screening. Ms. Wright asked who determines the referrals for drug screening. Ms. Shooter advised clients are referred to drug screening based on criteria of the program including drug convictions or suspicion of drug use.

Medicaid Transportation remains consistent.

Program Integrity continues to receive referrals and establish claims. They collected \$14,464 in January.

Ms. Shooter advised that Voter Registration policy has changed. Every client seen in the agency for Food Assistance and/or Medicaid will receive a Voter Registration form.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

The Role of the Adult Home Specialist - Rebecca Johnson, Adult Services Lead Social Worker

Ms. Ellis introduced Rebecca Johnson, Adult Services Lead Worker. She stated that she does a tremendous job in Adult Services as she serves our elderly and disabled adults. Rebecca will share the role of the Adult Home Specialist with the Board.

Ms. Johnson stated that she and Tracy Tolbert are the main Adult Home Specialist for the county. They monitor 8 Adult Care Homes (7 or more beds) and 15 Family Care Homes (6 or less beds). The State requires them to monitor each home quarterly. However, they strive for monitoring every other month to keep a presence in the facility. In addition to monitoring, they investigate complaints, provide consultation and technical assistance to homes, assist citizens interested in opening a family care home in Cleveland County, prepare negative actions/penalty proposals, host annual quality caregiving training for facility staff, attend quarterly meetings and annual conferences of the Adult Foster Care Association / Association for Adult Home Specialist.

Ms. Johnson explained that even though her degree is in Social Work she completes monitoring and trainings in medication management, food service (client's diet order), Resident's rights, Personal / Health care, staffing qualifications, physical environment and activities.

Ms. Johnson advised Complaint Investigations are received through the Adult Services Intake Unit and from the State. They can also be taken as Adult Protective Services reports if the report meets the criteria. The complete process may require multiple visits to the facility and must be completed within 60 days. DSS is authorized to issue corrective actions that include Standard Deficiency (non-compliance with any requirement within a particular rule), A1 Violation (violation results in death or serious physical harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation), A2 Violation (violation that results in substantial risk that death or serious physical harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation will occur) and B violation (violation that is detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of any resident but does not result in substantial risk that death or physical harm, abuse or exploitation will occur). Depending on the violation, facilities may have fines imposed or training recommended, if accepted by the State. Ms. Johnson advised that currently the Section Chief at the Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR) decides what penalties will be imposed. She noted that we do not have the authority, as a county, to suspend admissions or close a facility. Enforcement of penalties is left up to the DHSR.

Ms. Johnson informed the Board that the DSS constantly receives inquiries from individuals who are interested in opening new Adult homes. DSS meets with owners to discuss the process, visit homes to complete square footage measurements, identify barriers to licensing, gather all documentation to be sent to DHSR. The DHSR Construction and Licensing sections assist with the development of policies and procedures. She advised that the process to open an Adult Care Home can take about one year.

Ms. Johnson advised Adult Care Homes and Family Care Homes' records are public record. Monitoring reports, complaint investigations and penalty proposals are part of the public record and can be requested by anyone.

Ms. Wright asked if Adult / Family Care Homes are different from a Nursing Homes due to being State supported. Ms. Johnson stated that the level of care for an individual is determined by a physician. If a doctor states a person can be maintained at an Adult Home level of care the person must be placed in an Adult Care Home or Family Care Home. If a physician recommends skilled nursing home care, then the person must be placed in a nursing home. DSS does not monitor nursing homes. The DHSR monitors nursing homes. If an Adult Protective Services Report is received on a resident in a nursing home and meets the criteria for an assessment, then DSS does complete an APS assessment and informs the DHSR. Nursing Homes are subject to Federal and State Guidelines. They are held to a higher standard as a result of receiving funds from Medicare. It has been expressed to her that some families prefer Adult/Family Care Homes because they know that DSS monitors every other month.

Ms. Johnson reflected that, at times, their role requires them to make tough decisions and enforce rules that are not always liked by the facilities we monitor. However, DSS always addresses situations with respect, dignity and professionalism. As a result, Cleveland County has received numerous compliments and have great relationships with the Adult Care/Family Care Homes in our county.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. 2017 NC General Assembly Social Services Consortium Legislative Priorities

Ms. Ellis referred Board members to the handout listing the Legislative Priorities in their Board Packets. Ms. Ellis discussed each priority.

NC Fast Daycare Update

Ms. Ellis advised that Ms. Eppers and her staff have worked diligently implementing Daycare Cases into NCFAST. Ms. Shooter remarked that several Pilot counties have completed the Daycare process in NCFAST for several months. Typically, Pilot Counties discover system problems for the State to correct prior to the release of the remaining counties for implementation. She shared that on our initial go live date, we encountered problems that Pilot Counties never reported and had to speak with the State about making corrections that had not been discovered. As a result, the rollout has been somewhat more difficult than expected. However, she boasted this speaks volumes to the great staff that we have in our Daycare department. Ms. Eppers added that they have already completed 200 of the 300 cases to be entered into NCFAST. Ms. Shooter noted that as a result of the multiple system defects, the worker had to key each case in NCFAST four times prior to each case being completely accepted. Ms. Ellis recognized an email notification received from the State listing Cleveland County as one of the top four counties completing conversions into NCFAST. Ms. Shooter advised of a potential Daycare problem in the future when Providers will be able to enter information into NCFAST to receive payments. This has the possibility to create issues of inaccurate payment information being processed. Ms. Eppers agreed that she is not looking forward to Daycare Providers adding information to receive payment for daycare services. However, she has full confidence her staff can handle any issues that may arise.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Discuss Change of Time/Location of March DSS Board Meeting/Budget Retreat

Mary Accor made the motion to schedule the March DSS Board Meeting/Budget Retreat for Monday, March 27, 2017 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Deer Brook Restaurant. The motion was seconded by Rev. William Thompson and unanimously adopted by the Board.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor advised the NCACBSS reviewed the same 2017 NC General Assembly Legislative document presented today by Ms. Ellis. She stated Mary Perkins, Edgecombe County Commissioner, acknowledged the assistance received during the

hurricane and bragged that it greatly helped the people in that area. The next meeting is scheduled in March.

c. Applications for DSS Board Member – County Appointment

Ms. Ellis advised that Betsy Wells' Board term ends June 30, 2017. It was also discussed that Rev. Thompson's appointment will end on the same date. Ms. Ellis advised that he is currently eligible to serve an additional term. Rev. Thompson advised that he will be unable to accept reappointment. Ms. Ellis stated that we will have two vacancies on the DSS Board. One vacancy is a County Appointment vacancy and the other one is a Social Services Commission vacancy. Both vacancies will require that an application be completed. She distributed instructions for the appointment process for the County Appointment. She stated the County appointment requires that applicants complete an online computer class and mail their certificate of completion to the Commissioners Board Clerk. The Commissioners will make the appointment in May or June. Ms. Ellis stated she has been approached by Lyndra Phillips who works in Communities in School and is interested in becoming the County appointed Board member. She has been very instrumental in working with this department and has a passion for what we do at DSS. Ms. Ellis also reported that Dale Oliver stated he would also be interested in serving on the Board again. Ms. Ellis advised she could email the application to individuals who are interested. In becoming DSS Board Members. Ms. Wright will contact Mr. Oliver.

d. CFPT update

Ms. Wright advised they discussed several cases but none involved DSS.

e. Other

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Rev. William Thompson to *adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m.*

Betsy Wells, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa M. Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD/BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

March 27, 2017
11:30 a.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its March Board/Budget Meeting on March 27, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. at Deer Brook Restaurant, Shelby, North Carolina.

Members attending: Betsy Wells - Chair
Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Commissioner, Susan Allen
Mary Accor
Rev. William Thompson

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Kay Howell, Jane Shooter, Attorney Chuck Wilson, LaSandra Pearson, Pam Bright, Alison Clark, Denise Harrill, Tom Ensley, Mary Eppers, Tanya Glenn and Melissa Hawk.

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Betsy Wells called the meeting to order and Commissioner, Mary Accor led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Rev. William Thompson led the group in a moment of silence. Denise Wright read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Rev. William Thompson, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Rev. William Thompson and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the February 27, 2017 Board meeting.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Ellis stated the department experienced a decrease in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls.

Twelve Work Permits were issued.

In Child Protective Services, 105 reports were accepted for assessment and 12 children were taken into DSS custody. 6 cases were referred to In-Home services. Currently, there are 219 children in DSS custody. We have 76 licensed family foster homes. 21 children are cleared for adoption with 2 children that do not have identified adoptive homes.

Services for Adults: 12 Adult Protective Services reports were received. 3 of the reports were substantiated. We received 1 Adult Care Home complaint, 2 Nursing Home complaints and 3 N.C. Recoveries.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support collections continues to work hard on collections.

Ms. Shooter stated the Day Care unit continues to work very hard to get cases into the NCFAST system. However, the process is not going well due to NCFAST issues. Ms. Wells acknowledged that she has also heard of those issues at their NCACBSS Board meeting

In Economic Services, the number of applications taken decreased for the month of February. Ms. Pearson, Economic Services Program Manager, advised the acceptance of Marketplace applications ended January 31st and a decrease is historical for the month of February.

1 Work First participant went to work in the month of February. There were no drug screening referrals.

Ms. Shooter advised the Medicaid Transportation report is not included at this time as information is not readily available since the new state process has changed. She stated that the numbers are about the same as we service the same population monthly. Ms. Howell commented that the Providers are now reporting their data directly to the State. Ms. Ellis clarified that providers are now billing directly to the State for Medicaid and Daycare. However, our staff is still responsible for eligibility, verifications and numerous tasks associated with each program. Ms. Ellis voiced concerns that Daycare providers and Medicaid Transportation providers are likely to have issues due to NCFAST. Commissioner Allen stated the County is currently evaluating transportation options throughout the county. They are looking for affordable solutions for the county.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Social Worker Appreciation Month Celebration

Ms. Ellis stated on March 24, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. we celebrated Social Worker Appreciation Month at Cleveland County DSS with a reception that included a variety of refreshments. All social workers were provided a gift bag that included a Subway gift card and Cleveland County DSS rain jacket.

b. Sound the Alarm Event

Ms. Ellis stated that April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. The agency will have the Annual "Sounding the Alarm" event on Monday, April 3rd at 2:00 p.m. outside the DSS auditorium as well as at the Administration building on Marion Street. Law enforcement, Fire Departments and Emergency Management are scheduled to participate again this year and sound that alarms and sirens. Ms. Ellis invited DSS Board Members to attend the event.

c. Other

BUDGET RETREAT

a. Discussion of the 2017-2018 DSS Budget

Ms. Ellis shared that there is not a significant change in the DSS Budget for 2017-2018. There is a reduction in the overall total budget for the upcoming fiscal year due to a reduction in daycare subsidy. Overall, there will be an increase in the county share of the DSS budget due to federal funding we have in the current fiscal year that is not projected for fiscal year 2017/2018. Also, we will receive minimal federal and state funding for the three new positions that we are requesting. Rev. Thompson asked if office space was available for three new positions. Ms. Ellis advised of 3-4 available office spaces. Ms. Shooter stated there are a few other offices that could be rearranged or clerical staff could possibly share office spaces. Ms. Ellis advised the County is completing a county-wide building planning survey and has hired a consultant to analyze floor plans and space. She reiterated that the proposed new positions are critical and we will find space for the staff if granted those positions.

Ms. Ellis proceeded to discuss that in the areas of Child Support, Adult Services and Child Welfare, there are no significant funding changes that will impact the DSS budget.

Ms. Ellis stated although there will be a reduction in our Daycare Subsidy funding for fiscal year 2017-2018, DSS is projected to receive sufficient state and federal funds to serve our mandated target populations. State and Federal funds reimburse direct services and administrative costs associated with the Daycare program at a rate of 100% based on the allocation. We will not spend over the budgeted allocation. However, there was a reduction in the amount of funds that we received for daycare subsidy this fiscal year and as stated earlier, there will also be a reduction in funding in fiscal year 2017/2018 according to state budget estimates. Daycare providers will also bill the State directly for their reimbursement for daycare subsidy payments. DSS will still be responsible for all other complex functions regarding the Daycare Subsidy program.

Ms. Ellis stated Medicaid Transportation vendors will also bill the State directly for services rendered. All Medicaid Transportation costs are reimbursed at a rate of 100% in state/federal funds. DSS will still be responsible for determining the eligibility, scheduling the appointments for clients and verifying all required items for Medicaid Transportation trips. Once the trips are verified, the worker will upload data into NC FAST and the State will then pay the Medicaid vendors.

Ms. Ellis state we are requesting to add 3 new positions in this year's DSS Budget. Due to the increase in legal services for Foster Care, Adoptions, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Child Support and Guardianship, we are requesting a Paralegal and a PA III to assist our two attorneys with the increased legal work associated with the above areas. Also, we are requesting a Social Worker I position as the judges are ordering increased supervised visitation between children in DSS custody and their parents. Currently, we do not have adequate staff to carry out the judge's orders regarding supervised visitation.

In conclusion, the total DSS budget for fiscal year 2017/2018 is \$24,648,807. This year's budget total decrease is \$333,727 over last year's budget of \$24,982,534. The decrease is due to the reduction of Daycare Subsidy Funds.

However, the county share of the DSS Budget is projected to increase \$353,373 from fiscal year 2016/2017 based on the budget estimates provided by the state. The county share for 2017/2018 budget is projected to be \$7,676,896.

Ms. Ellis included considerable information (graphs, FAQ, and numbers) that reflects a clear picture of where we have been and where we need to go.

She appreciates the consideration of what is believed to be a very conservative budget based on the essential needs of the department to carry out mandated services and programs that we are bound by law to administer. This budget accurately reflects the costs associated to administer our programs and services.

Ms. Ellis also included in her presentation, *Frequently Asked Questions/ Answers for the 2017-2018 Budget.*:

1. **What is the Board of Social Services statutory role as it relates to the annual DSS Budget?** *At a regularly scheduled Board meeting the Board votes to **transmit** the budget to the Board of County Commissioners.*
2. **What is the total DSS Budget (Federal, State and County) proposed for 2017-2018?** *\$64,117,858.*
3. **What is the county share and percentage of the 2017-2018 DSS budget?** *\$7,676,896 (11.97%)*
4. **What was the county share and percentage last fiscal year?** *\$7,323,523 (11.08%)*
5. **Is the county's percentage of the budget higher this year?** *Yes. The county's percentage in this year's budget is slightly higher compared to the previous year.*
6. **Is there an increase or decrease in the county share of DSS's budget over last year?** *Yes. There is a projected increase of \$353,373.*
7. **Are you asking for new positions this year?** *Yes. Due to the increase in legal services for Foster Care, Adoptions, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Child Support and Guardianship, we are requesting a Paralegal and a PA III to assist our two attorneys with the increased legal work associated with the above areas. Also, we are requesting a Social Worker I position as the judges are ordering increased supervised visitation between children in DSS custody and their parents. We do not have adequate staff to carry out the judge's orders currently regarding supervised visitation.*

8. Does this year's budget address all of the needs of the DSS? Yes.

Next, Ms. Ellis presented DSS' **Goals FY 2017-2018:**

1. Recognize staff accomplishments and difficult jobs with at least one annual Staff Appreciation Day event.
2. Continue to increase the rate in which children in the agency's custody achieve permanency.
3. Continue to meet processing times for Economic Services Programs (FNS, Medicaid, Work First, Daycare, Medicaid Transportation, CIP and LIEAP) through the challenges of the NC FAST system.
4. Child Welfare and Financials will be actively involved in the development of NCFAST P4 to hopefully allow for better implementation of the child welfare project in NC Fast.
5. Increase collections in the Program Integrity and Child Support units.
6. Publish an annual report for FY 2016-2017 in October 2017.
7. Follow Directives that are assigned by the DSS Board to achieve results or goals.

Criteria for Meeting Goals FY 2017-2018:

1. Staff will be informed in advance of the date selected for Staff Appreciation Day event. A time will be set aside for workers to attend and be recognized for their hard work and dedication to DSS consumers.
2. 3% more children will achieve permanency in one year or less from the date they enter DSS custody.
3. Eligible individuals and families will receive Economic Services in a timely manner despite the glitches in the NCFAST system while continuing to deliver Economic Services in an integrated process with one universal worker.
4. Staff from Child Welfare and Financials will attend work sessions in Raleigh on a weekly basis to finalize the development of Child Protective Services, Adoptions and Financial responsibilities for NCFAST. They will begin reviewing the work from June through August and then begin working on the functional design until the end of the year.

5. Program Integrity and Child Support Collections will increase collections by 3%.
6. A DSS Annual Report will be completed and distributed to the DSS Board, Stakeholders, Community Partners, County Commissioners, County Manager and DSS Employees by October 31, 2017.
7. Achieve goals when assigned by the Board of Social Services.

Progress on Goals for 2016-2017

1. **Recognize staff accomplishments and difficult jobs with at least one annual Staff Appreciation Day.** A Staff Appreciation Luncheon was held on March 4, 2016. Lunch was provided for the employees and DSS Board Member, Mary Accor, was the motivational speaker.
2. **Reduce turnover.** The overall turnover rate for 2016 was 11.71%; in 2015, the turnover rate was 10.50%. There was a 1.21% increase in our turnover rate. The greatest turnover rate was in Child Support. The reasons employees listed as leaving on their exit interview: poor job fit, better pay and less stress and family relocation to another state.
3. **3% more children will achieve permanency in less than one year from the date of entering DSS custody.** This goal was achieved. In FY 2015, 33.33% of the children that entered DSS custody achieved permanency in one year or less. In FY 2016, **105** children entered DSS custody and **50 / (47.61%)** of those children achieved permanency in one year or less. There was a **14.28%** difference in the permanency rate from 2015 to 2016. In addition, **38** children achieved permanency through adoption.
4. **Publish an Annual Report for FY 2015-2016 in October 2016.** An Annual Report was published and distributed to key county stakeholders in the community and to the DSS Board in October 2016.
5. **Achieve other goals that may be determined by the Board of Social Services.** The Director and staff followed all directives and suggestions made by the DSS Board of Directors in **FY 2015-2016.**

DSS Board Vote to transmit the DSS Budget to the Board of County Commissioners

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Denise Wright and unanimously approved by the Board to; *transmit the Cleveland County DSS 2017-2018 Proposed Budget to the Cleveland County Commissioners.*

BOARD MEMBERS' ITEMS

a. NCACBSS Update

Ms. Wells stated the Board met March 17th at the Cutting Board Restaurant in Burlington, NC. She acknowledged that Ms. Accor always receives accolades from across the state regarding the NCACBSS Newsletter (copy included in Board packet.) She praised her for a job well done. Ms. Wells referenced the agenda for their meeting is included in the newsletter. She stated they had a very productive meeting. Jack Rogers, from the State, reported from Wayne Black in his absence. He completed a presentation for NCFAST as well. Ms. Accor mentioned that they also discussed the Governors Budget. She referred to the impact on Social Services as a result of elimination of Federal Block Grants, 18% reduction from Federal Government, 1.7 billion on weatherization Assistance Programs (Energy) and TANF funding being on the watch list. She stated they are trying to find optimism with that budget. In addition, there are concerns regarding the possibility of Medicaid expansion. She suggested we need to contact Rep. Patrick McHenry, Rep. Tim Moore and Rep. Kelly Hastings to tell them how important it is to keep funding for our Programs. Ms. Wells will meet again on May 12, 2017 where they will receive Legislative updates.

b. CC Child Protection/Fatality Review Team Update

Denise Wright stated she and Pam Bright attended the team meeting. She advised they discussed a child that was previously in DSS custody, adopted and now back in DSS custody due to the mother being unable to handle his behavior. The team discussed ideas that might help that situation. Mr. Wilson stated this case is a contested court action and the Judge will make the final decision.

c. NCACBSS March/April 2017 Newsletter

Ms. Wells advised the newsletter has already been discussed during the NCACBSS Update. She encouraged all to read the copy included in the Board packet.

d. DSS Board Vacancies/Applications

Ms. Wells advised her 6-year Board appointment ends in June and Rev. Thompson will not seek an additional appointment when his term ends in June. She reported Dale Oliver, previous Board Member, and Lyndra Phillips, from Communities in School, have expressed interest in filling these vacancies. Both have submitted their applications to the County and the Social Services Commission. Ms. Ellis advised she included nomination instructions and applications in Board packets in case Board Members encounter others that might be interested in being considered for Board vacancies.

BOARD MEMBER'S DISCUSSION

Ms. Wells asked if Board Members needed additional time to discuss any other topics or if they feel all items have been addressed. There was a consensus that no additional items needed discussion. Ms. Wells stated she wanted more information on the situation with the church in Rutherford County. Ms. Ellis confirmed that a former employee attended church there and has been accused in the media of coaching church members regarding a Child Protective Services investigation. That employee has since resigned. Ms. Wells stated she is interested in the outcome of this case. There is no other outcome regarding this matter as it relates to the department in that the employee is no longer employed by the department. Ms. Wells stated Ms. Ellis is always good in keeping the Board informed about situations involving the Department. Ms. Wells reminded this was a retreat and is interested in anything others may want to share about staff. Ms. Pearson advised staff welcomed the pay survey and are excited that the County cares about salary changes, even if it's not approved. Ms. Ellis informed the Board of a recent pay study being completed by the County. Ms. Wells thanked Commissioner Allen for the County taking steps to evaluate salary of staff.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Denise Wright to *adjourn the meeting at 1:33 p.m.*

Betsy Wells, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 24, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its April Board Meeting on April 25, 2016 at 4:00 in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Mary Accor
Rev. William Thompson
Commissioner Susan Allen

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Chuck Wilson Mary Etters, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Tanya Glenn, Alison Clark, Pam Bright

New Staff Members: Lauren Boyd, Latesha Moorer-Doss, Kim Whitfield

Promoted Staff Members: Nicole Wilson, Nicole Smith

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Mary Accor called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and led the moment of silence. Rev. William Thompson read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Susan Allen made the motion, seconded by Rev. William Thompson and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rev. William Thompson made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Susan Allen and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the March 27, 2017 Board meeting.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced an increase in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls for the month. The department issued 23 Work Permits.

In Child Protective Services, 126 reports were accepted for assessment. 17 children were taken into DSS custody. 8 cases were referred to In-Home Services. Currently, there are 229 children

in DSS custody. 21 children are cleared for adoption (2 children with a non- identified home). We currently have 76 Licensed Foster Homes.

Services to Adults: 15 Adult Protective Service reports were accepted for investigation. 3 of these reports were substantiated. We received 0 Adult Care Home complaints and 1 Nursing Home complaint. There were 0 Recoveries for that month of March.

Next, Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support is working very hard in collecting child support. She stated CJ Benson was recognized by the State for his large collection amount. Child Support Collections overall increased for the month of March. 182 absent parents were located and 62 new orders were established.

In Daycare, the numbers stay relatively the same. The Daycare unit continues to prepare for Go-Live in NCFAST but remain in a holding pattern. Ms. Shooter explained that Providers are expected to key their information into NCFAST system to receive payment. Pilot counties have experienced problems with Providers not understanding how to maneuver through the system and enter the needed data to complete the process. She anticipates continued problems for Daycare with the transition to NCFAST.

Economic Services remains fairly consistent with about the same number of individuals continuing to receive services in the County. The numbers of applications slightly increased.

2 Work First participants went to work in month of March. There were 0 clients referred for drug screening.

Medicaid Transportation statistical information continues to be delayed. NCTRACKS is not providing the county with up to date information regarding our data. There are no significant changes in the dollar amounts as the number of clients served are relatively consistent. Ms. Shooter advised the Providers are now required to participate in NC Tracks for their payments. There is currently a transition period of trying to get the process to run smoothly for vendors who provide Medicaid Transportation.

Program Integrity continues to receive referrals and establish claims. They collected \$44,483 in March.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Update on Partnering for Excellence

Jenny Cooper, Project Director Benchmarks - Social Work Program Manager

Ms. Pritchard introduced Jenny Cooper, Project Director for Benchmarks. Ms. Cooper began by explaining the Child Welfare system is focused on safety and permanency while Partners Behavioral Management is the local Managed Care entity. She stated that even though each group works with the same family, they are two different systems and have different mandates that need to be followed. This can create an issue of one group not understanding what the other group is doing which can lead to chaos and distrust.

Ms. Cooper explained they talk a lot about adverse childhood experiences. There are 10 different most common ones they look at: Emotional, physical and sexual abuse, mother treated violently, substance use, mental illness, separation, divorce, incarceration of a household members is all counted as household challenges, as well as neglect with emotional and physical abuse. She provided statistics of abuse and stated that the community spends a large amount of money as a result of these issues in different ways. She advised that we tend to think of cost from the criminal justice system, DSS cases, special education and healthcare. However, 67% of the cost of trauma from adverse childhood experiences is through productivity. Some of the long-lasting impact can lead to obesity, lung disease, heart attacks, strokes, broken bone, risky sexual behaviors, alcoholism and drug abuse.

Ms. Cooper advised that they strive to 1) make the future better for kids and 2) increase the resiliency of those who experienced adverse childhood experiences. One of the ways to do this is “Partnering for Excellence.” The overall goal is to redefine the Child Welfare system and the Behavioral Health system so that they can give trauma informed services to families to improve their outcomes and reduce high end services. This would keep them out of detention centers, hospitals, group homes and psychiatric residential facilities. The ultimate goal would be to prevent children from coming into DSS custody.

Ms. Cooper stated as an aid for assessments and to better offer needed services for individuals, the Child Welfare Trauma Training tool kit curriculum is used. She continued to provide an in-depth presentation concerning the trauma screening tool. She advised it’s not enough for Social workers to be aware of trauma but also the entire community. She acknowledged DSS has three awesome staff members (2 workers, 1 supervisor) who are trained and have become successful champions for this curriculum. She informed the Board that at the beginning of May, they will be co-training this curriculum with other community members. Some participating organizations who will attend the training include: Cleveland County Schools, Health Department and Income Maintenance. DSS will become the Trauma Informed Champions of the entire community by demonstrating what families deserve and how to break the cycle of abuse. In addition, Ms. Cooper advised she would be working with Ms. Clark and Ms. Bright to discuss ways to deal with secondary traumatic stress.

DIRECTOR’S ITEMS

a. April is Child Abuse Awareness Month

Ms. Pritchard discussed that April is Child Abuse Prevention month. We had the annual “Sound the Alarm” event onsite at DSS and at the Cleveland County Administration building on April 3, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. She stated this event raises community awareness regarding child abuse and neglect in our county. There were many community partners that participated in this event. Partners who participated included Law Enforcement, Fire Departments, EMS, our DSS staff, the GAL program, Children’s Homes of Cleveland County and community members. Ms. Pritchard advised, in spite of the heavy rain, we received lots of attention and count this event as a community success.

b. DSS wins Safety Award

Ms. Pritchard informed the Board that the NC Department of Labor presented DSS with a Certificate of Safety achievement for the Gold Award-1st Year in recognition of the outstanding safety and health efforts that resulted in a substantial reduction of injuries and illnesses and the promotion of safer working conditions in 2016. Denise Harrill, who is the Department's Safety Coordinator and Liaison with the County, accepted the award on behalf of DSS. Ms. Pritchard advised that we have reduced our Worker's Comp claims as well as other measures with falls or injuries.

c. NCFAST Daycare Update

Ms. Pritchard asked Mary Etters to share an update. Ms. Etters advised of several technical issues with the NCFAST system that we cannot control. However, our Daycare department is doing a fine job at maneuvering through the process. She stated that the Pilot counties are finding it to be difficult to deal with a third party, the Providers, who do not understand the urgency in entering information into the NCFAST system. One worker, who has been through all phases of NCFAST, remarked that the Daycare transition to NCFAST has been the most difficult. Ms. Etters stated the Staff is anxious to be fully activated in NCFAST in order to move forward.

d. Staff Appreciation Ice Cream Event

Ms. Pritchard invited Board members to the Staff Appreciation Ice Cream drop-in event on Friday, May 26, 2017 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm in the auditorium. We will treat staff to ice cream sundaes and thank them for their service. All bowls, ice cream and toppings have been donated.

e. Other

Ms. Pritchard advised that the Directors Association is opposed to both Senate Bill 594 and the similar House Bill. They have reached out to Tim Moore, Speaker of the House, to make him aware of their position on the Bill. She stated that she compares this Bill to Mental Health reform, which has been disastrous. She stated that she could not imagine regionalization in social services and believes the consumers would suffer. Ms. Pritchard stated that the NCACC has yet to take a position on this Bill. However, she believes they are concerned. Commissioner Allen remarked that she spoke with Representative Moore who, she believes, does not totally agree with the bill. She informed the Board that she will reach out to him today. Mr. Wilson stated in checking the Legislative website, the bill is still in the Committee stage. His biggest concern is that no one on the Child Welfare side knows where the Bill originated. Usually legislation affecting Child Welfare laws come through the AOC court improvement project. There are components of the bill that discuss how termination of parental rights (TPR) are handled. It would also require termination of parental rights' appeals to go directly to the State Supreme Court. Currently, it takes about a year for appeals out of our court to be heard. He expressed concern about the effect it would have on the timeframe, if passed. Ms. Shooter advised during a Director's call, Wayne Black informed that DHHS was not asked for any input. Mrs. Accor is concerned about the bill and regionalization. The regionalization of Mental Health is an example of not thinking through the process and the negative impact such a bill can have on a county. She made the board aware that a Gaston County representative is a key sponsor of the Senate Bill and is concerned about the

impact the proposed bill will have on Cleveland County. Ms. Pritchard advised the NCACDSS will be discussing this bill during a work session later that week. She also stated our Lobbyist advised that NCACDSS should work with Senator Barringer. Ms. Accor expressed gratitude that Ms. Prichard brought it to the Board's attention.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Discuss May 2017 Board Meeting Dates

Rev. Thompson made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Allen and unanimously adopted by the Board to ***change the May Board Meeting to May 30, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.***, as May 29, 2017 is a holiday for Cleveland County Government.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor advised that they are also concerned about Bill 594, as previously discussed. She anticipates ongoing conversation.

c. Other

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Allen made a motion, seconded by Rev. Thompson to ***adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m.***

Betsy Wells, Chair
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 30, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its April Board Meeting on May 30, 2017 at 4:00 in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Betsy Wells, Chair
Mary Accor
Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Rev. William Thompson

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Angela Woods, Mary Eppers, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Tanya Glenn, Pam Bright

New Staff Members: Keith Rhodes, DeAnna Staton, Stephanie Blair

Promoted Staff Members: Louanne Cason, Nicole Fredell, Tiana Littlejohn

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Betsy Wells called the meeting to order. Mary Accor led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and Betsy Wells led the moment of silence. Denise Wright read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the April 24, 2017 Board meeting.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls for the month. The department issued 19 Work Permits.

In Child Protective Services, 110 reports were accepted for assessment. 19 children were taken into DSS custody. 6 cases were referred to In-Home Services. Currently, there are 240 children in DSS custody. 30 children are cleared for adoption (3 children with non- identified adoptive homes). We currently have 76 Licensed Foster Homes. Ms. Pritchard remarked that the number of children in DSS custody is growing across the state and is not unique to Cleveland County DSS. She attributes the increase to mental health and substance abuse issues affecting families. She expressed concern that the issue is growing and does not appear to be getting better. Ms.

Wright inquired if there would be a shifting of duties to offset the large numbers of cases. Ms. Pritchard advised that a Social Worker I position was approved. This position will be supervising visits between children in DSS custody and their parents. This will enable social workers to complete other required tasks.

Services to Adults: 14 Adult Protective Service reports were accepted for investigation. 2 of these reports were substantiated. We received 1 Adult Care Home complaint and 3 Nursing Home complaints. There were 0 Recoveries. Ms. Pritchard stated the department is busy handling Guardianship cases. She advised Andrea Leslie Fite, County Attorney, is providing relief to Ms. Woods by absorbing our Guardian cases.

Ms. Shooter informed the Board that today is Tanya Glenn's last day as Child Support Program Manager with Cleveland County DSS. Tanya has taken a job with the state as a Child Support Consultant. She will be working with our department in her new job. The Supervisors will be completing some of her duties during this interim period. She advised the Board that we have a great applicant pool for the Child Support Program Manager position. Overall, the Child Support Department continues to work hard with collections and establishing orders.

Ms. Shooter stated the Daycare unit continues to prepare for our Go-Live Date in NCFAST. Ms. Ethers remarked the tentative Go-Live date is June 8, 2017 as all cases are scheduled to be activated on the night of June 7, 2017. The Daycare staff are eager to see the final results from months of preparation. Ms. Shooter stated the difference between NCFAST in Daycare and Economic Services deals with the responsibility of our Daycare Providers. The system will only be as successful as the information each Daycare Provider enters into NCFAST for payment. Ms. Pritchard expressed concern regarding this process as some Providers may struggle with completing tasks in the NCFAST system. Ms. Shooter informed of previous delays, with Pilot Counties, due to issues Providers had submitting all required information for the system to process. Ms. Ethers further explained, by the 1st five days of the month, Providers must check rosters, verify attendance and submit other needed information by midnight in order to receive payment. She expects the process will be routine to Providers after a couple of months. Ms. Ethers also stated Daycare staff have been assisting Providers with questions they have regarding the transition into NCFAST.

Economic Services remains consistent with about the same number of individuals continuing to receive services in the County. The numbers of applications decreased for the month of April.

1 Work First participants went to work in month of April. There were 0 clients referred for drug screening.

Ms. Shooter advised the Medicaid Transportation statistical information is now available. As expected, the numbers have been fairly consistent over the past several months. During an Alliance for Health meeting, it was reported that TACC will begin offering transportation every 30 minutes to certain routes. This change is not related to Medicaid Transportation. However, it will be an improvement in transportation for all clients. Ms. Pritchard added that our County will have free public transportation through TACC for the West Shelby areas. TACC will establish routes to CCC, DSS, the Health Dept., and many other locations that those in need. This service is very much needed and will offer these families hope to have a better life.

Program Integrity continues to receive referrals and establish claims. Ms. Pritchard referenced the collection amount of \$30,445 and thanked the staff for their continuous hard work.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Serving our Elderly Consumers

Tom Ensley, Social Work Program Manager

Ms. Pritchard introduced Tom Ensley, Adult Services Program Manager. Mr. Ensley read two Proclamations issued by NC Governor, Roy Cooper. Per the proclamation, Older Americans Month is committed to supporting older adults as they take charge of their health, explore new opportunities and activities, and focus on independence. The Vulnerable Adult and Elder Abuse Awareness Month Proclamation recognizes North Carolina's vulnerable and older adults who may be targets of abuse, neglect or exploitation. It reminds us that protecting our vulnerable and older adults is a community responsibility. This event is observed from Mother's Day to Father's Day.

Mr. Ensley stated various services offered by Adult Services Social Workers include the following: Adult Services Intake, Protective Services, In-Home Assessments, Guardianship, Representative Payee, In-Home Aide Services, Adult Care Home Placement, Nursing Home Placement, Adult Care Home Monitoring and Consultation, Adult Day Care / Health Center, Special Assistance/In-Home Program and Services for the Blind. In addition to these services, he stated Adult Services is actively involved with several tasks in the community. He advised they are a member of the Accessing Cleveland County Elderly Services (ACCES) group which consists of about 40 community agencies. They meet monthly to share information on programs available and discuss issues that need to be addressed with the elderly and disabled population. In addition, Adult Services Social Workers, Tracy Tolbert and Shelly Snyder, participate in CIT training with local law enforcement. Mr. Ensley stated they try to be a part of the community as much as possible.

Mr. Ensley continued to provide an in-depth presentation describing each task completed by Adult Services Social Workers. Handouts were also furnished to the DSS Board and staff. Questions were asked and answered by the presenter.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Proclamation, "Older Americans Month"

Ms. Pritchard acknowledged the discussion of this topic during Mr. Ensley's presentation. She reaffirmed the importance of taking care of our Senior citizens and vulnerable disabled adults.

b. AAA Performance Monitoring Response

Ms. Pritchard informed the Board of results from an on-site monitoring visit on March 28, 2017 for compliance from the AAA Policies and Procedures Manual and the Home and Community Care Block Grant Agreement. Findings revealed "All areas monitored were in compliance with the Consumer Contribution policy and Procedures.

c. NCACDSS' Document on SB 594

Ms. Pritchard referred Board members to review the packet containing documents that the NCACDSS Association prepared regarding Senate Bill 594. She stated they are currently monitoring actions in the House and Senate to be aware of what's to come. She advised that the bill is currently not in the House. She acknowledged opposition to this bill as it previously was on a fast track. Ms. Wells stated Association members discussed Bill 594 at the recent Quarterly meeting. Several counties presented Proclamations from their County Commissioners against this bill. It was reported that there was never a roll call vote on the Senate floor regarding this bill. It was added under the radar because of its "Child Welfare" title. She stated it was about regionalization of DSS and turning DSS' into Mental Health which will not work. She stated the NCACBSS sent out 25-30 letters to House and Senate members in opposition of SB 594. Ultimately, Ms. Wells wanted everyone to know that the NCACBSS is working very hard with the Directors Association and Lobbyist to make sure that we are contacting our Legislators. She credited the Directors Association with doing a great job by compiling information, such as the packet Ms. Pritchard provided, and being available to take on whatever task is needed. Ms. Accor questioned the optional regionalization listed in the mark-up Bill 594 provided in the Directors Association packet. Ms. Prichard advised the mark-up Bill was put together by the Directors Association as a tool to use with Senator Barringer. She clarified that it has nothing to do with the original Bill but was developed as a strategy to be used if the Bill was headed for approval. She advised that she did not vote for the Association's revised Bill and suggested they go on record opposing the bill.

d. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. NCACBSS Newsletter

Ms. Wells praised Ms. Accor for another great addition on the NCACBSS Newsletter.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Wells advised the intent of their last Board meeting was to stop Senate Bill 594. She stated she is thankful for the actions and support of Representative Ford and his consideration of the clients we serve.

c-e. NCACBSS Letters (discussed under Director's items)

f. Child Protection Team Update

Ms. Wright provided a summary of the meeting. Ms. Bright advised that an upcoming Child Fatality Review will be completed in Gaston County regarding the in infant who was shaken and abused.

g. Other

Ms. Wright stated she loves the billboards around the county. Ms. Pritchard advised Adoption Promotion funds are being used for the Billboard Advertisements.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Denise Wright to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:15 p.m.*

Betsy Wells, Chair
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its June Board Meeting on June 26, 2017 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board at DSS.

Members attending: Betsy Wells, Chair
Denise Wright, Vice Chair
Mary Accor
Reverend William Thompson
Commissioner, Susan Allen

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Attorney Chuck Wilson, LaSandra Pearson, Pam Bright, Mary Etters, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Angela Woods, Tabitha Walker, Debra Watson, and Melissa Hawk.

New Staff Members: Terri Mitchell, Sonja Stowe
Promoted Staff Members: Beverly Rhom, Julie Kale

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Betsy Wells called the meeting to order. Rev. William Thompson led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Commissioner, Susan Allen read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Rev. William Thompson made the motion, seconded by Denise Wright, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the May 30, 2017 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. *Complimentary email to Karen Pritchard from Bill Hooker.* Mr. Hooker expressed "thanks" for being an inspiration for him through her passion, knowledge, spirit, commitment and leadership in our community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department received an increase in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls for the month. The department issued 31 Work Permits.

In Child Protective Services, 114 reports were accepted for assessment. 11 children were taken into DSS custody. 6 cases were referred to In-Home Services. Currently there are 237 children in DSS custody. 29 children are cleared for adoption with 3 in non-identified homes. We currently have 77 Licensed Foster Homes. Ms. Pritchard advised we are continuing to recruit and get new Foster parents.

In Services to Adults, we accepted 19 Adult Protective Service reports and 4 of these reports were substantiated. We received 6 Adult Care Home complaints and 1 Nursing Home complaint. We had 1 Recovery.

Next, Ms. Shooter stated that Denise Harrill has returned to Child Support as the Program Manager. The amount of collections increased for the month. 69 absent parents were located and 44 new orders were established.

Ms. Shooter advised Daycare continues to maneuver through the NCFAST system. We will provide you with more information in the Director's Items portion of the meeting.

Economic Services experienced an increase in the number of applications taken for the month. Ms. Pearson advised, historically, the increase is due to school being out for the summer.

In Work First, 2 participants went to work. There were 0 referrals for drug screens.

Ms. Shooter advised our clients continue to need Medicaid Transportation assistance. These numbers remain consistent.

Ms. Shooter stated Program Integrity continues to work hard with 30 referrals received for the month. \$17, 204 were collected for the month.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

The Lean Project - Lasandra Pearson, Economic Services Program Administrator

Ms. Prichard introduced Lasandra Pearson, Tabitha Walker and Debra Watson as instrumental in working with the Lean Project and making the project a successful one. Ms. Pearson explained that the agency has focused on Economic Services and business process changes as a result of NCFAST. She wanted to ensure that our Clerical staff had not been left behind and improve communication with Reception and Economic Services staff to better serve our clients. As a result, she contacted the Operational Support Team (OST) who began offering the Lean Project. Ms. Pearson introduced Tabitha Walker, Economic Services Supervisor to explain the details of this project. Ms. Walker suggested the Lean project would look at expediting the movement from the client's perspective. Some goals include eliminating duplication of work, reduce client time from point of entry to seeing a caseworker, bridge gap of communication between Reception and Economic Services and offer a more formal/standard training. Ms. Walker shared a PowerPoint with the Board detailing actions and recommendations discussed as well as the sustainability plan developed by our Lean Team.

Ms. Wells thanked Ms. Pearson, Ms. Walker and Ms. Watson for providing information regarding this project.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Cleveland County DSS, *United Way Golden Eagle Award*

Ms. Pritchard advised DSS won a Golden Eagle Award for the “Highest Percent of Giving Potential for a Mid-Size Service Division.” She expressed being proud of our staff for contributing to the great services provided by United Way. On behalf of the United Way, Rev. Thompson, again, expressed appreciation for contributions received and acknowledged the hard work completed daily by Cleveland County DSS. He stated without the help from wonderful people, such as DSS staff, United way would be unable to help those in need.

b. NCFAST Update for Daycare

Ms. Ethers stated the Daycare unit is continuing to work in NCFAST. Thus far, they have ten Help Tickets that are unresolved at the State. All of those cases are associated with NCFAST system defects. She advised that Cherre Huskey and Kami Pruett have been working diligently with our Daycare Providers through telephone calls, sending letters and visits to prepare them for the next step of adding attendance/completing rosters in NCFAST. Staff are maintaining their work in NCFAST and the old system. She stated it is a safety net to ensure Providers get paid. Ms. Ethers expressed hopefulness for the next step. Ms. Pritchard advised that our County found problems not discovered by Pilot counties. She applauded Ms. Ethers for setting a positive tone with the staff and being a great leader during this transition. Ms. Ethers also recognized 2 staff members from Work First and Employment Services, as well as a temporary staff member from PSU that aided in the success of staff training for the transition into NCFAST.

c. NCFAST – P3 (Energy)

Ms. Pearson advised staff is currently completing NCFAST training. They were able to bring in two temporary staff a couple of weeks early to provide them with the new training. She also advised two regular IMC I staff members are being trained for Energy to provide stability when seasons change and temporary staff may be unavailable. She reported a Lead Worker is managing the team. Ms. Pritchard remarked there is a lot of training and new processes being implemented at DSS as we continue to roll out new programs and services in NCFAST.

d. NCFAST – P4 (Child Welfare)

Ms. Pritchard stated she and Ms. Shooter have worked diligently to identify County Champions and to reorganize the current structure in Child Welfare to be able to prepare for Child Welfare moving to NCFAST. She advised some Social Work Supervisors will need to work heavily in NCFAST to prepare the child welfare staff for the transition to NCFAST. Three Lead Workers have been identified to absorb some duties of Supervisors who are now heavily involved with NCFAST. Ms. Pritchard was able to obtain a small pay increase for these lead workers. Ms. Pritchard stated that we have planned well for this transition. She reported that our staff have been going to Raleigh for two years to help design Child Welfare in NCFAST. Our staff is very optimistic and continue to prepare for the NCFAST launch in October. Ms. Shooter stated Social Workers may face a challenge during this transition because the way they currently work and document will not look the same in NCFAST. They will be introduced to new terminology, new forms and new processes that they have never completed. She reiterated the State assured counties that this system would not rollout until it is completely ready. However, we do anticipate some problems may arise as they do with any new system function. Ms. Shooter shared two items that we have communicated with staff, 1) “Competent workers will struggle while mediocre workers will drown.” and 2) “Competency in NCFAST is

directly related to a worker's willingness to take ownership of their own learning." She stated staff duties have recently been shifted and they continue to prepare for the large amount of training to be completed. She anticipates August and September to be really hard for staff due to training needs. Rev. Thompson asked how that would affect workers vacation plans because that could potentially affect staff morale. Ms. Shooter advised Leave will not be approved for September and October due to the required 40 hours of training required prior to "going live" in October. Staff has been encouraged to complete vacations prior to this time. Ms. Accor questioned the current morale with the Social Worker staff. Ms. Shooter stated the morale is fine. However, she acknowledged they are overworked with current vacancies and have higher caseloads. She cannot guarantee decent morale will remain once they see the amount of new training they will face and begin working in NCFAST. Change is difficult for many staff. We do have a great support built incorporated for this transition. Ms. Pritchard stated that it may be helpful that staff respect Charlotte Willis, Greg Grier and Sarah McDowell who have been to Raleigh to help design the system and believe in its ability to work. Also, staff are aware that this transition is not a choice but requirement by the State. Ms. Shooter believes this transition will go better and be less complicated than the transition that Economic Services faced with NCFAST. Ms. Howell remarked that there may not be as much stress in child welfare verses Economic Services, in that benefits are not tied to the child welfare system. Ms. Pritchard remarked that staff can still go out on visits and complete their work on paper even if the system is not functioning properly. Ms. Shooter commented that Social Workers having iPads in the field would make their job easier. This would allow parents to sign needed forms, schedule CFT's, etc. Ms. Pritchard asked JD our IT person to gather estimates which would be shared with our Finance Director. Ms. Wright suggested a minimal number of iPads could be shared in the department for workers to use in the field and brought back when not needed. Ms. Accor expressed concern, with confidentiality, if workers constantly swapped iPads and stated it would need to be monitored. Rev. Thompson remarked that it may boost morale to offer this aid to help make the workers job a little easier.

e. HB-630

Ms. Pritchard advised forced regionalization is off the table. However, it is optional for County Commissioner to decide if they want to pursue regionalization in social services. She stated she is hopeful that our County will not take pursue that option. The bill has been given to the Governor for his signature. Ms. Wells advised the Directors Association received a position on the Workforce Committee within the Bill whereas the County Boards Association did not. The NCACBSS will only serve on the ad-hoc committee. She advised the report must go back to the General Assembly for approval. She had hoped that since it was out of the House budget, it would not be listed from the Senate budget.

f. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. July 2017 DSS Board Meeting – Elect Chair and Vice-Chair of DSS Board

Ms. Wells stated to Board Members to be aware that at their July Meeting they will be electing a Chair and Vice-Chair of the DSS Board of Directors.

b. Oath of Office for New DSS Board Members – July DSS Board Meeting

Ms. Wells advised Dale Oliver, an experienced Board Member, is the State Appointee. Ms. Pritchard advised Lendra Phillips was appointed by the Board of Commissioners during their regular meeting on June 20, 2017. She stated that Ms. Phillips works with Communities in School. She advised that she is respected in the community and will be a great addition to the DSS Board. Mr. Oliver and Ms. Phillips will take their Oath of Office at the July 2017 DSS Board Meeting.

c. NCACBSS Update

Ms. Wells informed that she will remain the President for NCACBSS. She advised they meet again on August 11, 2017 at the Cutting Board in Burlington, NC. They anticipate hearing an update from the Lobbyist concerning items gained in the General Assembly. She advised the Social Services Institute will be held in October 2017.

d. Child Protective / Fatality Team Update

Ms. Bright advised they reviewed three cases. None of the cases had a history with DSS. She stated two of the infants had gestational issues and were born pre-term. The other infant had a genetic defect.

e. NC Social Services Commission Board Appointment

Discussed – See Board Members Items Section (a).

f. Cleveland County Board of Commissioners Board Appointment

Discussed – See Board Members Items Section (a).

PRESENTATION OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS

Ms. Pritchard presented Rev. William Thompson with a gift thanking him for 3 years of service, this term, on Cleveland County DSS Board. She stated that he has made a huge positive impact on DSS during his time on the Board. Rev. Thompson expressed his love and appreciation for the gift and his years of service.

Ms. Pritchard presented Ms. Betsy Wells with a gift thanking her for 6 years of service on Cleveland County DSS Board. Ms. Wells stated that being on the Board provided a learning experience and she values the task of each person on the Board and staff in the agency. Ms. Pritchard advised Ms. Wells is interested in possibly returning to the Board when Ms. Wright's terms ends next year.

Ms. Accor took pictures of the presentation to share in the **NCACBSS** newsletter.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Allen made a motion, seconded by Mary Accor to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:10 p.m.*

Denise Wright, Vice-Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 31, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its July Board Meeting on July 31, 2017 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Commissioner, Susan Allen
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Attorney, Chuck Wilson, Kay Howell, Mary Eppers, Alison Clark, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Amy Schnurr

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Denise Wright called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and in a moment of silence. Commissioner, Susan Allen read the agency's mission statement.

BOARD MEMBERS' OATH OF OFFICE

Melissa Hawk, Clerk to DSS Board, administered the Board Member's Oath of Office to Dale Oliver. Mr. Oliver was appointed by the Social Services Commission to replace Rev. William Thompson for the July 2017 – June 2020 term on the DSS Board.

Melissa Hawk, Clerk to DSS Board, administered the Board Member's Oath of Office to Lendra Phillips. Ms. Phillips was appointed by the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners to replace Betsy Wells for the July 2017 – June 2020 term on the DSS Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Susan Allen made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Susan Allen *approved the minutes of the June 26, 2017 Board meeting* since she and Denise Wright were the only Board members who attended.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Denise Wright opened the floor to accept nominations for the DSS Board Chair. Ms. Wright made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *elect Commissioner, Susan Allen to serve as Chairperson* and there was a unanimous aye vote.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Denise Wright opened the floor to accept nominations for the DSS Board Vice-Chairperson. Commissioner, Susan Allen made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *elect Denise Wright to serve as Vice-Chairperson* and there was a unanimous aye vote.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. Tracy Tolbert – *Ms. Prichard received a call stating Ms. Tolbert went out of her way to help a client. She was impressed with the services she provided. The caller stated Tracy was an outstanding employee.*
- b. Tisha Browder – *She received a “Pure in Heart Service” Award from Carolina Therapeutic Services for her sacrifice, dedication and service.*

PERSONNEL REPORT

Ms. Pritchard stated that she would verbally inform the Board how many vacant positions and in the specific areas at each Board meeting rather than to list the data in packets that the Board received in advance of the meetings. This will enable the Board to receive information in “Real Time” and have the most current information. The Board Members agreed this was a good suggestion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients to the agency. However, there was an increase in number of incoming calls for the month. The agency issued 39 Work Permits.

Ms. Pritchard stated 110 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 8 families were referred to In-Home Services. 5 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 230 children currently in DSS custody. DSS has 77 Licensed Foster Homes. 28 children have been cleared for adoptive placement with 3 in non-identified homes. There were no recoveries for the month.

12 Adult Protective Services reports were received and accepted. 4 of these reports were substantiated. We received 2 Adult Care Home Complaints and 3 Nursing Home Complaints.

Ms. Shooter stated that Denise Harrill returned to Child Support as Program Manager a few weeks ago. Child Support continues to work hard on collections and locating absent parents.

Ms. Shooter advised Daycare information is unavailable due to recent transition into NCFASST.

Ms. Shooter stated the number of applications taken in Economic Services increased slightly. Ms. Pearson advised there has been a slight increase in FNS participation across the state. The numbers remained fairly consistent with the number of people receiving Medicaid.

4 Work First participants went to work for the month of June. There were no referrals for a drug screens.

Ms. Shooter stated the Program Integrity Unit continues to work very hard and received 80 referrals. Ms. Pearson advised 2 stores in Gaston County were closed by USDA as a result of a state investigation. The closing of the two stores generated referrals on clients that may have involved, therefore we had an increase in our referrals for Program Integrity.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Work First

Mary Etters, Work First/Daycare Program Manager

Ms. Pritchard introduced Mary Etters, Program Manager for Work First and Daycare programs. Ms. Etters explained the dynamics of applying for Work First (WFFA) benefits. She stated applicants meet with a worker to complete an Intake application for Cash Assistance in addition to Food & Nutrition and Medicaid, when applicable. In connection with the Cash Assistance program, WFFA applicants are required to meet with an Employment Social Worker who provides services for clients to obtain employment.

Ms. Etters described the drug abuse policy, which came into effect August 2014. Clients applying for Cash Assistance and who have been convicted of a H or I class felony in the last 3 years must be drug tested prior to approval. Since this policy went into effect, Cleveland County has completed drug screens on 3-4 individuals. Ms. Etters acknowledged a decline in applications over the past several years due to a better economy.

Ms. Shooter pointed out the myth that individuals “receive a welfare check without having to work.” Ms. Etters stated there are about 260 Child-Only cases. These are cases where grandparents/other relatives take care of children and receive payments without participating in the employment aspect of the program. We have about 30 able-bodied families who are assigned a Social Worker. Those clients are required to work 20-30 hours per week with one of our community partners (ex. Salvation Army, Goodwill, etc.) prior to receiving a cash payment.

Ms. Etters proceeded to furnish handouts regarding Emergency Assistance and the Broad River Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and Kinship Care Support Group to the DSS Board and staff. In addition, she shared details of a “Hot Car” demonstration that was recently held at DSS to show clients the effects of a vehicle’s temperature on S’mores as an example of what happens when children are left in a hot car. Vehicles become a deadly weapon in a matter of a few minutes for children or infants left in a vehicle.

Questions were asked and answered by the presenters.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Update – NCFAST in Daycare

Ms. Etters advised most of our Daycare Providers received payments, as expected. Others were overpaid, underpaid or did not receive payment at all. These issues are due to glitches in the NCFAST system and are not errors of the DSS staff. The state is currently working on resolving those issues to provide correct payments in the future. She advised our staff have worked very hard to help providers understand the process. Our county discovered 2 defects causing issues with the application process. As a result, the State logged the discovery as a defect and is working on a process to correct the defect.

b. Update – NCFAST in Energy Programs

Ms. Pearson stated Energy's rollout in NCFAST has been successful. She stated payments do not go through NCFAST. She believes there has been a slight increase in productivity. Ms. Shooter remarked that Energy is the simplest program to manage. Ms. Pearson advised 512 people have been served with \$111,000 in assistance funds.

c. Social Services Institute

Ms. Pritchard advised the Social Services Institute will be held at the Hickory Convention Metro center in Hickory, NC on October 18-20, 2017. The address is 1960 13th Ave Dr SE, Hickory, NC 28602 phone:(828) 322-1335

She advised that New Board Member training will be held on October 18, 2017 from 11:30 – 5:00. She will register all Board Members and complete the registration. Mileage Reimbursement will be provided for DSS Board Members who attend the SSI. Ms. Pritchard suggested that Ms. Phillips attend the New Board Member training on October 18, 2017. She encouraged all other Board Members to attend the NCACBSS annual meeting on October 18, 2018. This meeting is from 8:30 – 5:00. Ms. Pritchard asked Board Members to let her know for sure if they will be attending the SSI prior to the next DSS Board Meeting. She informed the Board that the Best Practice Awards Luncheon will be held on October 19, 2017. Our department has submitted four nominations.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. NCACBSS Update

No updates available.

b. Other

Commissioner Allen reported that she attended the County Commissioners National Conference last week. She stated the new Chair discussed a desire to see healthier counties and believes that working with children 0-3 years can be the key to success. She reported Cleveland County ranks 82 in the State. This is not an attractive number. She

advised that she will contact him to ask of the direction we, as a county, should take to move up the poll for healthier living.

Ms. Pritchard offered to set up an orientation for new Board Members to visit different departments with DSS, attend court and meet with her individually.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dale Oliver made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn the meeting at 5:04 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant I
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 28, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its August Board Meeting on August 28, 2017 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Commissioner Susan Allen, Chair
Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Jane Shooter, Attorney Chuck Wilson, Kay Howell, Alison Clark, Denise Harrill, Tom Ensley, Melissa Hawk, Lasandra Pearson, Mary Etters, Rhonda Hoyle, Tonya McGee, Paula Parker, Rebecca Sitzes

New Staff Members / Employees Promoted: Rebecca Sitzes, Paula Parker, Tonya McGee, Timara Jefferies

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order. Lendra Phillips led group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Mary Accor read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the July 31, 2017 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

a. Tisha Browder, SW, “Complimentary email” from Dawn Stover, Guardian ad Litem Supervisor – Ms. Pritchard stated the email describing Ms. Browder read that she is the most supportive, responsive, trustworthy dependable social worker he has ever worked with.”

b. Kathy Price, IMC III, “Appreciation Note” from client – Ms. Pritchard shared a comment from the client survey box stating Ms. Price “has been an angel and her professionalism, kindness and servant spirit is appreciated.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced an increase in the number of incoming clients and phone calls for the month. The agency issued 21 Work Permits.

Ms. Pritchard advised the department experienced a decrease in the number of CPS reports for July, as this is common for summer months since school is out. 86 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 10 children were referred to In-Home Service. 17 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 245 children currently in DSS custody. 31 children are cleared for adoption (4 children with a non- identified home). DSS has 78 Licensed Foster Homes. Ms. Pritchard advised of a new MAPP class scheduled for next month. She also identified a new category, “Voluntary Placement Agreements” listed on the Executive Summary. This category includes youth ages 18-21, who sign the agreement requesting to remain in foster care after they turn 18. These youth must remain in school or college to be eligible to remain in Foster Care.

We accepted 23 Adult Protective Services reports. 5 of these reports were substantiated. We received 0 Adult Care Home Complaints, 0 Nursing Home Complaints and 1 Recovery.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support continues to work hard on collections and locating absent parents. She advised Ms. Harrill continues to evaluate the department for any modifications that may prove to be helpful.

Ms. Shooter advised Day Care numbers remain consistent. Ms. Etters will share a detailed update during the “Directors Items” later in the Board meeting. However, the dollar figures remain relatively the same because we have a specific amount of money to serve those needing daycare assistance.

Ms. Shooter stated Economic Services continue to work hard as we are universal workers in Economic Services. The number of applications taken in Economic Services remain consistent.

Ms. Shooter stated 2 Work First participants went to work for the month of July. No clients were referred for drug screens. Only 27 clients are receiving cash assistance. The child only cases are relatives that are raising grandchildren or other relatives.

Ms. Shooter stated the Program Integrity and Medicaid Transportation units continue to work hard and numbers remain fairly consistent. Program Integrity numbers may be slightly increased due to referrals from a store being investigated by the USDA.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

The Preparation and Process of Child Permanence

Alison Clark
SW Program Manager

Ms. Clark stated that Child Protective Services (CPS) receive reports and evaluate if a child is at risk and in need of an assessment. She advised that cases are staffed with the Social Worker, Supervisor and Program Manager to determine the needs of the child(ren). Our Attorney takes a petition to the court, which must be signed by a judge that gives the department legal and physical custody. The local law enforcement agencies assist with the removal of children in need of protection. The Child Permanence (CP) worker explores placement options initially with relatives of the family or someone that has a close relationship with the child. Ms. Clark provided detailed information regarding timelines to complete health screens, joint visits, trauma assessments, etc. to meet required state mandates. She explained when DSS takes custody of a child, we are required to obtain items such as the child's Birth Certificate, Medicaid Card, Social Security Card, clothes, medications, etc. Often, parents are not willing to provide these needed items when a child is removed from the home. As a result, the department is obligated to provide and/or purchase the needed materials for children.

Ms. Clark boasted on the collaboration between Child Protective Services and Child Permanency as they work together to serve the children and as well as the parents. She continued to provide an in-depth presentation describing tasks completed by our social work staff. Questions were asked and answered by the presenter.

Ms. Clark provided a "Sponsor Links" flyer listing items that "Links" children (youth ages 13-18) would enjoy. Some items include donations for sports equipment, band instruments, school pictures, class rings, ear buds and Carmex lip balm. She explained simple items such as those listed can really brighten a child's day.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Child Support Awareness Month

Ms. Pritchard informed the Board that August is Child Support Awareness month. She reminded members that this month is a national initiative to help inform families about child support and the services that are available to help them.

b. Adoption Promotion Award Funding

Ms. Pritchard reviewed a letter advising North Carolina Child Support Division collected \$704,347,809.00 for the families and children we serve. She remarked Cleveland County does an excellent job with collections. The NC Child Support Program establishes goals for each county based on standard incentive measurements set forth by the Federal Office of Child Support

Enforcement. Ms. Pritchard explained incentives received help pay salaries of the Child Support staff. She acknowledged Ms. Harrill's commitment to the success of this department.

c. Human Services Exploration: DSS Case Worker

Ms. Pritchard advised of the Human Services Exploration: DSS Case Worker class offered at Cleveland Community College September 12 – November 21, 2017. She explained the course covers skills and strategies required of a DSS Income Maintenance Caseworker. She announced that Ms. Pearson is the instructor again for these classes. Ms. Pritchard advised that our agency has hired two individuals who attended the previous class. Ms. Shooter stated that those who complete the class receive an interview if they apply for vacant Income Maintenance Caseworker positions. She looks forward to compare their success in the office with their performance in class.

d. Child Advocacy Group Funding

Ms. Pritchard reported Rep. Tim Moore was instrumental in helping the Children's Home of Cleveland County acquire \$250,000 from the NC General Assembly. The funding will assist in providing two apartments for young adults who age out of foster care and allow them to have a transitional living space to prepare them for independent living. Thus far, the Children's Home of Cleveland County has reached the \$1.35 million mark in its capital campaign. Ms. Pritchard advised of an upcoming fundraiser for the Children's Home at Aldersgate Church in September where one of our former foster children will be the speaker. She encourages other to donate to this campaign to help support our children.

e. NCFAST- Daycare

Ms. Pritchard asked Ms. Etters to share information regarding the transition of Daycare into NCFAST. Ms. Etters advised of continuous system issues including payment issues reported by at least 300 daycare providers throughout the state. She advised the reason for issues given by the State were defects and other variables within the system. She stated most of our providers did not receive complete payment amounts. However, one of our providers did not receive any of a \$12,000 payment for July. As a result, this provider has lost two staff members due to the inability to pay salaries and they received a notice of utility disconnection due to non-payment of their monthly bill. Ms. Pritchard remarked that she contacted Angela Taylor, the top executive with NCFAST as well as Wayne Black who is the Director at the Division of Social Services requesting their immediate assistance with these issues. As of this morning, this Provider's payment was "in process" and should be deposited into their account tomorrow. Mr. Oliver asked if Providers were aware of possible issues when they agreed to accept vouchers. Ms. Howell recalled speaking with a Provider who stated she was advised to minimize the number of "voucher kids" enrolled due to possible issues of delayed or non-payment with the transition into the NCFAST system. Ms. Pritchard remarked that Ms. Etters has done a tremendous job with the NCFAST/Daycare's rollout.

f. Other

Ms. Shooter provided a visual of Child Welfare training material for its transition into NCFAST. She stated that it did not include the 30 hours of online training or 200,000 plus pieces of paper

that will be required to scan into NCFAST for case history. Ms. Pritchard remarked that NCFAST requires a lot of work and does not increase worker productivity. She thanked Ms. Shooter for the example. She also expressed a concern for increased turnover in Child Welfare due to the implementation of NCFAST.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. NCACBSS Update

Ms. Accor advised the Board has discussed the budget. They agree that there were good items included. However, there were also items lacking. She advised Wayne Black no longer attends their meetings. Currently, Michael Beckets, Assistant Secretary to DHHS, is the representative. Ms. Accor stated NCACBSS continues planning for the Social Services Institute. They are excited to host a joint meeting between NCACBSS and members from the NCACDSS. She thanked Ms. Pritchard for agreeing to participate on a panel during meetings regarding of the joint session.

b. Social Services Institute

Ms. Accor acknowledged excitement for the upcoming Social Services Institute this year. She reported most of the reserved hotel rooms are booked. She stated there are many items listed on the agenda including a session on the increasing opioid crisis. Ms. Pritchard advised our county submitted four Best Practice nominations and expressed hopefulness that we will win.

c. NCACBSS August/September Newsletter

Ms. Accor thanked the Board for providing information for the newsletter. They were appreciative of the article featuring Rev. Thompson and Betsy Wells' recognition for their years of service on the Cleveland County Board of Directors. Ms. Pritchard thanked Ms. Accor for providing a great newsletter to share information across the state.

d. Child Protection Team Update

Ms. Pritchard advised they did not staff any cases. They used the meeting to discuss new legislation in place regarding positive drug screens with newborns.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dale Oliver made a motion, seconded by Mary Accor to *adjourn* the *meeting at 4:56 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 25, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its September Board Meeting on September 25, 2017 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Commissioner Susan Allen – Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Lasandra Pearson, Alison Clark, Mary Etters, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Angela Woods, Cortney Shuford, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Jamela Geter, Skylar Littlejohn, Quanne Woods, Melanie Blanton

Promotions: Sheri Fussell, Lisa Koehn

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and led the group in a moment of silence. Mary Accor read the agency’s mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips, and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the August 28, 2017 Board Meeting.*

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

**“DSS Staff’s Responsibility in Manning Shelters
Whenever a Disaster Occurs**

Tom Ensley, Program Manager

Ms. Pritchard advised that our DSS was very prepared to staff a shelter during the possible impact of Hurricane Irma. She introduced Tom Ensley who is the Cleveland County DSS Disaster Coordinator. Mr. Ensley distributed handouts for his presentation. He advised North Carolina Law requires DSS’ staff to man emergency shelters. He stated the Director of Emergency Management Services makes the initial decision to setup a shelter(s) when the need is indicated. Once the decision is made, the Red Cross is contacted to determine the location of the shelter followed by contacting DSS to staff the facility. Mr. Ensley stated that he first contacts DSS Disaster team volunteers to recruit their services for the shelter(s). However, if additional help is needed, he begins to contact other DSS staff. He

reminded the Board that all 200+ DSS staff members are responsible to work in these shelters if the need arises. He stated some duties of the staff include registration, food services, clean up, activities for children, etc. Ms. Pritchard remarked that safety of staff is considered during times of disaster situations. Therefore, emergency vehicles are prepared to pick up staff from their homes to help man shelters if they are unable to drive because of adverse weather conditions. Mr. Ensley mentioned spending time in a shelter may help to remind us that we all need to plan for a disaster so that we can do as much as possible for our families. He was happy to report that Cleveland County works as a team to see that our county citizens are taken care of during times of a crisis.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department had an increase in number of incoming clients and incoming calls for the month. The agency issued 23 Work Permits.

106 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 8 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 246 children currently in the department's custody. Ms. Accor asked why there has been a continuous increase. Ms. Pritchard advised that there has been about a 25% increase in CPS reports and children taken into custody across the state of North Carolina. She stated that it is due to domestic violence, drugs and mental health issues. Ms. Clark also suggested a reason for the increase is the opioid crisis. Ms. Pritchard stated Meth is prevalent in Cleveland County. Outcomes of this drug cause people to hallucinate, become very violent and volatile. Attorney Wilson remarked that we do not have a lot of success stories with Meth addiction and treatment with families.

Currently we have 79 Licensed Foster Homes. 32 children are cleared for Adoption with 4 children who do not have identified adoptive homes. We currently have 7 children age 18-21 who have signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement to remain in our care who are attending school or college.

19 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 5 of these reports were substantiated. We received 4 Adult Care Home Complaints. We received 3 Nursing Home Complaints. We had 1 recovery.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support continues to work hard on collections, establishing orders and locating absent parents.

Ms. Shooter advised Day Care numbers provided are incorrect due to NC FAST reporting issues.

3 Work First participants went to work in the month of August. 1 person was referred for a drug screen and had negative result meaning no drugs were in the person's system.

Economic Services has had an increase in applications and continues to serve the population of clients in need of Medical Assistance and Food and Nutrition Services.

Ms. Shooter advised Medicaid Transportation amounts are not listed on the report due to Providers having trouble entering their information into NC Tracks. We will make this information available once the information is received from the Transportation Providers.

Ms. Shooter stated that Program Integrity is continuously working hard establishing claims and collections.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Connect, Commit to Change Event

Ms. Pritchard advised that she and Ms. Etters will be attending the Connect, Commit to Change event on October 21, 2017, 10:00 – 2:00 pm. They will be showcasing the services that DSS provides to our community. During this event, volunteers are recruited for Foster Childs Christmas Fund and the Adult Senior Santa Project. This has been a successful venue to promote Adoptions and the need for Foster Parents. In addition, monetary donations are received to help youth purchase items such as class rings, Senior pictures, etc. Connect, Commit to Change has been a great program to inform the community on how they can help support DSS.

b. NC FAST– Daycare Update

Ms. Etters stated the NC FAST system appears to be getting worse rather than better. There are Providers who continue to receive more or less payments than they should receive. The amounts will need to be reconciled at some point in the future. As a follow-up, the two Providers who did not receive payment last month have since been paid. One received a check from their attorney after contacting DCDEE. Ms. Etters advised of a current issue with another Provider due to a change in ownership. As a result of the change, there has been a delay in the issuance of vouchers. Ms. Pritchard has been in contact with the State regarding this problem. Currently the Director of DCDEE and NC FAST have staff working to resolve the issue.

c. NC FAST– Child Welfare Update

Ms. Pritchard stated that our Child Welfare department is scheduled to rollout October 23, 2017 in NC FAST. However, she and Ms. Shooter participated in a conference call from the Pilot counties who identified about 26 system issues. Pilots are suggesting other counties should not go-live in NC FAST until issues are resolved. We stand united in supporting the postponement of further rollouts until the defects in the system are repaired and correct. The Pilot counties are scheduled to meet in Rowan County with Association President Donna Fayko, Michael Becketts, Wayne Black and Angie Taylor with NC FAST. Ms. Pritchard advised there is a major issue in the system with using county funds instead of state and federal funds when making Foster Home Board payments. Ms. Shooter remarked that there was no way to prevent this from happening since all of our Foster children's information will automatically convert into the NC FAST system. Ms. Pritchard expressed concern that NC FAST will increase work tasks for Social Work staff. She advised she will continue to be vocal regarding the NC FAST transition and keep the Board informed of updates.

d. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Child Fatality Team Update

Ms. Pritchard advised the Chair cancelled the meeting. She advised the Child Protection team will meet in October and the Child Fatality Team will meet in November.

b. NCACBSS Updates & the Social Services Institute

Ms. Accor relayed a message from Betsy Wells. She reminded everyone to attend the Social Services Institute in October. She advised of Board member training scheduled on Wednesday, in addition to, the Board's business meeting and luncheon on Thursday. Ms. Pritchard advised all Board members that they have been registered to attend and rooms are paid for all those who elected to stay overnight.

c. Other

Ms. Pritchard advised her Annual Evaluation is due in October. The 2016 evaluation was given to Board members for review. Ms. Pritchard asked that this year's evaluation be returned by Ms. Allen, Ms. Wright and Ms. Accor to Melissa Hawk by Monday, October 16, 2017. She advised that Ms. Phillips and Mr. Oliver will not complete the evaluation since they just joined the DSS Board in July 2017.

Ms. Allen advised of an upcoming county competition to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House. She proceeded to describe the enormous support this foundation gives families in Cleveland County. Beginning in October, each department will compete by collecting the most soda pop tabs.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:00 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 30, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its September Board Meeting on October 30, 2017 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Commissioner Susan Allen – Chair
Denise Wright
Mary Accor
Dale Oliver
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Lasandra Pearson, Alison Clark, Mary Ethers, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Pam Bright, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Gene Shuford

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order. Denise Wright led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Dale Oliver read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor, and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the September 25, 2017 Board Meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. Beth Lankford received a "Thank you" card from a client who stated she made a difficult situation much easier

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department had a decrease in number of incoming clients and incoming calls for the month. The agency issued 14 Work Permits.

124 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 8 children were referred to In-Home Services. 13 children were taken into DSS custody. Ms. Allen questioned if this amount included siblings or separate individual cases. Attorney Wilson informed that we did not have any large sibling

groups that entered custody. This number is the result of investigations on 4 or 5 different families. Ms. Wright remarked, due to recent history, the cases probably involved drug usage. There are 249 children currently in the department's custody. Currently, we have 79 Licensed Foster Homes. 35 children are cleared for Adoption with 4 children who do not have identified adoptive homes. We currently have 7 children age 18-21 who have signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement to remain in our care who are attending school or college.

13 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 3 of these reports were substantiated. Ms. Pritchard advised we are receiving many exploitation reports. She has signed several affidavits to freeze bank accounts in an effort to prevent money from being taken from our clients. We received 1 Adult Care Home Complaint. We received 0 Nursing Home Complaints. We had 3 recoveries.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support continues to work hard on collections, establishing orders and locating absent parents.

Ms. Shooter advised Day Care continues to work through its challenges in NCFAST. She acknowledged probable inaccuracies in the amounts listed on the Executive Summary reported due to inaccuracies on NCFAST reports. She stated we continue to serve about the same number of children in Daycare.

1 Work First participant went to work in the month of September and there were no referrals for drug screens.

Economic Services had a slight decrease in applications but continue to serve the population of clients in need of Medical Assistance and Food and Nutrition Services.

Ms. Shooter advised Medicaid Transportation amounts are about the same. Ms. Howell reported the money no longer comes from the county but is paid from the State to the providers. Ms. Pritchard further explained that Providers directly bill the State for Medicaid Transportation services. Ms. Allen questioned if the new free transportation system available in the West part of Shelby would reduce the numbers reported. Ms. Shooter clarified the TACC verification process that must be completed when a client requests transportation to a doctor's appointment. Mr. Ensley, who is the DSS representative on the TACC Board, reiterated that the free transportation follows a specific route and does not intend to take people to physician offices. Ms. Shooter suggested a significant number of people would need to utilize the free transportation opposed to pre-arranged TACC for Medicaid doctor appointments to determine the impact, if any.

Ms. Shooter stated that Program Integrity is continuously working hard establishing claims and collections. She advised the previous increased number involved a store investigation.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Youth Employment Certificate / Work Permits

Ms. Pritchard stated effective October 5, 2017, youth employment certificates/work permits can no longer be issued by Department of Social Services. The form must be obtained from the Commissioner of Labor. All parents and/or youth may utilize the N.C. Department of Labor's online process by visiting www.nclabor.com. As

previously required, we will retain copies of certificates issued by our office for a period of two years following the date of issuance.

b. Invitation to Adoption Celebration – November National Adoption Month

Ms. Pritchard invited Board members to the Cleveland County DSS Annual Adoption Day Celebration on Friday, November 17, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. in Court Room #4 at the Cleveland County Courthouse. She stated this event is an emotional celebration. We celebrate families and adoptions achieved this year. Families have their photo taken, receive an adoption certificate followed by a reception. She advised Special Needs Adoption Promotion money is used to fund the reception.

c. DSS Annual Report

Ms. Pritchard provided our Annual Report to the Board, compliments of Kay Howell. She discussed the report and pointed out our remarkable numbers that capture the huge volume of work completed by DSS staff. She remarked that our numbers are quite overwhelming and pointed out the great work that our department has provided to Cleveland County citizens. Additional copies were given to Board members to share.

d. NCFAST – Child Welfare Rollout Delay

Ms. Pritchard informed the deployment of NC FAST for Child Welfare has been postponed due to problems experienced in Pilot counties. She advised the board of 26 “show stopper” issues that were identified and needed to be corrected prior to other counties being added. The new anticipated rollout date is in January, 2018 contingent upon the defects being repaired.

e. NCFAST – Child Welfare Rollout Delay

Ms. Ethers advised that we cannot recoup overpayments created by NCFAST as that functionality is currently turned off. She anticipates that once the issue is resolved, workers will be required to correct on all affected cases as a high priority. She stated other issues and defects continue to be found. She stated other counties continue to be added to NCFAST in daycare despite increased known issues. However, staff continue to work hard. Ms. Wright questioned the method of retrieving overpayments. Ms. Pritchard advised the State will retrieve overpayments even if it is deducted from a daycare direct payment from the state. She advised, due to lack of accurate reports, we do not know the number of children served, the amount of money spent, Smart Start, etc. She stated it creates an uneasy feeling with the absence of information. Ms. Pritchard praised Ms. Ethers for a job well-done while keeping up the morale of staff despite continued issues.

f. Other

Ms. Accor stated she had to leave the Social Services Institute early but questioned if the Secretary explained any topics concerning NCFAST. She expected her to address the multiple issues since it affects a large number of counties. She expressed concern because it appears to be the same discussion all the time. Ms. Accor questioned if it is

something the Board could do as appreciation for the hard work completed by each department during their various adversities. Ms. Allen asked if NCACBSS discussed present NCFAST problems at their meetings. Ms. Accor affirmed that there are individuals on the Board who are eager to address Legislators themselves. Ms. Pritchard confirmed that morale is definitely impacted because of NCFAST issues. There is so much more work involved from the top to the staff. She advised the new Chief Deputy of Child Welfare, Lisa Colley from Wake County, was told that NCFAST in Child Welfare was working just fine. Ms. Pritchard advised that she commented, during a workshop, that the rollout was postponed due to Twenty something major defects in the system. She informed that Ms. Colley spoke with her after the workshop where she advised her to visit with the pilot counties for a more accurate assessment of NCFAST. Ms. Colley was unaware of the existing problems which is evidence of poor communication in the state.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. NCACBSS and Social Services Institute Updates

Ms. Accor remarked the Social Services Institute was a success. They will meet again at the beginning of next year. She enjoyed the collaboration between NCACBSS and the Board of Directors. She advised she was elected as the 2nd Vice President. She's excited about the upcoming work and hopes to be a louder voice regarding NCFAST issues. Ms. Allen expressed appreciation for representing our county at that level. Ms. Pritchard was proud to have such a large representation of Board Members attending this year's Institute. She appreciates the support received from the Board for our department.

b. Child Fatality Team Update

Ms. Bright stated they reviewed one case. She advised next month they will review child fatalities.

c. Other

CLOSED SESSION

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor, to *enter into a closed session at 4:45 p.m. to discuss a Personnel Issue, GS143-318.11(b)*.

A personnel matter was discussed in closed session and no action was taken.

Motions were made and seconded to exit the closed session and return to open session.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, *the meeting adjourned.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 27, 2017
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its November Board Meeting on November 27, 2017 at 4:00 in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Susan Allen, Chair
Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Attorney, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell
LaSandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill and Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Scott Sykes

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order. Denise Wright led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and in a moment of silence. Mary Accor read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the October 30, 2017 Board Meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

- a. Rachel Forms, "*Unsung Hero*" email thanked Ms. Forms for assisting an elderly client with Medicaid premiums that resulted in a refund.
- b. Shelley Snyder, "*Thank You*" email expressed appreciation for her positive impression during a difficult time.
- c. Kirk Poteet, "*Complimentary*" email shared the awesome treatment he gives to his clients and appreciation for his dedication to disabled and elderly citizens in our county.
- d. Beth Lankford, "*Thanks for compassion*" telephone call from a client complimented her professionalism and thanked her for the compassion and concern for her clients.
- e. Connect, Commit to Change "*Thank You*" email received for participating in this year's event. Ms. Pritchard advised DSS received 5 commitments (monetary donations, volunteers, etc.) as a result of this event.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Foothills Farmers' Market / Market Moola
Tammy Bass – Catalyst for Healthy Eating and Active Living
Carol Maxwell – Foothills Farmers' Market Manager
Jordan Jackson -Consumer and Foster Parent

Ms. Pritchard reminded the Board that the relationship between DSS and the Foothills Farmers Market began about 5 years ago. She stated the initiative was developed to help clients learn to make healthy recipes and use EBT benefits at the Farmers Market by purchasing healthy food. She introduced Tammy Bass, Catalyst for Healthy Eating and Active Living, who will present.

Ms. Bass stated the goal for her position is to change the system and environment so people can have access to healthy food. She proceeded to provide history on how EBT acceptance was introduced to local farmers then established for use at Foothills Farmers Market. Ms. Jackson, a DSS Foster parent, described a typical day at the market for she and her children. She explained their increased excitement for purchasing healthy food as a result of their market experiences. In addition, Ms. Maxwell explained the method for EBT clients to purchase tokens and earn Markey Moola for food items sold at the market.

Ms. Bass, Ms. Maxwell and Ms. Jackson continued to provide an in-depth presentation relating to children activities, locally grown products available and the benefits from shopping at Foothills Farmers Market. Questions were asked and answered by the presenters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department received an increase in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls for the month.

In Child Protective Services, 125 reports were accepted for assessment. 5 children were taken into DSS custody. 8 cases were referred to In-Home Services. Currently there are 248 children in DSS custody. 38 children are cleared for adoption with 4 in non-identified homes. We currently have 77 Licensed Foster Homes. 13 Voluntary Placement Agreement (individuals age 18-21)

In Services to Adults, we accepted 14 Adult Protective Service reports and 2 of these reports were substantiated. We received 2 Adult Care Home complaints and 1 Nursing Home complaint. 0 Recoveries.

Ms. Shooter stated Ms. Harrill continues to manage Child Support and is operating with several vacancies. She advised there is a slight delay in filling positions due to the pay study that goes into effect January 2018. The amount of collections increased to \$798,162 for the month. 88 absent parents were located and 40 new orders were established.

Ms. Shooter informed the Board that Daycare numbers are unavailable at this time due to NC FAST. However, we continue to serve relatively the same number of children. This department continues to maneuver through the NCFAST system despite reported system issues.

Ms. Shooter recognized a decrease in the number of individuals receiving FNS. Ms. Pearson advised the amount was correct and the decrease is due to the new Able-Bodied Adults Without

Dependents (ABAWD) policy that was recently implemented. Ms. Shooter stated the number of Medicaid recipients remain consistent.

In Work First, 0 participants went to work. There were 0 referrals for drug screens.

Ms. Shooter advised Medicaid Transportation assistance numbers remain consistent.

Ms. Shooter stated Program Integrity continues to work hard with 64 referrals received and 36 claims established for the month. \$14,779 collected for the month.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. November is National Adoption Month – Update on Local Adoption Celebration

Ms. Pritchard informed the Board that November is National Adoption Awareness Month and referred to the Proclamation signed by Governor Cooper in the Board Packets. She reported that we had a very successful event at the courthouse on November 17, 2017. She stated five families attended and received certificates, along with their adopted children. Ms. Pritchard thanked Commissioner Allen for attending the event. Ms. Allen said she appreciated the emotional remarks from Judge Wilson who declared this event as one of his favorite days of the year. A reception followed the program.

b. Foster/Adoptive Parent Christmas Dinner – December 7, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Pritchard invited all board members to attend the Christmas Dinner for the Foster/Adoptive Parents and children on December 7, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the county auditorium. All of our foster/adoptive parents and children are invited to this event.

c. DSS Holiday Luncheon – December 8, 2017 at 11:30 a.m.

Ms. Pritchard invited all board members to attend the DSS Holiday Luncheon on December 8, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. following the DSS Board Meeting at 10:45 a.m. The DSS Choir will be providing musical entertainment.

d. Update – NC FAST in Child Welfare

Ms. Pritchard advised there are a large number of defects that remain within Child Welfare NC FAST system. Regardless, it is still expected to rollout to Group 1 counties January 22, 2018. She stated she expressed displeasure with anticipated rollout at a meeting with the State because of the huge system defects.

e. Update – NC FAST in Daycare

Ms. Pritchard stated Daycare continues to experience issues in NC FAST. She advised of a recent incident where Providers were omitted from a list and did not

receive payment for services. Ms. Shooter reiterated that problems experienced daily are unpredictable.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Discuss Changing December Board Meeting Date (to December 8, 2017 at 10:45 a.m.)

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to *change the December Board Meeting to December 8, 2017 at 10:45 a.m.*

b. DSS Accomplishments

Ms. Allen advised she asked Ms. Pritchard to provide the list of “DSS Accomplishments,” as a recap of the year to reflect on the great tasks completed by this agency. Ms. Pritchard reviewed the list with the Board and expressed being proud of DSS staff. Ms. Allen thanked Ms. Pritchard for her leadership and the hard work completed by this agency for the people of Cleveland County.

c. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor reported the NCACBSS Newsletter is almost complete. She stated that the Quarterly Meeting will be held in January 2018.

d. Child Fatality Team Update

DSS Supervisor, Charlotte Willis attended the meeting to represent DSS. No remarkable findings related to DSS with the fatalities presented.

e. Other

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Denise Wright made a motion, seconded by Mary Accor to *adjourn the meeting at 5:00 p.m.*

Denise Wright, Vice-Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 8, 2017
10:45 a.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its December Board Meeting on December 8, 2017 at 10:45 a.m. in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Ellis, Jane Shooter, Attorney Chuck Wilson, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Mary Eppers, Alison Clark, Attorney Angela Woods, Tina McNeilly and Melissa Hawk

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Denise Wright called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, moment of silence and read the agency's Mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The December Board Agenda was not approved, as there was not a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November DSS Board Minutes were not approved, as there was not a quorum present. The November minutes will need to be approved at the January 2018 meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

**Foster Children's Christmas Project –
Tina McNeilly, Processing Assistant III
Senior Santa – Tom Ensley, Program Manager**

Foster Children's Christmas Project, Tina McNeilly

Ms. McNeilly stated there are currently 201 children in Foster care or relative placements that needed assistance with Christmas this year. She advised the Foster Children's Christmas fund currently has a balance of \$9520.00. To assist Foster families, there will be 4 days available at Walmart to purchase gifts for these children. Depending on the child's age, they are able to spend \$25, \$75 or \$100. If a family chooses to purchase items on their own, they may send in receipts for reimbursement up to the designated amount. In addition, each child's name has been given to a Sponsor for additional gifts.

Ms. McNeilly continues to receive calls from businesses/organizations wanting to donate clothing, toys and/or money. In addition, she informed the board of several fundraisers held throughout the year to collect donations for the Foster Children Christmas Fund which include Kings Mountain Golf Tournament, jewelry shows, food and clothing sales. We have received monetary donations from Ms. Pritchard and other DSS staff. Ms. McNeilly

recognized a few other donating organizations/companies: Harris Funeral Home, Turner Trucking, Edward Jones, Cleveland Yutaka, Curtis Wright and America Safety. Ms. McNeilly want to give a special recognition to the Cleveland County Realtors Association for significant donations while providing Belk clothing for 40 Foster Children. Ms. Pritchard reiterated the appreciation for the Association's annual gift.

Ms. McNeilly stated she continuously looks for new ideas for fundraisers and always accepts donations. Ms. Wright questioned if DSS would be receiving toys from the motorcycle group this year. Ms. Pritchard advised the Annual Toy Run will be on December 16. She advised the Children's Home of Cleveland County receive the monetary donations and first choice of donated toys. All remaining toys are given to DSS for further distribution. Ms. Clark acknowledged Kings Mountain Optimus who also completed a toy drive for our Foster Children this year.

Ms. Pritchard acknowledged the hard work of DSS staff who evaluate gifts given to assure children in the same home receive equitable gifts.

Ms. Pritchard advised the Foster Children's Christmas Party was celebrated last night in the auditorium. Foster families were treated to a catered meal by Shelby Café. She stated that the children were very excited to see Santa as he made his surprise visit. The Foster Children also received a gift from Santa. Ms. Pritchard also advised the Board that the Grandparent Raising Grandchildren group will have their Christmas celebration on Monday evening.

Adult Senior Santa Project, Tom Ensley

Mr. Ensley enlightened the Board on the progress of the Senior Santa Project. He proceeded to describe how the thoughts of receiving toiletries, knitted hats or socks may mean little to some people, whereas, to our Seniors, it means a great deal. He stated the gifts we give our Seniors are the only gifts they are likely to receive this holiday season.

Mr. Ensley informed the Board that each November, decorated Christmas boxes are placed throughout the agency giving staff the opportunity to donate suggested items to the Senior Santa Project. This year, there was a large participation by DSS staff. He wanted to highlight their generosity and express sincere appreciation for items given for Seniors.

Mr. Ensley stated that \$700.00 in monetary contributions have been received this year. He expressed appreciated for donations from Ms. Pritchard as well as from a retired staff member, Nancy Johnson, who started the Senior Santa Project. In addition, the Agency promotes "Senior Santa Christmas in July" which allows staff to wear denim for a \$1/day donation to the Senior Santa Project. Mr. Ensley advised that donations are continuously accepted.

Mr. Ensley wanted to highlight a group that was spearheaded by one of his Title V staff, Alberta Partlow. The Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World-Emma B Kelly Temple donated a significant number of baskets filled with numerous items for the Senior Santa Project. This donation, in addition to other items collected, will allow 150-200 bags to be given to Seniors this year.

Ms. Wright asked how bags are distributed. Mr. Ensley informed that 53 will go to

individuals who are Wards of the County, 80+ bags for SA In-Home clients and about 50 bags for community seniors through referrals.

Mr. Ensley displayed contents of a Senior Santa Bag with the Board. He stated that staff try to make bags appropriate for males and females. Some items placed in bags may include: soap, lotion, toothpaste, shampoo, socks and other toiletry items. Ms. Pritchard questioned if crochet blankets are available this year. Mr. Ensley advised he requested blankets from Warm Up America but has yet to receive them. He is optimistic that the donations will arrive in time for distribution to our seniors in need. Ms. Clark advised they routinely share stuffed animals received from the toy run to contribute to the Senior Santa bags.

Mr. Ensley concluded with his appreciation to everyone that help to make this project a success.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Donations for Senior Santa, Foster Children's Christmas Fund

Ms. Pritchard stated that we continuously accept donations for both the Foster Children's Christmas Fund and the Senior Santa Project. For those wanting to mail donations at a later date, she provided the mailing address and advised to send their donation to "Attn: Cheryl Barnett" until December 31st and to "Attn: Kay Howell" thereafter. She stated that due to a decrease in monetary donations over the years, our agency depends on sponsorship from those in the community. Ms. Wright asked for more information regarding Angel Trees. Ms. Pritchard explained that those are often created by the Salvation Army, Communities in School, Abuse Prevention Council or School system for children they are assisting.

b. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

- a. Updates**
- b. Other**

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.

Denise Wright, Vice-Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 29, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its January Board Meeting on January 29, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Denise Wright – Vice-Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Attorney Angela Woods, Pam Bright, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, LaSandra Pearson, Mary Eters and Melissa Hawk.

Promoted Staff Members: Julia Sewell, Nicole Guin

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Denise Wright called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Mary Accor read the agency’s mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the November 27, 2017 Board meeting.*

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the December 8, 2017 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. Tonya Robbs received a “Thank You” email from a Child Support client she assisted with processing an arrears payment.
- b. FNS Timeliness Best Practices and Process Survey Report recognized Cleveland County as having met or exceeded 95% timeliness processing in both FNS applications and reviews.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Work First Employment / Cash Assistance

– Mary Etters, Program Manager

Ms. Pritchard introduced Mary Etters, Program Manager for Work First and Daycare programs. Ms. Etters explained the dynamics of applying for Work First (WFFA) benefits and Cash Assistance. She recognized the clients we serve are unemployed or underemployed. She stated the Income Maintenance Caseworker takes the application for eligible benefits while the Employment Services Social Worker works with Able-Bodied Adult participants to obtain employment. Ms. Pritchard asked if we paid for clients to attend school. Ms. Etters responded that these clients are usually eligible for Pell Grants through the school. If not, we can possibly assist with some payment. She also advised we pay for books, clothing, shoes and other needed supplies. In addition, we can pay for tests required for nursing or other trainings required with educational studies.

Ms. Etters reported having about 270 “child only” cases where grandparents/other relatives take care of children and receive payments without participating in the employment aspect of the program. Ms. Shooter acknowledged the 19 cash assistance cases currently active. She stated these individuals receive what some may refer to as a “welfare check.” Ms. Pritchard interjected that clients must be actively involved in work, complete volunteer hours or attend school prior to receiving payment in a process called Pay After Performance. Ms. Phillips questioned the availability of childcare assistance if the grandparent works. Ms. Etters stated that being a payee does not qualify a person for daycare services. Those services are provided to clients in Child Protective Services or Able-Bodied WFFA recipients. She clarified that many grandparents receive daycare services because they received guardianship of the child/children through Child Protective Services. She noted 500 children are currently on the daycare waiting list.

Ms. Etters stated her staff also provides Emergency Assistance to their clients. This includes assistance with utilities and rent. Referrals are accepted from social workers within the agency, the Health Department and school system.

Ms. Etters continued to provide an in-depth presentation regarding Work First Employment/Cash Assistance and the Grandparent Program. Questions were asked and answered. In addition, handouts including program descriptions and income limits were also furnished to the DSS Board and staff.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard discussed the following items related to the Executive Summary. There was a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls to the agency for the month of December. She explained the reduced numbers are because the department was closed three days for the holiday season.

92 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 12 families were referred to In-Home Services. 2 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 242 children currently in the department’s custody. We have 78 licensed foster homes. We have 49 children cleared for adoption and 47 of those children have identified adoptive placements.

6 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 0 of these reports were substantiated. We received 2 Adult Care Home Complaints and there were 0 Nursing Home

complaints. There was 1 recovery for the month of December. There are 14 young adults in a Voluntary Placement Agreements. Ms. Pritchard advised The Children's Home of Cleveland County had a groundbreaking for their transitional living program. This will allow some of our Voluntary Placement Agreement participants to live independently with supervision from the Children's Home staff. She advised this will be located on Gidney Street in Shelby beside of the James Home. In addition, the Children's Home offices will also be housed on this same site.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support collections decreased slightly for the month of December. However, they continue to work hard locating parents and establishing orders. Ms. Wright questioned the decrease in the number of absent parents located and those in locate status. Ms. Harrill advised that those numbers can vary greatly from time to time. Variances that affect the report include Show Cause Notices to appear in court, civil complaints, notice of hearing returned unserved, etc. Ms. Shooter stated she previously believed that those numbers represented parents we've found when it actually represents the number we are looking to find. Ms. Harrill advised the automated system searches for absent parent matches 24/7. Therefore, numbers can vary depending on the time a report was pulled.

Day Care numbers remain fairly consistent.

In Economic Services, there was a slight decrease in the number of applications taken for the month of December. The number of people we continue to serve remains consistent.

0 Work First participants went to work in the month of December. She noted that only 19 cases out of 256 receive Work First cash payments (formerly known as "welfare checks.") There were no clients referred for drug screening.

Program Integrity staff continue to work hard processing fraud claims and collections.

Ms. Shooter advised Medicaid Transportation providers are slowly turning in their reports. Ms. Howell stated that since providers are required to "direct bill" to Medicaid at their discretion that our numbers will look differently. Ms. Shooter informed the Board of the large amount of paper records maintained/created from various programs within the agency. She described the current warehouse location of records being extremely crowded and somewhat hazardous with rows of files in boxes stacked on top of each other almost reaching the ceiling. She advised these records will be destroyed, if they can be purged by policy or if we are required to keep them be moved to the county warehouse central storing facility. Ms. Pritchard reported the findings of a space study revealed that DSS is in need of a new building. However, it is not in the plans for DSS to get a new building at this time. Ms. Shooter remarked that she anticipates some space to become available once paper records are moved. Ms. Accor questioned the new location for file storage. Ms. Shooter advised the County obtained a contract with Cleveland Vocational Industries (CVI) on Post Road. Ms. Howell advised that the lease fee will be paid out of the County's budget opposed to the DSS budget. Ms. Shooter advised that records needed can be requested and brought to staff at DSS as opposed to our staff having to search through boxes of records at the current location.

Ms. Pritchard reminded the Board that she did not receive positions requested last year to assist our two Staff Attorneys, Angela Woods and Chuck Wilson. She acknowledged Andrea Leslie Fite, prior to her resignation from the County, was designated to help Ms. Woods by taking over Guardianship cases. Currently, both DSS Attorneys are overwhelmed with with the magnitude of court work. Child Support orders are behind because of the huge volume of guardianship cases and

child support cases. She stated that Attorney Wilson prepares all his court orders. In addition, Attorney Woods advised Child Support can evaluate 40-60 cases weekly that would potentially require orders to be completed. Ms. Pritchard advised that when the new assistant county attorney position is filled, they will take over the Guardianship cases that Ms. Woods is now responsible for handling. Ms. Woods remarked that she spoke with Tim Moore who offered to assist us during this demanding time. She anticipates him attending Child Support court toward the end of February. She has invited him to court prior to him assisting with cases in order for him to view the current procedural process. Ms. Pritchard praised Attorneys Woods and Wilson for working very well together.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Cleveland County Employee Recognition Event – February 22, 2018 at 11:45, Legrand Center

Ms. Pritchard extended invitations to Board Members for the Cleveland County Employee Recognition Luncheon at the LeGrand Center on February 22, 2018 at 11:45 a.m. This event recognizes employees for years of service and Cleveland Strong Awards. She advised several DSS staff have been nominated for awards.

b. IV-E Eligibility Determination Process Review

Ms. Pritchard reviewed a letter from Secretary Mandy Cohen of NC DHHS. It stated that staff were instrumental in the success of the IV-E Eligibility Determination Review which enabled NC to receive a rating of substantial compliance on the final report from the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted the week of July 24, 2017. Ms. Pritchard expressed being proud of the continuous hard work completed by our staff. All records that were pulled from our county passed in full compliance with standards.

c. NC FAST P4 Child Welfare Update

Ms. Pritchard advised the Child Welfare rollout has been delayed. She advised five Pilot counties discovered a large number of defects in NC FAST. It was determined that these critical defects be resolved prior to further rollout to Group I counties. She advised participating in a meeting with other Group 1 counties, Pilot Counties, Secretary Cohen, Assistant Secretary Susan Perry- Manning and various other DHHS officials. All concerns and defects were outlined. The State produced a "List of R1 Defects and Change Requests" that they expect to fix prior to rollout on February 26, 2018. Susan Perry Manning reported that she will meet with NC FAST weekly to assure issues are being resolved. Ms. Pritchard expressed concern that we will not be able to test the system prior to rollout. She stated she will return to Raleigh the week of February 6th and expect to receive updates on this process. She thanked Ms. Accor and Ms Allen for their advocacy efforts with House Speaker, Tim Moore regarding to NC FAST.

Ms. Accor stated in her conversation with House Speaker, Tim Moore, she discussed worries regarding NC FAST and the morale of DSS staff. She further expressed concern that if NC FAST goes live with issues, the blame will be pointed towards counties again. Ms. Accor discovered the letter regarding NC FAST issues had not been sent to his office

and he was unaware of the reported problems. She believes Cleveland County Commissioners, State Representatives and other officials should be copied on all correspondence received to keep all parties informed. Otherwise, issues will not be addressed and possible solutions will not be explored. She will continue to send information to Speaker Moore's office to keep him informed. Ms. Shooter advised that the list provided by the State does not cover all of the issues discovered. Ms. Pritchard noted Secretary Cohen's opening comments stated "it sounds like we don't have the best system but it's what we have." Ms. Pritchard continued to express that what we have (NC FAST) may not work in Child Welfare.

d. NC FAST Daycare Update

Ms. Eppers stated that Daycare in NC FAST is "moving right along." The State is currently working on underpayments/overpayments that have been created. Our County has six pending help tickets registered with the Help Desk. They continue to have Over Shoulder Support (OSS) assistance weekly which has been helpful to resolve issues that are discovered.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Child Protection Team Update

Ms. Wright advised of the last day for the team's Chairperson, Dr. Richardson. They are currently looking for a replacement. She also informed of a new task force that will be focused on runaways. They met with law enforcement to discuss individuals harboring runaways. There is no desire to arrest or penalize those who aid these individuals as it is better to have these youth in a home rather than on the street. Ms. Pritchard advised a runaway petition can be filed for Foster children who runaway. However, after being in secure custody for five days, they are set free and can run again. She stated DSS is still liable for these children since they are in our custody. Ms. Bright remarked that almost 100 homeless teens are "couch surfing" which could potentially be neglect reports. She anticipates an increase in those type of reports. She reflected on a case where an inappropriate placement had been made by school staff. She notified Sandy Hamrick who reached out to a school Social Worker for assistance. Ms. Bright reiterated the importance of recognizing the need for a report.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor stated NCACBSS completed a conference call in lieu of their meeting in Burlington due to inclement weather. She advised they had the same conversation as previously discussed in the "Director's Items" regarding NC FAST and the upcoming rollout next month. Ms. Accor, again, expressed her concerns relating to NCFAST. She advised the next meeting is scheduled in March at the regular location in Burlington.

b. NCACBSS Newsletter

Ms. Pritchard thanked and praised Ms. Accor for another great edition of the NCACBSS newsletter.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:04 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa M. Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 26, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its February Board Meeting on February 26, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Susan Allen – Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Attorney Chuck Wilson, Alison Clark, Denise Harrill, LaSandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Mary Eppers, Melissa Hawk, Debra Watson, Lisa Koehn.

New Staff Members: Amber Lawson **Promotion:** Sharon Fuller, Tammy Stephens, Jada Warren

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Lendra Phillips called the meeting to order, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence and read the agency’s mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by, Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by, Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board, to, *approve the minutes of the January 29, 2018 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. **2018 Cleveland Strong Awards** - Ms. Pritchard stated that she was proud to recognize DSS staff who were Finalists or Award recipients at the Cleveland County Employee Recognition Event held at the Legrand Center on February 22, 2018. Staff recognized include: Jennifer Potter – 1st Place for “Service,” Renee Carroll – 3rd Place for “Service”, Misti Merritt – 3rd Place for “Networking,” Lisa Koehn – 2nd Place for “Getting Healthy” and Debra Watson –3rd Place for “Getting Healthy.” Alison Clark received the Ronald J. Hawkins Sky King Award.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard discussed the following items related to the Executive Summary. There was an increase in the number of telephone calls received in the agency. There was also an increase in the number of incoming clients to the agency for the month of January.

118 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 7 children were referred to In-Home Services. 5 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 240 children currently in the department's custody. We have 75 Licensed Foster Homes. We have 52 children cleared for adoption and 2 children who do not have identified placements. There are 14 Voluntary Placement Agreements being utilized. (Youth 18-21.)

8 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 4 of these reports were substantiated. We received 1 Adult Care Home Complaints and 1 Nursing Home complaints. There was 1 recovery for the month of January.

Ms. Shooter noted that the Child Support department had an increase in collections and established 40 new orders.

Day Care numbers remain consistent.

In Economic Services, the number of individuals served remain consistent.

0 Work First participants went to work in the month of January. There were no referrals for drug screening.

There continues to be a delay from Providers to submit reports for billing. The amounts will be updated once received. This is due to Providers billing for Medicaid Transportation Services directly to the state.

Program Integrity continues to receive referrals and establish claims. They collected \$16,897 in January.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Health Choice

– LaSandra Pearson, Program Manager

Ms. Pearson provided background information regarding CHIP funding, which is a healthcare program for children who are ineligible for Medicaid but are still low- income. She stated CHIP is financed by State and Federal levels but receives a higher reimbursement rate than Medicaid. North Carolina's administers this program in the form of North Carolina Health Choice (NCHC). She stated to be eligible for this program, children cannot qualify for full Medicaid nor have comprehensive private insurance. Once certified, children receive NCHC for 12 months. The only reason for termination would be moving out of State, obtain another health insurance, incarceration, obtain Work First, SSI, become pregnant (receive MPW) or child turns age 19. Depending on income, some households are required to pay a fee of \$50 per child up to a maximum of \$100/family. Ms. Pearson also advised that persons receiving NCHC are not eligible to receive Medicaid Transportation Services. Ms. Allen suggested reminding clients of free transportation available from West Shelby areas to several stops in Shelby. She continued to provide an in-depth presentation, reviewed provided handouts to further explain NCHC along with a copy of income limit charts. Questions were asked and answered.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Work First Monitoring

Ms. Shooter advised this was the first Work First Monitoring since 2013. She praised Ms. Etters and her staff for doing a remarkable job, especially while addressing NC FAST issues. There were a few minor issues regarding form completion that was addressed on the report. In one example, the State previously advised information is not required to be written on paperwork since it is available in the NCFAST system, However, the State Monitor cited the County for failure to list the same available information on forms. As requested, Ms. Etters completed a written response to appeal that error cited. Ms. Pritchard stated she was very pleased with the findings. Ms. Etters acknowledged having a great department and staff.

b. Annual Written Agreement (Fiscal Year 2018-19) Between NC DHHS Division of Social Services

Ms. Pritchard stated this is the first year DSS has been asked to sign a written agreement with the State. She advised a copy was sent to Brian Epley, County Manager. She asked Brian to share with County Attorney, Tim Moore and the Commissioners. She explained the agreement is to be signed by the Commissioners and holds the DSS Director and staff accountable for Performance Measures that are set by the state. She advised the DSS Board that she and other DSS Directors are concerned about the agreements because of vast NC FAST issues and reports not being available so managers can monitor the work effectively.

c. NC FAST Child Welfare Update

Ms. Pritchard advised Cleveland County will rollout Child Welfare in NC FAST on November 26, 2018. She advised that Rutherford County has the same rollout date. She stated that our County has been very vocal and found several defects during the transition to NC FAST. Ms. Pritchard is very concerned about NC FAST being used in Child Welfare since the system is not functioning appropriately at this time. She has been vocal at the state level about her concerns as they relate to the safety of children are tasked to protect. Ms. Shooter remarked that our County was very prepared to rollout in March. However, we were not given the choice of the appointed date. Ms. Allen stated that the delay should allow the State to resolve any issues and improve the system.

d. NC FAST Daycare Update

Ms. Etters stated there continues to be lots of issues in NC FAST. However, the State is currently working on resolving Underpayments/Overpayments.

e. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Discuss Change of Time/Location of March DSS Board Meeting/Budget Retreat

Mary Accor made the motion to schedule the March DSS Board Meeting/Budget Retreat for Monday, March 26, 2018 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Deer Brook Restaurant. The motion was seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor advised the NCACBSS has a meeting on March 16, 2018. She anticipates discussions regarding NC FAST and any legislative concerns that will impact DSS. She advised the Lobbyist should be in attendance to provide updates.

c. Applications for DSS Board Member – DSS Board Appointee

Ms. Pritchard advised that Denise Wright’s Board term ends June 30, 2018. Applications were distributed to DSS Board members to share with individuals interested in serving on the DSS Board. The DSS Board will vote at the June 2018 meeting on the appointment of the new DSS Board Member.

d. Other

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 4:55 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa M. Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD/BUDGET RETREAT MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2018
11:30 a.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its March Board/Budget Retreat Meeting on March 26, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. at Deer Brook Restaurant, Shelby, North Carolina.

Members attending: Susan Allen - Chair
Denise Wright, Vice-Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Attorney Chuck Wilson, LaSandra Pearson, Pam Bright, Alison Clark, Denise Harrill, Tom Ensley, and Melissa Hawk.

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order and Denise Wright led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mary Accor led the group in a moment of silence. Susan Allen read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Denise Wright and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the February 26, 2018 Board meeting.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a decrease in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls.

In Child Protective Services, 133 reports were accepted for assessment and 12 children were taken into DSS custody. 7 cases were referred to In-Home services. Currently, there are 232 children in DSS custody. We have 75 licensed family foster homes. 50 children are cleared for adoption with 2 children that do not have identified adoptive homes. There are 18 Voluntary Placement Agreements being utilized. (Youth 18-21.) Ms. Pritchard advised that these individuals can live in an approved Foster home, group home, with friends/family or alone.

Attorney Wilson stated that the individual in the Voluntary Placement Agreement cannot live with the parent from whom they were removed.

Services to Adults: 11 Adult Protective Services reports were received. 3 of the reports were substantiated. We received 3 Adult Care Home complaints, 1 Nursing Home complaints and 0 N.C. Recoveries.

Ms. Shooter stated that Child Support collections remain consistent. We continue to work on locating absent parents.

Ms. Shooter stated the Day Care unit continues to deal with issues in NC FAST along with over/underpayments. She also advised if fraud is determined in Daycare, the funds must be upfronted with utilizing all County funds. It is our responsibility to get the money paid back from the Provider.

In Economic Services, the staff continues to work diligently to provide Food Assistance and Medicaid. Numbers remain consistent.

0 Work First participant went to work in the month of February. There were no drug screening referrals.

Ms. Shooter advised the Medicaid Transportation reports continue to be behind due to the way Providers report their information. Ms. Allen questioned if there has been a visible change in the Medicaid Transportation usage since free transportation has been made available in West Shelby. Ms. Shooter stated there has not been enough change that can be noticeably calculated. She advised that most individuals using Medicaid Transportation are accustomed to that process for their specific appointment times. Ms. Allen looks forward to the continued use of free transportation to the citizens of Cleveland County.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Social Worker Appreciation Month Celebration

Ms. Pritchard stated we will celebrate Social Worker Appreciation Month on March 29, 2018 at 3:30-4:30 p.m. with a reception that includes a variety of refreshments. She invited DSS Board members to attend.

b. Sound the Alarm Event

Ms. Pritchard stated that April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. The agency will have our annual "Sounding the Alarm" event on Monday, April 2nd at 2:00 p.m. outside the DSS auditorium and County Administrative building. Law enforcement, Fire Departments and Emergency Management are scheduled to participate again this year by sounding alarms and sirens. This event provides for a great opportunity to educate the community about child abuse and neglect. Ms. Pritchard invited DSS Board Members to attend the event.

c. Medicaid County Paybacks

Ms. Pritchard informed the DSS Board that for the first time, the State is holding counties accountable for Medicaid paybacks. Counties will be responsible to pay back 100% of the funds for Medicaid errors. She acknowledged that no one is perfect and we will make errors. She stated our staff works very hard to be error free whenever we process cases. We also conduct secondary supervisor reviews on as many cases as possible. In addition, we have regular Quality Control audits as well as single county audits. Thus far, we have not been identified as having any county paybacks. Ms. Pritchard feels good about our County being strong and having great quality assurance practices in place. However, we have budgeted \$200,000 for Medicaid paybacks as a precautionary method for worker errors. She informed the Board that other county Directors are doing the same. She has updated County Manager, Brian Epley of this new process. Ms. Accor concurred that NCACBSS received the same information and advised some counties have already received a bill. Ms. Shooter clarified that this does not include all errors. She explained, if ineligibility is found, any money spent by Medicaid for treatment must be paid back. Ms. Pritchard advised, currently, Cleveland County has not had any claims identified. Ms. Howell stated, in speaking with Mr. Epley, it was discussed to possibly obtain liability insurance regarding paybacks.

d. NC FAST Child Welfare Update

Ms. Pritchard advised today is a go-live date for several counties in NC FAST for Child Welfare. She expressed continued concern with the functionality of the NC FAST system to the Association and Directors have voiced their concerns to the Legislative Oversight Committee. She recently spoke with representative Moore's Assistant to relay her concerns. The Board continued to discuss major NC FAST issues reported in several programs. She reminded the Board that we are now scheduled to go-live in November 2018.

e. Other

BUDGET RETREAT

a. Discussion of the 2018-2019 DSS Budget

Ms. Pritchard shared that there will be a significant change in the DSS Budget for 2018-2019. There is a reduction in the DSS budget for the upcoming fiscal year due to the State paying directly for Daycare Subsidy and Medicaid Transportation. However, there is an increase in the county's share of the DSS budget due to pay increases that DSS staff received as a result of the county – wide Pay Study.

Ms. Pritchard proceeded to discuss that in the areas of Child Support, Adult Services and Economic Services, there are no significant funding changes that will impact the DSS budget.

Ms. Pritchard stated although the State is directly paying Daycare Subsidy after Providers submit their documentation, we are setting aside \$100,000 to take care

of any county responsible overpayments. State and Federal funds reimburse direct services and administrative costs associated with the Daycare Subsidy program at a rate of 100% based on the allocation. However, we are still responsible for not overspending our funding allocation.

Additionally, Medicaid Transportation vendors will also bill the State directly for services rendered. All Medicaid Transportation costs are reimbursed at a rate of 100% in state/federal funds. DSS will still be responsible for contracting with vendors, determining the eligibility, scheduling the appointments for clients and verifying all required items for Medicaid Transportation trips. Once the trips are verified, the worker will upload the data into NC FAST and the State will then pay the Medicaid Vendors.

Due to a new mandate regarding County Responsibility regarding Medicaid Errors, the county will be responsible to pay back all costs associated with Medicaid Errors. We are setting aside \$200,000 to cover any possible worker errors.

Ms. Pritchard stated we are requesting to add 4 new positions in this year's DSS Budget due to our agency being out of compliance with State law and policy as it relates to caseload standards in child welfare, the number of Child and Family meetings that are mandated and the number of social workers that a Child Welfare Supervisor can supervise. The positions requested are as follows: Foster Care Social Worker III, Child Protective Services Social Worker IAT, Child and Family Team Facilitator Social Worker III and a Child Protective Services Supervisor.

In conclusion, the total DSS budget for fiscal year 2018/2019 is \$21,129,626. This year's budget total decrease is \$4,041,366 over last year's budget of \$25,171,022. The decrease is due to DSS no longer being responsible for budgeting Daycare Subsidy Funds and Medicaid Transportation Funds.

However, the county share of the DSS Budget 2018/2019 is projected to increase \$629,365 from fiscal year 2017/2018 based on the budget estimates provided by the state. The county share for 2018/2019 budget is projected to be \$8,439,262.

Ms. Pritchard included considerable information (graphs, FAQ, and numbers) that reflects a clear picture of where we have been and where we need to go.

She appreciates the consideration of what is believed to be a very conservative budget based on the essential needs of the department to carry out mandated services and programs in accordance with law and policy which we are bound by law to administer. This budget accurately reflects the costs associated to administer our programs and services.

Ms. Pritchard also included in her presentation, *Frequently Asked Questions/ Answers for the 2018-2019 Budget.*:

1. **What is the Board of Social Services statutory role as it relates to the annual DSS Budget?** *At a regularly scheduled DSS Board*

meeting the Board votes to **transmit** the budget to the Board of County Commissioners.

2. **What is the total DSS Budget (Federal, State and County) proposed for 2018-2019?** \$58,784,928.
3. **What is the county share and percentage of the 2018-2019 DSS budget?** \$8,439,269 (14.36%)
4. **What was the county share and percentage last fiscal year?** \$7,809,904 (12.08%)
5. **Is the county's percentage of the budget higher this year?**
Yes. The county's percentage in this year's budget is higher compared to the previous year because of the salary increases as the result of the pay study and the request of 4 new positions.
6. **Is there an increase or decrease in the county share of DSS's budget over last year?** *Yes. There is a projected increase of \$629,365.*
7. **Are you asking for new positions this year?** *Yes. We are requesting to add 4 new positions in this year's DSS' Budget due to not having adequate staff to meet the caseload standards set by the State. We are asking for a CPS SWIAT, a Child Permanency Social Worker, a Child and Family Team Facilitator and CPS SW Supervisor.*
8. **Does this year's budget address all of the needs of the DSS?** *Yes.*

Ms. Pritchard proceeded to provide detailed explanations for each new position requested and referenced the NC Department of Social Services Family Services Manual. Per policy, State and Federal funding may be withheld (1) without meeting Supervisory/Worker ratio, (2) if we don't comply with having CFT's in accordance with law and policy (3) if we fail to meet caseload sizes and (4) if we are out of compliance with caseload standards in the Child Permanency Unit. Ms. Pritchard expressed we want all of our children to receive the services as outlined by the State and Federal Government. She wants what is in the best interest of each child and family we serve. We need these positions to adequately serve and protect our children.

Next, Ms. Pritchard provided 2018-2019 DSS' Performance Goals listed below.

Goals FY 2018-2019

1. Recognize staff accomplishments and difficult jobs with at least one annual Staff Appreciation Day event.
2. Continue to increase the rate in which children in the agency's custody achieve permanency.

3. Continue to meet processing times for Economic Services Programs (FNS, Medicaid, Work First, Daycare, Medicaid Transportation, CIP and LIEAP) through the challenges of the NC FAST system.
4. Child Welfare and Financials will be actively involved in the training and implementation of NCFAST P4 – Child Welfare.
5. Increase collections in the Program Integrity and Child Support units.
6. Publish an annual report for FY 2017-2018 in October 2018.
7. Follow Directives that are assigned by the DSS Board to achieve results or goals.

Criteria for Meeting Goals FY 2018-2019

1. Staff will be informed in advance of the date selected for Staff Appreciation Day event. A time will be set aside for workers to attend and be recognized for their hard work and dedication to DSS consumers.
2. 3% more children will achieve permanency in one year or less from the date they enter DSS custody.
3. Eligible individuals and families will receive Economic Services in a timely manner despite the glitches in the NCFAST system while continuing to deliver economic services in an integrated process with one universal worker.
4. An NC FAST coordination team will develop and implement training plans protocols and procedures for launching NC FAST Child Welfare. Staff will receive training and resources to become competent with NC FAST.
5. Program Integrity and Child Support Collections will increase collections by 3%.
6. A DSS Annual Report will be completed and distributed to the DSS Board, Stakeholders, Community Partners, County Commissioners, County Manager and DSS Employees by October 31, 2018.
7. Achieve goals when assigned by the Board of Social Services.

Progress on Goals for 2017-2018

1. **Recognize staff accomplishments and difficult jobs with at least one annual Staff Appreciation Day.** A Staff Appreciation event was held on May 26, 2017.

2. **Reduce turnover.** The overall turnover rate for 2017 was 13.51%; in 2016, the turnover rate was 11.71%. There was a 1.08% increase in our turnover rate. The greatest turnover rate was in Child Support again this year. The reasons employees listed as leaving on their exit interview: poor job fit, better pay and less stress and family relocation to another state.
3. **3% more children will achieve permanency in less than one year from the date of entering DSS custody.** This goal was not achieved. In FY 2016, 40.95% of the children that entered DSS custody achieved permanency in one year or less. In FY 2017, 135 children entered DSS custody and 36 / (26.67%) of those children achieved permanency in one year or less. There was a 14.28% difference in the permanency rate from 2016 to 2017. In addition, 10 children achieved permanency through adoption.
4. **Publish an Annual Report for FY 2017-2018 in October 2017.** An Annual Report was published and distributed to key county stakeholders in the community and to the DSS Board in October 2017.
5. **Achieve other goals that may be determined by the Board of Social Services.** The Director and staff followed all directives and suggestions made by the DSS Board of Directors in **FY 2016-2017.**

DSS Board Vote to transmit the DSS Budget to the Board of County Commissioners

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously approved by the Board to; *transmit the Cleveland County DSS 2018-2019 Proposed Budget to the Cleveland County Commissioners.*

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn the meeting at 1:55 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 30, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its April Board Meeting on April 30, 2018 at 4:00 in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Susan Allen
Denise Wright
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Kay Howell, Chuck Wilson, Mary Etters, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Alison Clark, Greg Grier, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Kristy Miller, Landrum Allen, Angelique Brown, Christy Okon, Takiyah Burgess, Jennifer Lee, Natasha McIntosh, Jennifer Smith, Paris Brooks, Faith Webber

Promoted Staff Members: Carla Hastings, Natalie Parrott

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Denise Wright led the moment of silence. Lendra Phillips read the agency’s mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor. Karen Pritchard advised Chris Gash will be unable to complete the “Special Presentation” today due to the unavailability of his co-speaker. It was unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the amended agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the March 26, 2018 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

- a. **“2018 Celebrating Women’s History Month:” Card** – Ms. Pritchard shared a card received from Cleveland County Commission for Women thanking her for the great work completed at Cleveland County DSS. She expressed appreciation for being recognized.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients and telephone calls for the month.

In Child Protective Services, 119 reports were accepted for assessment. 8 children were taken into DSS custody. 9 cases were referred to In-Home Services. Currently, there are 224 children in DSS custody. 52 children are cleared for adoption (2 children with a non- identified home). 19 Youth (age 18-21) in Voluntary Placement Agreement. We currently have 75 Licensed Foster Homes.

Services to Adults: 17 Adult Protective Service reports were accepted for investigation. 4 of these reports were substantiated. We received 3 Adult Care Home complaints and 1 Nursing Home complaint. There were 0 Recoveries for the month of March.

Next, Ms. Pritchard stated that Child Support continues to work hard collecting child support. Child Support Collections were \$1,052,962 for March. 59 absent parents were located and 41 new orders were established. She acknowledged the great job Ms. Harrill continues to do and praised her for holding staff accountable to do their jobs.

In Daycare, we served 501 children.

Economic Services remains fairly consistent with about the same number of individuals continuing to receive services. 859 applications were taken. Ms. Pritchard noted more recipients receive Medicaid compared to Food Assistance. She believes this to be the result of an improving economy for Cleveland County.

22 individuals receive Work First cash assistance. These participants are required to work, volunteer or attend school to receive a time limited payment. The other 230 cases are grandparents/other relatives who are raising someone else's children. There were 0 clients referred for drug screening. 0 Went to work.

Ms. Pritchard advised since Vendors submit invoices directly to the State, we receive data in an irregular manner. She stated the amounts remain about the same. Therefore, Medicaid Transportation statistical information continues to be delayed.

Ms. Pritchard congratulated Program Integrity for collecting \$132,515 in March. She advised the amount increased due to Federal and State tax interceptions from this year's tax season. She informed the Board that we received \$20,822 incentive funds from March 2018 collections.

Ms. Wright inquired about the process of referring clients for drug screens. Ms. Etters advised drug screens are required for clients applying for Work First (WFFA) benefits who have an H/I felony, convictions within the last three years or score high on a WFFA questionnaire.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. April is Child Abuse Awareness Month

Ms. Pritchard informed the Board that April is Child Abuse Prevention month. The annual "Sound the Alarm" event was held on April 2, 2018 at Cleveland County DSS and Cleveland County Administration building. Community partners who participated included Law Enforcement, Fire Departments, EMS, GAL staff, our DSS staff and other community members. She stated this event raises community awareness regarding child abuse and neglect in Cleveland County.

b. Cleveland County Guardian ad Litem holds vigil for children

Ms. Pritchard shared a Shelby Star article highlighting a vigil, held by Cleveland County Guardian ad Litem for Foster Children who have been abused or neglected. She advised she spoke alongside Judge, Larry Wilson

c. Staff Appreciation Event, May 18, 2018 – Sweets and Treats

Ms. Pritchard invited Board members to attend the Staff Appreciation event, "Sweets & Treats" drop-in on Friday, May 18, 2018 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm in the auditorium. We will treat staff to various desserts and thank them for their service. All items have been donated.

d. NC FAST – Over/Under Payments for Daycare

Ms. Pritchard attended their Annual Meeting in Blowing Rock, NC last week. She stated Directors are upset due to DSS staff having to process Daycare over/underpayments created by NC FAST system. She suggested it creates a hardship for staff who are required to process these issues along with their other daily responsibilities. Ms. Pritchard asked Mary Etters and Greg Grier to share other updates. Ms. Etters advised of 32-38 Providers who have been identified with over/underpayments. Of these Providers, there are 114 underpayments for \$7300 and 200 overpayments for \$32,000. For Providers with large overpayments, the State has given them the option to payback amounts over several months. For those with lower amounts, it is expected to resolve over/underpayments in about a month. Ms. Etters wants to resolve all errors by the end of the fiscal year but expressed uncertainty for all to be completed. Mr. Grier advised his staff is in the process of notifying all 8 Providers affected in the 1st group identified by the State. He stated letters have been sent to Providers and Cherre Huskey, Accounting Clerk, is calling each of them to explain it was not their fault but a NC FAST system error. Ms. Pritchard thanked them for their hard work and their continued service.

e. Chairman Conaway's Farm Bill Would Increase Food Insecurity and Hardship

Ms. Pritchard shared a copy of Chairmen Conaway's Farm Bill that would increase food insecurity and hardship among Food Stamp recipients. She asked Ms. Pearson to share our concerns with the bill. Ms. Pearson stated this Bill targets 18 to 59 year-old clients who are not working at least 20 hours/week, who have no children in the home under 6

and who are not disabled. Currently, there are no reports to show the exact impact to Cleveland County. However, she reported 9000 clients fall in that age bracket. She noted that there has already been a drastic reduction in clients due to better economy/increased jobs and the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) policy enacted July 2016. Ms. Accor inquired about who, by category, received food assistance. Ms. Pearson shared the number of individuals receiving benefits by age. Ms. Wright recognized that over 50% receiving food benefits are children. Ms. Pritchard wanted to make the Board aware that this proposed Bill will require a significant increase in DSS staff responsibility. It will require additional training for staff to monitor and report continued eligibility on a monthly basis opposed to the current process of reviewing cases every 6 months. She stated the County must provide transportation assistance to or reimburse individuals for transportation expenses that is a result of participation with the required job search. In addition, the County must provide childcare for children age 6 and older for parents required to participate.

f. Other

Ms. Pritchard advised of a vote at the NCACDSS Executive Board meeting, to stop the rollout of NC FAST with its current functionality in Child Welfare. They are anxious to see the response from the State once the letter is furnished to the DHHS.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Discuss May 2018 Board Meeting Dates

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to *change the May Board Meeting to May 21, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.*, as May 28, 2018 is a holiday for Cleveland County Government.

b. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor advised they will be meeting on May 18, 2018.

c. Child Fatality Team Update

Ms. Pritchard stated all fatalities were reviewed and none involved CC DSS.

d. Closed Session to consult with Attorney GS 143-318.11 (a)(3)

CLOSED SESSION

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor, and unanimously adopted by the Board to *enter into a closed session at 4:50 p.m. to consult with Attorney, GS143-318.11(a)(3). No action was taken during the closed session.*

ADJOURN

Motions were made and properly seconded to exit the closed session and return to open session. Motions were made and properly seconded to adjourn the DSS Board meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Susan Allen, Chair
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 21, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its May Board Meeting on May 21, 2018 at 4:00 in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Susan Allen, Chair
Denise Wright
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Angela Woods, Mary Eppers, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Alison Clark, Greg Grier, Chuck Wilson, Yonkia McGhee, Alyssa Edwards, Carly Peeler, Sherry Wilson, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Yonkia McGhee, Alyssa Edwards, Carly Peeler

Promoted Staff Members: Sherry Wilson

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order. Mary Accor led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. Dale Oliver read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board, to *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Wright made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the April 30, 2018 DSS Board meeting.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients and an increase in telephone calls for the month of April.

In Child Protective Services, 131 reports were accepted for assessment. 4 children were taken into DSS custody. 3 cases were referred to In-Home Services. Currently, there are 217 children in DSS custody and 19 youth, ages 18-21 in voluntary placements. 51 children are cleared for

adoption (2 children have non- identified adoptive homes). We currently have 75 Licensed Foster Homes.

Services to Adults: 13 Adult Protective Service reports were accepted for investigation. 5 of these reports were substantiated. We received 8 Adult Care Home complaints and 1 Nursing Home complaint. There were 3 Recoveries for April.

Ms. Shooter stated Child Support continues to work hard in collections and establishing orders. The vacant Child Support Supervisor position was recently filled and will be a huge benefit to other supervisors and child support staff.

Daycare numbers are currently unavailable at this time but will be updated on next month's report. Currently, there are several issues as a result of NC FAST system defects. She advised Ms. Howell has worked on a payment issue for several days which still has not been resolved.

Economic Services remains fairly consistent with the number of individuals continuing to receive FNS and Medicaid services in the County. The numbers of applications increased for the month of April.

0 Work First participants went to work in April. There were 0 clients referred for drug screening.

Ms. Shooter advised the Medicaid Transportation statistical information is not completely available as several agencies have not submitted their information.

Program Integrity continues to work hard receiving referrals and establishing claims. They collected \$31, 880 in April.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Community Prosperity Initiative

Chris Gash

Ms. Pritchard introduced Chris Gash, who is the Community Coordinator for the Community Prosperity Initiative. Mr. Gash stated this Initiative is made up of a diverse group of community leaders, agencies and organizations that are passionate about improving the life of those in Cleveland County by working together to address social determinants and wellbeing. Some community partners include, CC Schools, TACC, Atrium Health, Cleveland Community College, CC Commissioners, CC DSS, CC Health Department, and Partners Behavioral Health. The group goals are to reduce children living in poverty, improve citizen access to healthcare and reduce the use of substance abuse. Mr. Gash advised their job is to build pathways and provide opportunities for individuals. As a tool, they created focus groups to identify needs, concerns and help map plans for improvement. He acknowledged some barriers include unemployment, employability skills, transportation, parenting, low morale and trauma.

Mr. Gash shared ongoing successes and challenges through working and implementing programs such as those at Graham Elementary School. He continued to provide an in-depth presentation describing goals and current projects of the Community Prosperity Initiative. Questions were asked and answered by the presenter.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Proclamation, "Older Americans Month"

Ms. Pritchard reviewed a Proclamation, signed by President Donald Trump, proclaiming May 2018 as Older Americans Month. It called "upon all Americans to honor our elders, acknowledge their contributions, care for those in need and reaffirm our country's commitment to older Americans this month and throughout the year."

b. Proclamation, "National Foster Care Month"

Ms. Pritchard reviewed a Proclamation, signed by President Donald Trump, proclaiming May 2018 as National Foster Care Month. It called "upon all Americans to observe this month by taking time to help children and youth in foster care, and to recognize the commitment of those who touch their lives, particularly celebrating their foster parents and other caregivers."

c. NCDOL Certificate of Safety

Ms. Pritchard informed the Board that the NC Department of Labor presented DSS with a Certificate of Safety Achievement - 2nd Consecutive Year Gold Award in recognition of the outstanding safety and health efforts that resulted in a substantial reduction of injuries and illnesses at DSS and the promotion of safer working conditions in 2017.

d. State/County MOU

Ms. Pritchard referred the Board to the "FY 18-19 DHHS/County Agreement Final Draft Talking Point" and "Annual Written Agreement (Fiscal Year 2018-19) Between the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services and County Name" handouts. She advised this is no longer referred to as a contract but an MOU. She stated this draft document is scheduled to be effective July 1, 2018. She explained that if a Department is not where they need to be in an area, a corrective action plan is created, adequate time given and technical assistance provided by the state to satisfy the proposed requirement. She stated this process is seems fair compared to the original proposed contract. Ms. Allen questioned if something similar was currently in place. Ms. Pritchard advised there is not. She stated this is the first-year counties have been asked to sign the proposed agreement. She advised she has sent the MOU to County Attorney, Tim Moore for review and feedback but has not yet received a response. Ms. Pritchard proceeded to review some responsibilities listed in the MOU. She expressed concern of entering into a contract when we currently are not meeting some of the listed benchmarks due to circumstances that are out of our control. Ms. Shooter noted that the State has not upheld their responsibility of having a computer system that works. She discussed a situation where NC FAST calculated benefits in error but reported the error as a County issue. The State would not acknowledge the error even though it was documented and verified by maintaining an alternate spreadsheet. Ms. Allen questioned if it was addressed with NC FAST. Ms. Pritchard stated that we have informed the State and NC FAST as we always do whenever issues appear. Ms. Allen stated we can continue to always express concern and push as hard as possible. If there are concerns

that can be put together, the Board can take to Tim Moore to ask for his voice. Ms. Pritchard stated that she brought this information to the Board because they are asking for she and the County Manager to sign this agreement. She wanted to inform the Board of the reasons the proposed benchmarks may not be met. She also noted that she contacted Tim Moore several times prior to receiving a response that he will look into this agreement. Ms. Allen stated she appreciates the updates that Ms. Pritchard provides.

e. Other

Ms. Pritchard advised Ms. Wright's last DSS Board meeting will be in June. She informed the Board that a gift will be presented to Ms. Wright and a reception is planned to celebrate her six years of service on the CC DSS Board.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor stated there has been conversation regarding HB 630, Regionalization Bill. She advised maps were given to the workgroup for review. She stated a partnership has been developed between Legislators, the Directors Association and County Board Association. She advised there would be Governing Board training available. Ms. Accor stated she felt comfortable since there was a lot of shared communication. She advised that we do have representation on the Board that can advocate for us.

Ms. Accor stated they discussed recognizing advocates throughout the State in the Newsletter. She encouraged sharing names of advocating individuals to possibly appear in future editions and receive letters / notes as appreciation for their support. She acknowledged that partnerships are always good to get things done. She shared a copy of the newsletter with the Board.

Ms. Accor provided copies of the NCACBSS Strategic plan with DSS Board members. She advised there is continued talk of consolidation with Health Departments and DSS'. However, it is minimal. Ms. Pritchard thanked Ms. Accor for being a leader and providing an informative report.

b. Child Protection Team Update

Ms. Wright advised the meeting was cancelled since there was not a case to review. Ms. Allen acknowledged the vacancy of a DSS Board regarding this team with the end of Ms. Wright's DSS term. She asked for a volunteer but will discuss again at next month's meeting.

c. June Meeting – Vote on new DSS Board Member Appointment

Ms. Pritchard advised the only application received for DSS Board Member Appointment was Betsy Wells. Applications will be furnished to Board Members in advance of the June DSS Board Meeting for their review.

d. Other

Ms. Allen acknowledged feeling frustrations from staff as a result of ongoing system issues and duplication of work as a backup to systems. She stated she does not want us to be the squeaky wheel all the time and have everyone mad at Cleveland County. She believes we have an excellent relationship with the State and Ms. Pritchard does an excellent job for standing up for our County. However, it will be great to make a list of direct issues to share with the DSS Board for them to move them forward. She remarked that sometimes another advocate can help. Ms. Pritchard stated she appreciated the support.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 4:55 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chair
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 25, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its December Board Meeting on June 25, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the First-Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Dale Oliver
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Attorney Chuck Wilson, Tom Ensley, Alison Clark, Denise Harrill, Greg Grier and Melissa Hawk

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Dale Oliver called the meeting to order. Lendra Phillips led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. Dale Oliver read the agency's Mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The June 2018 Board Agenda was not approved, as there was not a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The May 2018 DSS Board Minutes were not approved, as there was not a quorum present. The May 2018 minutes will need to be approved at the July 2018 meeting.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

a. Kathy Price, IMC III "Thank you" note - Ms. Pritchard read a note thanking Ms. Price for her knowledge, ability and professionalism while helping their elderly parents obtain Medicaid.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a slight decrease in the number of incoming clients and an increase in telephone calls for the month of May.

In Child Protective Services, 145 reports were accepted for assessment. 5 children were taken into DSS custody. 1 cases was referred to In-Home Services. Currently, there are 217 children in DSS custody and 17 youth, ages 18-21 in voluntary placements. 47 children are cleared for adoption (2 children have non- identified adoptive homes). 2 adoptions were finalized in the month of May. We currently have 75 Licensed Foster Homes.

Services to Adults: 13 Adult Protective Service reports were accepted for investigation. 5 of these reports were substantiated. We received 3 Adult Care Home complaints and 3 Nursing Home complaints. There were 0 Recoveries for May.

Ms. Shooter stated Child Support continues to work hard in collections and establishing orders. They collected \$926,670 in May.

Daycare numbers remain fairly consistent. That department continues to work hard despite NC FAST issues. She stated Ms. Howell can attest to those challenges as she has dealt with financial issues requiring numerous hours to explore a defect in the system.

Economic Services remains fairly consistent with the number of individuals continuing to receive FNS and Medicaid services in the County. The numbers of applications slightly increased for the month of May.

3 Work First participants went to work in May. There were 0 clients referred for drug screening.

Ms. Shooter advised the Medicaid Transportation report information remains behind. There continues to be a delay from Providers to submit reports for billing.

Program Integrity continues to work hard receiving referrals and establishing claims. They collected \$31,813 in May.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

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Ms. Pritchard stated the “Special Presentation” was cancelled due to recent changes to the Child Welfare Manual. See Director’s Items (b).

DIRECTOR’S ITEMS

a. Cleveland County DSS, *United Way Golden Eagle Award*

Ms. Pritchard accepted the Golden Eagle award from United Way in recognition of donations and pledges given during their yearly campaign. She remarked this award is a reflection of our DSS staff who are very giving people who care about helping others.

b. Modified Child Welfare Manual

Ms. Pritchard advised the Child Welfare Manual was expected to be effective July 1, 2018. It included significant changes that impacted the Department as well as the community and the clients we serve. One specific change required workers to walk the property of a client’s home, including out buildings, barns and any type of structure on the property. However, the Director’s Association’s concerns with changes prompted further review of the new manual. As a result, the State will email sections of the manual to counties for Child Welfare staff and Directors to comment on proposed changes. Ms. Pritchard is anxious to learn the end result and advised she will share with the Board once complete.

c. MOU Update

Ms. Pritchard updated the Board on the FY 18-19 DHHS/County Agreement between the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services and Cleveland County. She, along with Ms. Shooter and Attorney Wilson, met with County Manager, Brian Epley and Rep. Tim Moore to discuss the MOU. She advised several directors around the State are creating a response statement to express concerns with the MOU. Mr. Wilson prepared a Response Statement to submit with the MOU for our Department. Mr. Wilson concurs this is a one-sided agreement where counties had very little input. He remarked that during the meeting with Mr. Moore, Tamara Barringer, sponsor of legislation, was called to share questions and concerns. He stated that she was not aware of some items listed in the MOU. Mr. Wilson reported being hopeful of tweaking of the statute in the coming year as the State set expectations that exceed Federal level requirements. He said Ms. Barringer voiced that her only intent was to align counties with Federal level expectations. Mr. Wilson's response letter expressed concerns and made suggestions on possible enforcement measure and revisions. Ms. Pritchard advised she will provide a final copy of the MOU at the DSS Board meeting in July.

d. NCFAST Child Welfare Update

Ms. Pritchard advised we are scheduled to rollout Child Welfare in NC FAST this November. However, Pilot counties continue to experience significant number of system defects. For example, in NC FAST Financials, Foster Care board payments are not calculated correctly. In Guilford County, there is a deficit of over \$200,000 they are having to pay due to system errors and they may never receive reimbursement. She advised the Directors Association has taken the stance that based on NC FAST current functionality, no additional counties will roll out. She informed the Board of IBM's attendance at the last meeting in Raleigh. They are open to visiting Pilot Counties to actually see our concerns with social work staff in pilot counties.

e. Single County Audit

Ms. Pritchard advised the Single County Audit, in conjunction with County Finance and our department, was completed with no errors. She stated this audit reviews all programs administered at DSS. She applauded the hard work of staff, especially Ms. Howell and Mr. Grier for their financial diligence.

f. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Ms. Pritchard advised, due to no quorum, the "Board Member Items" listed on the agenda will be addressed at the DSS Board meeting in July. She reminded the Board that they will vote on the vacant board appointment at the July meeting. Ms. Betsy Wells is the only applicant. In addition, election of DSS Board Chair and Vice-Chair will take place during the August meeting. Ms. Pritchard advised a Board member is needed to fill the required seat on the Child Fatality / Child Protection Team meeting held at noon on the 3rd Thursday of each month at the Cleveland County Health Department. She asked if

either Board member present would be interested in serving. Ms. Phillips advised that she is off work until September and could attend the meetings but supports Ms. Phillips decision to attend. Ms. Pritchard proceeded to describe the duties of this team. She thanked Ms. Phillips for agreeing to attend in August and invited her to consider attending throughout the year.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Susan Allen, Chair
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 30, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its July Board Meeting on July 30, 2018 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Susan Allen, Chair
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Attorney, Chuck Wilson, Greg Grier, Mary Eppers, Tom Ensley, Lasandra Pearson, Kelly Daves, Melissa Hawk

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order. Mary Accor led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and in a moment of silence. Lendra Phillips read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Mary Accor and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the May 21, 2018 Board meeting.*

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the June 25, 2018 Board meeting.*

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. Healthy Kids Day / Safe Kids Certificate of Appreciation – Ms. Pritchard advised DSS participated in this event and received a certificate for being an “Outstanding Partner and Supporter.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced a slight increase in the number of incoming clients to the agency. However, there was a decrease in number of incoming calls for the month.

Ms. Pritchard stated 102 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 14 families were referred to In-Home Services. 15 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 240 children currently in DSS custody. 30 of those children are living in mental health

placements. DSS has 75 Licensed Foster Homes. 51 children have been cleared for adoptive placement. Ms. Pritchard advised there is a continuous increase in meth and heroin use in our county. Individuals using those drugs can become very violent. She stated this is very dangerous and can pose a risk to our Social Workers.

18 Adult Protective Services reports were received and accepted. 5 of these reports were substantiated. We received 5 Adult Care Home Complaints and 4 Nursing Home Complaints. There were no recoveries for the month.

Ms. Shooter stated Child Support continues to work hard on collections and locating absent parents.

Ms. Shooter advised Daycare numbers are consistent. They are not experiencing as many problems in NC FAST as previously reported months ago. There are still issues at the state regarding over and under payments to providers. The state is also struggling with accurate data in this area.

Ms. Shooter stated the number of applications taken in Economic Services slightly decreased. However, the number of clients served are relatively the same.

0 Work First participants went to work for the month of June. There was one person referred for a drug screen but failed to keep the appointment.

Ms. Shooter stated Medicaid Transportation numbers are pending due to bills not yet submitted by TACC. The Department is currently working on contracts for Medicaid Transportation which were bid out for the upcoming fiscal year. She stated there will be 4 companies providing Medicaid Transportation for our clients. Ms. Pritchard advised a previous vendor, Boundless Transportation, did a great job providing services to our consumers but lost the transportation bid. She stated a new vendor was selected. Mr. Grier advised the new vendor is Connections Transportation, Inc. which is based out of Charlotte

Ms. Shooter stated the Program Integrity Unit continues to work very hard establishing claims and recouping funds. This unit received 44 referrals. The department collected \$36,232 for the month of June.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Representative Payee Cases for Social Security and SSI

**Tom Ensley, Adult Services
Program Manager**

Ms. Pritchard stated that DSS is the Payee for Social Security and SSI checks for people who are not able to manage finances for themselves and do not have a family member or friend to assist them. She introduced Tom Ensley, Program Manager for Adult Services to discuss this service.

Mr. Ensley remarked being a Payee requires a lot of work and is a big responsibility. He proceeded to handout a guide from the Social Security Administration (SSA) on rules of being a Payee. He advised SSA also offers Webinars as a method of online training. Mr. Ensley advised DSS is currently the Payee for 14 clients. Ms. Accor asked Mr. Ensley to explain the Payee process when a client is deceased. Mr. Ensley noted that guardianship ends when the client dies. He advised remaining funds can be used for burial arrangements, if a pre-need burial contract is

not in place. All other remaining funds are forwarded to the Clerk of Court for the client's estate to cover outstanding bills that may remain after death. Ms. Pritchard remarked that SSA might send notice for DSS to send funds directly to them prior to the Clerk's office handling the estate. Ms. Accor asked if having a Representative Payee eliminates other beneficiaries such as family members. Mr. Grier advised once SSA assigns DSS as the Representative Payee, we are deemed the individual's beneficiary.

Additional questions were asked and answered by Mr. Ensley.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a-c. Memorandum of Understanding (Fiscal Year 2018-19), Response Statement, Re-submission email - MOU – Acceptance Response

Ms. Pritchard presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by she and County Manager, Brian Epley. In addition, she shared the response statement prepared by Attorney, Chuck Wilson. Ms. Pritchard stated she was required by the state to re-submit the original documents and clarify, by email, that our MOU was a standalone document and that our response statement was not submitted as an attachment. The Division of Social Services confirmed that our response statement would be in the file but not incorporated into one document. The MOU was subsequently approved. Mr. Wilson stated that he attending an Attorney Conference last week where they spoke extensively about this process. He informed all but 2 counties had signed the MOU of which 38 completed and sent in some type of response statement. He said the State realized there was a problem with the draft and recognized the data collection process is not ready. He advised that there will not be any consequences during the first six months under the memorandum. In theory, they will use that time to identify any problems that need attention. However, effective January 1, 2019, any problems identified could potentially cause withholding of funds, as a last resort. Ms. Pritchard stated the state will begin sending out current data to the counties during the last week of August. The state informed counties that we will “partner” together to see if data is correct.

d. NCFAST Child Welfare Update

Ms. Pritchard advised the State has “paused” the rollout of Child Welfare into

NCFAST. While visiting several pilot DSS departments, IBM was shocked at the unacceptable function of the NC Fast system. The state stated that it will cost millions to fix the current problems. Mr. Grier discussed a NC FAST glitch discovered by our county which is negatively affecting our county. He advised the Catawba County NC FAST case will not allow our child to “exit” out the system.

As a result, we cannot receive reimbursement from the state for our foster child.

Mr. Grier had to submit a Help Ticket to hopefully resolve the issue.

e. Update on Positions Requested in 2018-2019 Budget

Ms. Pritchard advised that the Commissioners approved the budget for 2018 - 2019. However, DSS did not receive any of the positions requested. She stated we are out of compliance in Child Welfare as we do not meet the worker to caseload standard in Foster Care and Child Protective Services. She informed the Board that she

re-allocated an IMC II position to Child Welfare because of the safety factor of children. Even with this re-allocation we do not meet state standards and cannot serve and protect children adequately. This will also cause burnout to our social workers knowing that they have too many cases and are unable to protect children adequately. As a result of this re-allocation, overtime has increased in the income maintenance department by 30%. Ms. Pritchard remarked that she is concerned about turnover occurring in the income maintenance departments because folks will become frustrated with having to work overtime to meet timeframes and carry too many cases. She remarked that this area already has a high turnover rate.

Ms. Accor asked how the overtime equates. Ms. Shooter advised the Board that our staff earn comp time at a rate of time and one half, which is paid out once the balance exceeds 240 hours. Ms. Allen stated the County Manager is very efficient and has asked everyone to look at areas where they may have extra positions. It is suggested that those positions be reallocated to positions in greater need. She stated we understands the importance of having the right number of people in the appropriate number of spots. Ms. Accor questioned when compliance becomes General Statute. Mr. Wilson advised, effective January 1, 2019, the MOU states the ultimate penalty could be withholding of funds by the State and state take over. Ms. Pritchard acknowledged that she is frustrated and worried about the protection of children and providing adequate services to consumers because we are not adequately staffed. She expressed appreciation for Ms. Allen's support.

f. Other

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. Review Application for Recruitment of DSS Board Member – DSS Board Appointment

Ms. Allen advised Betsy Wells was the only applicant for DSS Board Appointment.

b. DSS Board - Vote on DSS Board Member Appointment

Mary Accor made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *elect Betsy Wells as the DSS Board Appointment.*

c. August 2018 DSS Board Meeting – Elect Chair and Vice-Chair of DSS Board

Ms. Allen advised these positions will be voted on at August Board meeting.

d. Board Member to fill required seat on the Child Protection/Fatality Team

Ms. Allen asked if anyone was interested in serving on this team. Ms. Phillips advised that she was planning on attending the August meeting.

e. NCACBSS Updates

Ms. Accor advised the next meeting is scheduled on August 11, 2018 in Burlington for two days.

f. Other

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mary Accor made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:00 p.m.*

Susan Allen, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 27, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its August Board Meeting on August 27, 2018 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Susan Allen
Mary Accor
Lendra Phillips
Betsy Wells
Dale Oliver

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Jane Shooter, Attorney Chuck Wilson, Alison Clark, Tom Ensley, Denise Harrill, Lasandra Pearson, Gregory Grier, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Sarah Pearcy

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Susan Allen called the meeting to order, Dale Oliver led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and Susan Allen held a moment of silence. Lendra Phillips read the agency's mission statement.

BOARD MEMBERS' OATH OF OFFICE

Melissa Hawk, Clerk to DSS Board, administered the Board Member's Oath of Office to Betsy Wells. Ms. Wells was appointed as a DSS Board Appointee to replace Denise Wright for the July 2018 – June 2021 term on the DSS Board.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Susan Allen opened the floor to accept nominations for the DSS Board Chair. Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *elect Mary Accor to serve as Chairperson* and there was a unanimous aye vote.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Susan Allen opened the floor to accept nominations for the DSS Board Vice-Chairperson. Dale Oliver made the motion, seconded by Betsy Wells, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *elect Susan Allen to serve as Vice-Chairperson* and there was a unanimous aye vote.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Betsy Wells made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dale Oliver made the motion, seconded by Betsy Wells and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *approve the minutes of the July 30, 2018 Board meeting.*

PERSONNEL REPORT

Ms. Pritchard introduced new a staff member to the DSS Board. She also informed the Board that DSS gained one position because of a vacancy in another department. She advised that position will be put in the CPS. We will be in full compliance with State regulations regarding the number of social worker's to case ratio in Child Protective Services. However, Child Permanency is still in need of one additional social work position to be in full compliance regarding the worker to staff ratio. Ms. Pritchard expressed appreciation for Susan Allen's advocacy during this process.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- a. Greg Grier – Ms. Pritchard acknowledged Mr. Grier for receiving a Doctorate of Education in Organizational Leadership received August 4, 2018. Ms. Pritchard and Commissioner Susan Allen joined Mr. Grier in a photo for the next NCACBSS Newsletter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Pritchard stated the department experienced an increase in the number of incoming clients to the agency. There was also an increase in number of incoming calls for the month.

Ms. Pritchard stated 113 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 7 families were referred to In-Home Services. 11 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 222 children in DSS custody. DSS has 61 Licensed Foster Homes. 52 children have been cleared for adoptive placement with only 10 children who do not have identified homes.

Ms. Accor inquired about the type of assistance foster children receive after they age out of the program. Mr. Wilson advised individuals 18-21 who meet certain qualifications may receive a monthly stipend as long as they are enrolled in school or working and abide by the signed contract. They have permission to live with foster parent or maintain their own housing. Ms. Pritchard reported Children's Home of Cleveland County is currently building a new facility that will offer transitional housing for youth who are aging out of foster care. Ms. Allen remarked 2 residences will be available at the new facility. Mr. Grier added that the monthly stipend amount is \$634.

15 Adult Protective Services reports were received and accepted. 4 of these reports were substantiated. We received 5 Adult Care Home Complaints and 4 Nursing Home Complaints. There were no recoveries for the month.

Ms. Shooter stated Child support continues to work hard. She stated Ms. Harrill could answer any questions regarding the department during her Child Support presentation today at this DSS Board meeting.

Ms. Shooter advised Daycare report information is unavailable in NC FAST. However, the number of clients served remain consistent.

Ms. Shooter stated the number of applications taken in Economic Services slightly increased.

No Work First participants went to work for the month of July. There were no referrals for drug screens.

Ms. Shooter stated Medicaid Transportation numbers are not complete, as not all of the bills have been submitted. The amounts will be updated when the bills are received. She stated contracts have been completed and we will have 4 Providers that will be providing Medicaid Transportation services.

Ms. Shooter stated the Program Integrity Unit continues to work very hard. They received 29 referrals and collected \$20,814 in July.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Child Support - How does it work?

Denise Harrill, Child Support Program Manager

Ms. Pritchard introduced Denise Harrill, Child Support Program Manager. Ms. Harrill stated Child Support is such a massive program in terms of availability, remedies of establishing paternity, collection and support. She advised that public assistance is not a requirement in order to receive child support services from the department. In fact, most cases are non-public assistance. She informed the Board that Child Support services include: the location of a non-custodial parent through various resources, establish health insurance coverage, establish court orders, establish support payments, and establish paternity. She provided the North Carolina Code of Ethics, Child Support Guidelines and Child Support worksheets to Board members to review. She proceeded to explain the Child Support application process. She informed one of the biggest pressures is meeting Federally mandated time frames for providing services. Once a Child Support order has been established, they are required to monitor compliance with orders, whether it is monetary and/or health insurance. To assist with compliance, they have interfaces with Workers Comp agencies, Professional Licensing agencies (nursing, barber, etc.), passport applications, and lotteries. She explained one of the biggest methods of receiving child support payments is through income tax interception. Ms. Shooter remarked numbers listed on the Board report does not reflect the actual number of cases. Ms. Harrill advised they currently have about 7500 cases in the department. Board members thanked Ms. Harrill for the informative presentation.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

a. Child Support Awareness Month

Ms. Pritchard reviewed a Proclamation from Governor Roy Cooper proclaiming August 2018 as “Child Support Awareness Month.” She expressed appreciation for the important service that the Child Support department provides for our children.

b. New Position from County Manager

Ms. Pritchard advised that we received a position from the county. The position will be placed in CPS. This issue was discussed in the Personnel portion of the meeting. Ms. Allen questioned the duties of the Foster Care licensing staff and asked if they were available to take Foster Care cases. Ms. Pritchard advised they have standards and duties to meet for their particular jobs and would not have the time to take on Foster Care cases. They are required to meet with foster parents as well as the children in the home for each visit. In addition, Licensing social workers teach MAPP classes in the evening. Mr. Grier remarked licensing staff actually have a caseload and are required to continually monitor foster homes for compliance. Ms. Shooter advised of several areas that are required when evaluating a home for licensing: family dynamics, work history, obtaining references, formal and informal support systems, income and finances, parenting and discipline, background checks, fingerprint checks, past abuse or neglect of potential foster parents, physical exams and scheduling other required inspections. Ms. Pritchard reiterated monitoring those homes are important and are required as caseload standards of licensing staff. Ms. Allen inquired about the difference in Work First numbers. Ms. Shooter advised in 2010 caseloads significantly decreased as a result of moving to Pay for Performance and eliminating Benefit Diversion. However, in 2013, Emergency Assistance funds doubled followed by Work First being added to NC FAST in 2014. As a result, the application time increased significantly. In 2016, one Work First Social Worker position was reallocated to Child Welfare. Ms. Allen expressed appreciation for the detailed responses to her inquiry.

c. Social Services Institute – October 17-19 – Hickory, NC

Ms. Pritchard advised the Social Services Institute will be held at the Hickory Convention Metro center in Hickory, NC on October 17-19, 2018. Ms. Wells advised Amy Wall, School of Government, would conduct Board Member training on Wednesday, October 17, 2018. She also mentioned other State personnel scheduled to attend. She stated a detailed agenda is forthcoming. Ms. Pritchard advised she will provide door prizes to be given away at the Institute for the Board Members as well as the general sessions. She will register applicants, make and pay for hotel reservations and complete their mileage reimbursement forms. She informed the Board of the Best Practice Awards Luncheon on October 18, 2018. Our department submitted 7 nominations for awards in various categories.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

a. NCACBSS Update

First, Ms. Accor wanted to applaud Ms. Harrill for her passion for the Child Support department as expressed in her presentation. She stated that Wayne Black shared news advising North Carolina's Child Support Division is 6th in the nation. Ms. Pritchard remarked of the great amount of paperwork involved in completing and managing child support cases. She also appreciates the effort of our staff in that department. Ms. Accor informed the Board that NC Social Services and Child Welfare reform continues to be a situation. Wayne Black informed of an audit where they received failing scores on all 7 of the Child Welfare outcomes. She expects an update at the next working group meeting on September 4, 2018. Ms. Wells informed the State is going to regionalization. They are now interested in the formation of regional areas and determining the source of funding for this project. She expects more information to become available from the Director's Association during the Social Services Institute.

b. NCACBSS Newsletter

Ms. Wells complimented Ms. Accor on another fine edition on the NCACBSS newsletter.

c. Child Protection Team Update

Ms. Pritchard and Lendra Phillips attended the meeting. She advised there are no longer minimum standards of care. The State requires all counties to follow state guidelines of CPS Intake throughout the life of child welfare. The team developed a document for schools and other organizations. However, she emphasized the importance of calling DSS when there is any question of a child being neglected, abused or dependent.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, Lendra Phillips made a motion, seconded by Susan Allen to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:00 p.m.*

Mary Accor, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 29, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its September Board Meeting on September 24, 2018 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Mary Accor – Chair
Commissioner Susan Allen
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver
Betsy Wells

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Tracy Tolbert, Angela Woods, Denise Harrill, Pam Bright, Gregory Grier, Nicole Guin, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Wendy Bailey, Tammy Newberry, Kimberly Manning

Promoted Staff Members: Angel Wimbush

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT

Mary Accor called the meeting to order, Dale Oliver led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and Betsy Wells led the moment of silence. Commissioner Susan Allen read the agency's mission statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Susan Allen, and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dale Oliver made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the September 24, 2018 Board Meeting.*

Reports / Updates

- a. Personnel Report – Ms. Pritchard recognized new staff members, Wendy Bailey, Tammy Newberry and Kimberly Manning. In addition, she introduced Angel Wimbush who was recently promoted. Ms. Pritchard advised there are currently 7 vacant positions.
- b. Executive Summary – Ms. Pritchard advised of changes made to the Executive Summary report to simplify reported information. She stated the department had a decrease in number of incoming clients and incoming calls for the month of September.

122 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 116 Assist and Screened out reports. 12 children were referred to In-Home Services. 4 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 210 children currently in the department's custody. Currently, we have 65 Licensed Foster Homes. 62 children are cleared for Adoption with 11 children who do not have identified adoptive homes. She remarked that these children are either runaways or in mental health placements and aren't ready for adoptions. We currently have 12 children age 18-21 who have signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement. There were 7 adoptions finalized.

16 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 3 of these reports were substantiated. We received 1 Adult Care Home Complaint and 1 Nursing Home Complaints. We had 0 recoveries.

Ms. Pritchard stated Child Support collected \$727,765 for September. The total number of child cases is 7,647 while the total under order are 6,408. Ms. Wells asked for an explanation for difference in numbers. Ms. Pritchard advised the "under order" numbers are the actual number of cases taken to court where the Judge ruled of a certain amount to be paid to clients.

Ms. Pritchard advised 566 children are receiving Day Care services. She stated the number is usually consistent. She advised 819 applications were taken in Economic Services. She indicated that \$2,279,947 from Food Assistance spending was going back into our county's economy.

Ms. Pritchard advised 254 clients received Work First. Of this number, 227 are child only cases and 27 are cash assistance. There were 7 clients that went to work.

Ms. Pritchard stated that Program Integrity is continuously working hard. They received 23 referrals, established 19 claims and collected \$17,753.68.

Ms. Pritchard remarked we are a voter registration agency. There were 4,240 people asked if they were registered to vote. There were 27 people who registered to vote.

Ms. Pritchard advised Medicaid transportation numbers remain fairly consistent. She advised the report continues to be incomplete due to late reporting from TACC vendor. She stated they have communicated with the vendor who stated they are working on the issues and suggested billing information should be received timely.

c. Child Fatality Team – Ms. Phillips stated they are still looking for someone to fill the "Parent Who Lost a Child" position on the team. The team reviewed an abuse case presented by DSS involving a family who moved to Cleveland County but recently relocated to Gaston county with family. They are currently receiving mental health assistance and children are enrolled in school. Police officials are trying to get the abuser to return to NC from Texas to be charged with crimes related to this case. Ms. Wells thanked Ms. Phillips for serving on this committee as it's very hard to listen to details of abuse.

d. NCACBSS – Ms. Wells

e. NCACBSS Newsletter – Ms. Accor

f. Commissioners – Ms. Allen

Old Business

- a. NC FAST Update – Ms.
- b. MOU – 1st Data Release – Ms.

New Business

- a. NC Social Services Reform Plan – Ms.
- b. Medicaid Transformation– 1st Data Release – Ms.
- c. Title IV-E Foster Care Monitoring Report – Ms.
- b. Discuss Changing December Board Meeting Date to Dec. 7, 2018 at 10:45 a.m.

Announcements

- a. Adoption Day Celebration
,
DSS Booth at the Fair

Special Recognition – Alison

Retirement Celebration for Karen Pritchard, Director

Closed Session pursuant to GS143-318.11 (b) Personnel

14. Next Meeting – November 26, 2018 – 4:00 p.m. (Downstairs DSS Board Room)

a. Adoption Day

15. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Lendra Phillips made a motion, seconded by Susan Allen to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:15 p.m.*

Mary Accor, Chairperson

Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 29, 2018
4:00 p.m.

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Members attending: Mary Accor – Chair
Commissioner, Susan Allen
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver
Betsy Wells

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Tracy Tolbert, Angela Woods, Denise Harrill, Pam Bright, Gregory Grier, Nicole Guin, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Wendy Bailey, Tammy Newberry, Kimberly Manning

Promoted Staff Members: Angel Wimbush

1-6. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, WELCOME, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT, CITIZEN RECOGNITION

Mary Accor, Chair, called the meeting to order and provided a welcome. Dale Oliver led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Betsy Wells led the moment of silence and Commissioner Susan Allen read the agency's mission statement. Ms. Accor read the Citizen Recognition statement. She opened the meeting for citizen concerns, of which there were none.

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lendra Phillips made the motion, seconded by Susan Allen, and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dale Oliver made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the September 24, 2018 Board Meeting.*

9. REPORTS / UPDATES

a. Personnel Report

Ms. Pritchard recognized new staff members, Wendy Bailey, Tammy Newberry and Kimberly Manning. In addition, she introduced Angel Wimbush who was recently promoted. Ms. Pritchard advised there are currently 7 vacant positions.

b. Executive Summary

Ms. Pritchard advised of changes made to the Executive Summary report to simplify reported information. She stated the department had a decrease in number of incoming clients and incoming calls for the month of September.

122 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. 116 Other County Assists and Screened out reports. 12 children were referred to In-Home Services. 4 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 210 children currently in the department's custody. Currently, we have 65 Licensed Foster Homes. 62 children are cleared for Adoption with 11 children who do not have identified adoptive homes. She remarked that these children are either runaways or in mental health placements and aren't ready for adoption. We currently have 12 children age 18-21 who have signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement. There were 7 adoptions finalized.

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Ms. Pritchard stated Child Support collected \$727,765 for September. The total number of child support cases is 7,647 while the total cases under order are 6,408. Ms. Wells asked for an explanation regarding the number of cases verses number under order. Ms. Pritchard advised the "under order" numbers are the actual number of cases taken to court where the Judge ordered a specific amount to be paid by the Non-Custodial Parent.

Ms. Pritchard advised 566 children are receiving Day Care services. She stated the number is usually consistent. She advised 819 applications were taken in Economic Services. She indicated that the \$2,279,947 from Food Assistance spending was benefiting our county's economy.

Ms. Pritchard advised 254 clients received Work First. Of this number, 227 are child only cases and 27 are cash assistance. There were 7 clients that went to work.

Ms. Pritchard stated that Program Integrity is continuously working hard. They received 23 referrals, established 19 claims and collected \$17,753.68.

Ms. Pritchard remarked we are a voter registration agency. There were 4,240 people asked if they were registered to vote. There were 27 people who registered to vote.

Ms. Pritchard advised Medicaid transportation numbers remain fairly consistent. She advised the report continues to be incomplete due to late reporting from TACC. She stated DSS has communicated with the vendor who stated they are working on the issues.

c. Child Fatality Team

Ms. Phillips stated they are still looking for someone to fill the "Parent Who Lost a Child" position on the team. The team reviewed an abuse case presented by DSS involving a family who moved to Cleveland County but recently relocated to Gaston county with family. They are currently receiving mental health assistance and children are enrolled in school. Police officials are trying to get the abuser to return to NC from Texas to be charged with crimes related to this

case. Ms. Wells thanked Ms. Phillips for serving on this committee as it's very hard to listen to details of abuse.

d. NCACBSS

Ms. Wells reminded the Board of the cancellation of the Social Services Institute previously scheduled for October 2018 due to inclement weather. She informed the Board of the devastation some counties across the state experienced as a result of the hurricane activity. She advised, due to recent hurricane activity, the Association decided to move the Institute to take place around the end of July / beginning of August next year. She also advised they decided to maintain current officers until the next annual meeting. Ms. Accor remarked that NCACBSS has the best President, Betsy Wells, who does an excellent job in communicating the needs of the department. Ms. Wells expressed appreciation for the kind remarks.

e. NCACBSS Newsletter

Ms. Accor discussed several articles listed in the current NCACBSS Newsletter including a memorial to Maria Conostas, Governor Cooper signing Hurricane Florence relief legislation into Law, Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group, and celebration of Cleveland County's own, Greg Grier, receiving his Doctorate.

f. Commissioners

Commissioner Allen reported the Community Prosperity Program continues to do well. A new route was added and has increased number of riders. The TeleMed continues to do well in participating schools. Another initiative the Commissioners is working on are the unemployed and underemployed. She stated there are many industries in our county in need of workers. They are looking to inform the community of the great technology school at Cleveland Community College. She stated there are other ways to make over \$40,000 without following a traditional college bound track.

10. OLD BUSINESS

a. NC FAST Update

Ms. Pritchard advised our county's Child Welfare department will go-live in July 2019, beginning with Intake and Assessments. Updated County rollout maps were shared with the Board.

b. MOU – 1st Data Release

Ms. Pritchard reminded this was first discussed at last month's Board meeting. She shared a letter from Lisa Tucker of the Division of Social Services advising Cleveland County met the requirements for Foster Care visits with 97.91%. Ms. Pritchard also reported receiving an email from Susan Osbourne advising efforts underway to identify which reports of MOU data can be run. They recognize data is not accurate at this time. Ms. Accor stated that MOU information provided will not be discussed at this time since, per DHHS, the validity of information is questionable. She questioned if these are the measures that would be used to impose penalties. Ms. Pritchard affirmed and stated she has asked for the data sources and time periods to be reviewed. She is still waiting on a response from DHHS. Regardless, Ms. Accor congratulated the department on results reported on the current MOU evaluation.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. NC Social Services Reform Plan

Ms. Pritchard advised the original reform plan is about 400 pages. However, she provided a condensed version of material to share with the board today. She highlighted the Supervision and Leadership portion of this correspondence regarding “decision-making on policy, funding, oversight and control.” She stated there are challenges in developing consensus among all 100 counties. In addition, staffing levels and salaries from Central State offices and County offices are insufficient and not equitable. She advised we want to be monitored by outcomes rather than certain numerical measures. They recommend a collaborative process to identify specific outcome measures that correspond to better client outcomes. Ms. Pritchard proceeded to discuss items in the provided NC Social Services Preliminary Reform report. Ms. Accor questioned if they are still looking for recommendations to be implemented. Ms. Pritchard referred Board members to the included chart which described Short-term, Mid-term and Long-term recommendations. She advised dates of projected implementation are listed from February 2019 and beyond. Ms. Accor advised NCACBSS has concerns and does not believe funding will be available to implement the recommendations. She expressed there was a lot being asked for with a limited amount of funding.

b. Medicaid Transformation

Ms. Pritchard stated the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services has approved the plan to move forward with the Medicaid Transformation process. She shared material and explained information on the fact sheet. Beginning in 2019, there will be two types of available Medicaid plans. Ms. Pritchard proceeded to explain the differences with both plans. She expressed a concern regarding who will monitor and make sure our clients receive needed services. She also advised that she will be attending a meeting that Partners is sponsoring for DSS Directors and Health Directors on November 15th in Hickory to learn how this change will affect our county. Ms. Accor questioned if someone will accompany Ms. Pritchard to this meeting. She advised the meeting was for Directors, therefore she will be going alone.

Ms. Pritchard advised of Lasandra Pearson’s retirement effective January 1, 2018. Ms. Wells acknowledged the hard work, both of Ms. Pritchard and Ms. Pearson and all that they have accomplished while working at Cleveland County DSS.

c. Title IV-E Foster Care Monitoring Report

Ms. Pritchard complimented the Foster Care staff, Chuck Wilson, Kay Howell and Greg Grier’s team for having no errors on the Title IV-E Foster Care Monitoring Final Report. Ms. Accor expressed pride for Cleveland County’s accomplishment and for not being one of the county’s Wayne Black has expressed concern.

d. Discuss Changing December Board Meeting Date to Dec. 7, 2018 at 10:45 a.m.

Susan Allen made the motion, seconded by remaining DSS Board members and unanimously adopted by the Board to change the December Board Meeting to December 7, 2018 at 10:45 a.m.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adoption Day Celebration

Ms. Pritchard advised of the Adoption Day Celebration on November 16, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. at the County Courthouse. She invited DSS Board members to attend. She stated each family will receive a certificate and a child friendly reception will follow the event.

DSS Booth at the Fair

Ms. Pritchard shared a photo of the Cleveland County DSS booth located at the Annual Cleveland County Fair.

Special Recognition

Ms. Pritchard shared an email received regarding gratitude for Alison Clark's wonderful service to children in the local community.

Retirement Celebration for Karen Pritchard, Director

Ms. Pritchard shared the invitation for her retirement party to be held on Friday, November 30, 2018. Ms. Wells remarked that Ms. Pritchard has done an excellent job in Cleveland County throughout her years of service. Other DSS Board members echoed the sentiments expressed by Ms. Wells.

13. Closed Session pursuant to GS143-318.11 (b) Personnel

Betsy Wells made a motion and seconded by Dale Oliver to move to closed session pursuant to GS143-318.11 (b) Personnel. No action was taken in Closed Session.

The Meeting returned to Open Session. Chairmen Accor stated the DSS Board is fully authorizing the County Human Resources Department to begin the Director recruitment process. The County Manager and Human Resource Director will keep the DSS Board updated during the recruitment process. The DSS Board will be consulted throughout and included in the final selection process. Typically, this is a 45 to 60 day process. It will be a competitive internal/external recruitment process.

14. Next Meeting – November 26, 2018 – 4:00 p.m. (Downstairs DSS Board Room)

15. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dale Oliver made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:20 p.m.*

Mary Accor, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 26, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its October Board Meeting on November 26, 2018 at 4:00 in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Mary Accor – Chair
Commissioner, Susan Allen
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver
Betsy Wells

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Kay Howell, Lasandra Pearson, Tom Ensley, Mary Eppers, Angela Woods, Denise Harrill, Pam Bright, Gregory Grier, Nicole Guin, Brian Epley, Allison Mauney, Melissa Hawk

New Staff Members: Brandy Warren, Carmen Coles, Wanda Gilmore, Lindsay Wright

Promoted Staff Members: Amy Greene

1-6. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, WELCOME, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT, CITIZEN RECOGNITION

Mary Accor, Chair, called the meeting to order and provided a welcome. Dale Oliver led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. Betsy Wells read the agency’s mission statement. Ms. Accor read the Citizen Recognition statement. She opened the meeting for citizen concerns, of which there were none.

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Betsy Wells requested to add item, “Hiring New Director” from last meeting’s discussion to the Old Business of the agenda today. Chair, Mary Accor advised it will be added as item “10. a.” for today’s agenda.

Betsy Wells made the motion, seconded by Susan Allen, and unanimously adopted by the Board to; *add the requested agenda item and adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dale Oliver made the motion, seconded by Susan Allen and adopted by the Board to, *approve the minutes of the October 29, 2018 Board Meeting.*

9. REPORTS / UPDATES

Personnel Report

Ms. Pritchard recognized new staff members, Brandy Warren, Carmen Coles, Wanda Gilmore and Lindsay Wright. In addition, she introduced Amy Greene who was recently promoted.

Executive Summary

Ms. Pritchard stated the department had an increase in the number of incoming clients and incoming calls for the month of October.

144 reports were accepted for assessment in Child Protective Services. Ms. Wells questioned the increase in the number of CPS reports. Ms. Pritchard advised numbers vary from month to month. There was no specific reason for the increase. 80 Other County Assists and Screened out reports were completed. 9 children were referred to In-Home Services. 19 children were taken into DSS custody. There are 217 children currently in the department's custody. Currently, we have 64 Licensed Foster Homes. 59 children are cleared for Adoption with 10 children who do not have identified adoptive homes. We currently have 13 children age 18-21 who have signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement. There were 4 adoptions finalized for the month.

18 Adult Protective Services Reports were accepted for assessment. 4 of these reports were substantiated. We received 1 Adult Care Home Complaint and 2 Nursing Home Complaints. We had 1 NCGS 130A-415 recovery. Ms. Wells asked Tom Ensley to explain the reason for an increase in Adult Services cases. Mr. Ensley suggested case numbers often increase in colder months as folks are in cold houses and need fuel assistance. In addition, he acknowledged the general population is getting older which will ultimately cause an increase in reports.

Ms. Pritchard congratulated the Child Support Unit for collecting \$819,478 for October. The total number of child support cases is 7,696 while the total cases under order are 6,487.

Ms. Pritchard advised 569 children are receiving Day Care services.

Ms. Pritchard advised 974 applications were taken in Economic Services. She indicated that the \$2,304,677 from Food Assistance spending stimulates our county's economy. There are 29,791 individuals receiving Medicaid services.

Ms. Pritchard advised a total of 249 clients received Work First. Of this number, 225 are child only cases and 24 are cash assistance. There were 0 clients that went to work in October.

Ms. Pritchard stated that Program Integrity is continuously working hard. They received 33 referrals, established 30 claims and collected \$12,795.63.

Ms. Pritchard remarked we are a voter registration agency. There were 34 people who registered to vote in our agency.

Ms. Pritchard advised Medicaid transportation numbers remain fairly consistent. She advised there were 5690 trips for Medical transportation in August.

Child Fatality Team

Ms. Phillips stated they are still looking for someone to fill the "Parent Who Lost a Child" position on the team. She advised she had not received the minutes from the previous team meeting. She has contacted individuals to assure she receives Fatality Team minutes in the

future. Ms. Pritchard advised the Health Department completes Fatality Team minutes and DSS completes Protection Team minutes.

NCACBSS

Ms. Wells distributed her NCACBSS business card listing an updated email address. She requested this address be used to correspond with her for DSS and NCACBSS business. She advised the next meeting scheduled January 11, 2019 in Burlington. She stated the Social Services Institute will definitely be moved to Summer, 2019 in conjunction with the Directors Association at the end of July or beginning of August. She also advised of the death of one of the Directors in Fayetteville, NC. Her position on the Board has not yet been filled. Ms. Wells expressed appreciation for the kind remarks.

Commissioners

Commissioner Allen reported the Economic Development group has been busy discussing new jobs to the county and challenges faced with finding people to fill those positions. She advised they are looking at how to utilize programs at local high schools and the local college as a resource to find unemployed and underemployed individuals in the community. Ms. Allen also advised of an upgrade to the county computer systems. She expects this to be beneficial when searching for information related to Cleveland County.

Medicaid Transformation

Ms. Pritchard stated she and Dr. Greg Grier attended the Medicaid Transformation meeting with Partners Behavioral Health in Hickory, NC. She advised there were no new updates from this meeting. She advised Maximus was chosen as the vendor to help consumers navigate through this process. She advised they are welcome to setup navigators at our DSS location for assistance to our clientele. She did inquire if foster children will be pulled out or included in one of the projected plans. Currently, they could not remark on that process as it has not yet been decided. They suggested there may be a representative to serve foster children only cases. Ms. Pritchard also inquired about the process of Medicaid Transportation, of which a decision has not been made on how it will be managed. She remarked that our staff will, more than likely, be called by clients who will receive letters advising they need to select a Medicaid plan. Ms. Accor suggested the issue will become whether a staff member can accurately explain the plans for their clients. Ms. Wells asked of the next steps in the planning process. Ms. Pritchard advised Partners will keep our agency updated with any new information that they learn. Ms. Shooter remarked that they should appoint a Liaison to assist with training staff. Ms. Pritchard stated updates will be provided to the DSS Board as information is received.

NC FAST Update

Ms. Pritchard advised Child Welfare is on schedule to rollout in NC FAST in July 2019. She stated there are continued issues reported with this system. She believes the State will continue to move forward due to funding.

10. OLD BUSINESS

a. Hiring New Director

Ms. Wells stated she did not realize, according to the statement read in the last meeting, the DSS Board would be giving up the Board's authority in selecting a DSS Director. Ms. Accor remarked, the statement read was a summary of what was previously discussed in prior meetings regarding the hiring for this position. She stated we would be taking advantage of the County's

Human Resource Department and authorizing them to complete the process. Ms. Wells stated, in the past, the posting was done internally and managed by the DSS Board. She acknowledged that since the motion was passed, the County Manager, HR and a selected committee will be the entity to make a decision that should also include one of the DSS Board Members. Ms. Accor affirmed her statement but also advised of representation of the DSS Board will be included on the hiring panel. Ms. Wells informed the board that according to State law, it is a directive for the DSS Board to hire, evaluate and terminate a DSS Director. She expressed concerns that this is not being handled as required. She requests that the Board reconsider what has been done. Ms. Accor expressed her understanding of Ms. Wells views. However, she suggested there have been multiple opportunities to review the statement, after closed session and prior to voting on the November Meeting minutes. She stated that the Board approved and authorized the County to move forward with this process when the November minutes were approved today. Ms. Wells advised that she abstained on voting on said minutes today and acknowledged that she should have brought it up at that time. Ms. Accor stated she did not realize Ms. Wells abstained from the vote. Ms. Allen appreciated comments made by Ms. Wells and suggested they listen to the presentation County Manager, Brian Epley will share with the DSS Board regarding this process. Ms. Wells expressed wanting to share her concern and make sure we get a qualified DSS Director who works well with staff. Ms. Accor appreciated her concern.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Notice of Public Hearing and Discussion of Transition Planning for Hiring New DSS Director

Mr. Brian Epley, County Manager provided a high-level overview of the timing, intent, process and authorization for HR and himself to participate in the DSS Director recruitment process. He confirmed that the DSS Board will have representation on the 5-8 interview panel during this recruitment process. He stated there is value to having members of the DSS Board represented. He stated it is also important to recognize the skills of the Human Resource department and data from the County Manager's office. He believes it's important to get the best candidate for the position. Mr. Epley proceeded to provide quick facts about current DSS staff and the amount of the annual DSS Budget.

Mr. Epley discussed the public hearing posting in the newspaper regarding conferring the Commissioners "all powers, responsibilities, and duties of the Cleveland County DSS Board and transitioning the current SS Board to an advisory board." He remarked on the statute which allows Commissioners to assume responsibilities of the board. He stated the Board will act in the same capacity except for the hiring, firing, personnel actions and finalizing decisions. He stated the board can make recommendations/advisements to County Commissioners. He advised that following the public hearing, the Commissioners will develop a resolution and move to change the DSS Board to an advisory board. Once approved, it will go into effect the following day. Mr. Epley proceeded to explained reasons the change for the DSS Board is being considered. Some reasons he suggested include liability from the MOU, regionalization, Medicaid reformation, managed care and for county operations/delivery. He stated the board and membership stays intact, if member choose to remain. He advised that those serving on a State Board will still qualify if they remain as a member on the DSS Advisory board. All decisions made will be considered recommendations opposed to final approval. Ms. Pritchard

stated Secretary Susan Perry-Manning stated regionalization may not occur since there has been a change with the election. Mr. Epley reviewed a map of counties across the state than have governing boards. He advised speaking with and visiting other counties that have gone through this process. He remarked that he does not sense an intent to have a merger or acquisition with the Health Department at this time. Mr. Epley continued to offer information and answer questions regarding this topic.

Mr. Epley shared desired qualifications for the next DSS Director. He stated they will look at State requirements (education, skills), State policy, External Industry challenges (ex. Opioid crisis, reformation), Internal Department challenges (ex. Technology, trainings, turnover, etc.), Innovation, Critical problem solving and Culture building. He stated the expectation is to find the best candidate. Ms. Wells asked if there was a schedule for this process. Mr. Epley stated they are gathering information and will create a job posting relaying qualifications needed in a candidate. He acknowledged that timing is a challenge. They are looking to appoint an interim DSS Director. They will look to run assessments and test skill sets of candidates to identify key attributes. In the end, they will gather a panel and conduct interviews with the most skilled candidates. He hopes to have the process completed by February/March 2019.

b. Modification Agreement to the DHHS / Cleveland MOU FY 2018-2019

Ms. Pritchard advised the MOU Agreement was sent back to counties since the data was wrong and information is still being validated. She stated the new MOU that was sent out must be signed by a “County Representative” opposed to the County Manager and the County DSS Director as previously listed. She questioned who will sign the MOU since she will be leaving after December 31, 2018. Ms. Accor believes this subject needs to be tabled until the next Board meeting. However, she stated Ms. Pritchard could sign since she currently is the Director. Ms. Pritchard noted her hesitation to sign since this MOU goes into effect July 2019 when she will no longer be the Director. Ms. Allen stated she will follow up to determine the person who should sign the MOU Agreement.

c. Heating Assistance

Ms. Pritchard advised information was published in Shelby Star and on Cleveland County Facebook page to advise the community of Heating Assistance availability. She advised this is not an entitlement program. Clients must meet eligibility requirements to receive assistance.

d. Cleveland County DSS Annual Report

Ms. Pritchard thanked Kay Howell for providing the Cleveland County DSS Annual report to DSS Board members. She advised that each member was given several copies to share with individuals in the community. Ms. Accor thanked Ms. Howell for providing such detailed information to share.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Adoption Month Proclamation

Ms. Pritchard shared a Proclamation signed by Governor Cooper stating November is National Adoption Month. Ms. Phillips shared memories of finalizing her family’s adoption of their son.

Retirement Celebration for Karen Pritchard, Director

Ms. Accor reminded the Board of the invitation for Ms. Pritchard's retirement party to be held on Friday, November 30, 2018 from 2:00 - 4:00. She encouraged DSS Board members to attend.

13. Next Meeting – December 7, 2018 – 10:45 a.m. (Downstairs DSS Board Room)

14. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Betsy Wells made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips to *adjourn* the *meeting at 5:15 p.m.*

Mary Accor, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 7, 2018
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County Social Services Board held its December Board Meeting on December 7, 2018 at 10:45 a.m. in the First Floor Board Room at DSS.

Members attending: Mary Accor – Chair
Commissioner, Susan Allen
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver
Betsy Wells

Others attending: Karen Pritchard, Chuck Wilson, Jane Shooter, Lasandra Pearson, Mary Etters, Denise Harrill, Gregory Grier, Alison Clark, Shelly Snyder, Melissa Hawk

1-6. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, WELCOME, PLEDGE, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MISSION STATEMENT, CITIZEN RECOGNITION

Mary Accor, Chair, called the meeting to order and provided a welcome. Betsy Wells led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. Dale Oliver read the agency’s mission statement. Ms. Accor read the Citizen Recognition statement. She opened the meeting for citizen concerns, of which there were none.

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Accor requested to add a statement to the agenda under Old Business as item “10 b.” Susan Allen made the motion, seconded by Dale Oliver and unanimously adopted by the Board to *add the requested agenda item and adopt the agenda as presented by the Clerk to the Board.*

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dale Oliver made the motion, seconded by Betsy Wells and adopted by the Board to *approve the minutes of the November 26, 2018 Board Meeting.*

9. REPORTS / UPDATES

a. **Foster Children’s Christmas**

Dr. Gregory Grier stated Tina McNeilly, Fundraiser/Donation Coordinator, has been busy securing funds to ensure our foster children have a joyous Christmas season. Several fundraising events included proceeds from a Valentine’s Day Gift Basket raffle, Lindor Chocolate sales, Bar-B-Que Cookoff, two Hopper’s Food Truck events, Car Wash raffle, July 4th gift basket, Float Fest, Riverbend Golf Course event and DSS Jean week. Dr. Grier also reported receiving several individual donations throughout the year from Alison Clark, Turner Trucking, Denise Wright, Baker Enterprises and Westmorland Printers. He reported receiving a grand total of \$6025.50 from fundraisers and individual donations. Dr. Grier advised DSS provided presents

for 221 foster children this holiday season. In addition, 215 foster children received a voucher to purchase items at Walmart. Ages 0 to 5 received \$25, ages 6 to 12 received \$75 and ages 13 to 18 received \$100. Foster parents choosing not to shop at Walmart had the option to submit receipts and receive reimbursement for amounts spent at other retailers.

Ms. Pritchard advised the Board that DSS is not allowed to self-sponsor fundraising events. She informed we must use a vendor who list, "Proceeds go to Cleveland County DSS Foster Children's Christmas Fund or Senior Santa Project."

Ms. Allen inquired of the location for the Annual Foster Children's Christmas Party. Ms. Clark advised the event is held in the DSS auditorium. Ms. Allen stated Jason Falls offered to host this event at the LeGrand Center next year. Ms. Clark acknowledged receiving an email from him. Ms. Wells questioned if there would be a charge for using that facility. Ms. Allen stated that Mr. Falls is aware that DSS does not have funds to pay for that event location. It was suggested that more details would become available closer to that date and time.

b. **Senior Santa Project**

Shelly Snyder, Adult Services Social Worker, stated the Senior Santa Project is a fun time of the year for staff and clients. She shared a sample gift bag, full of various items, donated by Grandparents Raising Grandkids and handmade blankets received from Warm Up America. The Adult Services unit received a total of \$1288.24 from fundraisers that include a Tupperware campaign, Paparazzi Jewelry Sale, Fall Gift Basket, Hopper's Food Truck proceeds, Gift Card Tree and Jean's Week. She advised money raised is used primarily to purchase gifts for 53 wards and helps to distribute about 150 bags to Adults they serve. Ms. Wells inquired of how individuals are selected to receive gift bags. Ms. Snyder advised they are given through referrals, to clients with APS reports, Special Assistance clients and other clients in the community. Mr. Oliver questioned if the money raised was the only resource for client gifts. Ms. Snyder informed of having remaining items received from previous donations along with items collected from generous DSS staff through donation boxes located throughout DSS agency.

Ms. Wells stated she was unaware of donations being accepted. She suggested a reminder email be sent to Board members next year. Ms. Pritchard advised donations are continuously accepted. She advised check can be made to Foster Children's Christmas Fund or Senior Santa Project.

10. OLD BUSINESS

a. Modification Agreement to the DHHS / Cleveland MOU FY 2018-2019

Ms. Pritchard advised this item was tabled at the last meeting to allow Ms. Allen to determine who needs to sign the Memorandum of Understanding Modification Agreement. She advised the previous draft required the County Manager's signature whereas this draft list County Representative. Ms. Pritchard stated she is willing to sign but will follow the suggestion of the Board. Ms. Accor yielded the decision to the Commissioners. Ms. Allen advised she will speak with Brian Epley regarding this matter. Ms. Pritchard advised the agreement is due back to the State by December 17, 2018.

b. Advisory Board Member Statement

Ms. Accor reminded of the December 18, 2018 public hearing to change the current DSS Board to an Advisory Board. She advised Brian Epley, County Manager, request current Board

members decide if they are interested in continuing to serve should the Advisory Board be approved by County Commissioners. Ms. Allen remarked that Board members expertise and knowledge are very valuable. She asked that everyone consider remaining on the Board as she does not foresee any changes. Ms. Wells, Ms. Phillips, Mr. Oliver and Ms. Accor agreed to continue to serve on the Advisory Board. Ms. Allen thanked everyone for agreeing to continue to serve. She will inform Mr. Epley of the decisions.

11. NEW BUSINESS

None

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Pritchard reminded the Board of a focus group meeting scheduled for Monday, December 10, 2019 in the DSS Boardroom. She advised members to check email for postponement due to projected adverse weather conditions. Ms. Allen remarked the company scheduled to conduct focus group meetings at DSS will help facilitate the hiring process for the upcoming vacant DSS Director position.

Ms. Pritchard advised this was her last DSS Board meeting since she will retire December 31, 2018. She thanked the Board and remarked of her enjoyment working with each member. She expressed appreciation for the Board’s support of the Department and herself. She stated it was an honor to work at Cleveland County DSS.

Ms. Pritchard invited Board members to the retirement party for Lasandra Pearson, Income Maintenance Program on Friday, December 14, 2019 at 3:00 in the Child Support Conference room.

13. Next Meeting – January 28, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. (DSS Board Room)

14. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Lendra Phillips made a motion, seconded by Betsy Wells to *adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m.*

Mary Accor, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Board Clerk

CLEVELAND COUNTY DSS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2019
4:00 p.m.

The Cleveland County DSS Advisory Board held its January Board Meeting on January 28, 2019 at 4:00 p. m. in the Second Floor Conference Room at DSS.

Members attending: Mary Accor – Chair
Commissioner, Susan Allen
Lendra Phillips
Dale Oliver
Betsy Wells

Others attending: Brian Epley, Jane Shooter, Chuck Wilson, Mary Eppers, Denise Harrill, Alison Clark, Melissa Hawk

CALL TO ORDER

Mary Accor, Chair, called the meeting to order and provided a welcome. Betsy Wells led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

AGENDA ADOPTION

ACTION: Betsy Wells made the motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips and unanimously approved by the Advisory Board to, *approve the agenda.*

CITIZEN RECOGNITION

No one registered to speak.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Clerk to the Board included the Minutes of the *December 7, 2018* regular meeting, in board members packets.

ACTION: Dale Oliver made a motion, seconded by Lendra Phillips, and passed unanimously by the Board to, *approve the consent agenda and minutes as written.*

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Ms. Shooter provided the current Cleveland County DSS organizational structure. In addition, the chart lists the number of employees in each department. Ms. Accor suggested an additional box at the top be added for the County Manager position.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Ms. Shooter advised the Personnel report includes the number of current vacancies in each department. She stated DSS is currently in the process of working with Human Resources to develop a protocol to recruit for the Economic Services Program Administrator and Child Protective Services Program Manager positions. She advised the CPS Program Manager position is scheduled to be posted next week. The process will include a series of exercises and screenings along with a panel interview.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ms. Shooter presented the Executive Summary for review. She explained the asterisks listed on the bottom of the report refer to unavailable information. She provided the example of Medicaid Transportation information currently pending due to unsubmitted bills from vendors.

AUDITS AND REVIEWS

Ms. Shooter remarked that we have often spoke of being audited and monitored. However, there has not been a comprehensive list of audits, until now. She provided a listed of all Federal and State audits, reviews and monitoring completed in each department. The list includes the type, frequency and person(s) responsible to gather information. She stated this is the first step to gain a more comprehensive look at how we are monitored and our standing. Ms. Shooter advised she has identified a person who will be responsible for completing spreadsheets to readily identify results of reviews. She anticipates providing these results to the Advisory Board quarterly.

REGULAR AGENDA

Federal Shutdown Impact

Ms. Shooter reviewed a letter from the State advising Food and Nutrition recipients received February food benefits on January 20, 2019. Since the government recently reopened, there as not been any additional information regarding a change in ongoing benefits. Ms. Accor asked there has been an increase in calls from clients regarding benefits. Ms. Shooter stated there have not been as many phone calls as anticipated. She advised the State and local agency did a great job of informing clients through robocalls, letters, flyers in the agency and through the media.

Memorandum of Understanding Update-State & County

Ms. Shooter reminded the Board of MOU data previously received September 2018. She previously thought the State would be entering a monitoring situation where we might receive program improvement plan beginning January. However, the State will not take any actions this fiscal year. She advised the reports will now be available in one location of Data Warehouse. She advised the State has begun scheduling meetings with Directors, managers,

etc. and the State Liaison to advise of criteria they will view. Our Child Support department has been scheduled to meet with the Liaison on Wednesday, January 30, 2019. Ms. Accor questioned the reason State benchmark and requirements do not match. In one example it lists requirement as 100% but State benchmark at 95%. Ms. Howell suggested every application must be completed in 45 days (no exception). However, since there are times cases go beyond the deadline, the State gives margin/leeway of 95%. Ms. Shooter advised some percentage amounts are subject to change over time.

Medicaid Transformation

Ms. Shooter reviewed the proposed maps of 6 regions for contracts of prepaid health plans. She discussed a letter received from the State explains that DSS anticipated impact will be through increased telephone calls. She advised the agency will need to be knowledgeable regarding the process. The State will be working with us on the method of directing clients correctly.

BOARD REPORTS

Child Protection/Fatality Team

Lendra Phillips, CP/FT Board Representative, advised this month's meeting discussed a family of abused children recently taken into DSS custody. They are currently receiving needed treatment and various services. She stated next month's meeting will discuss fatalities. Ms. Wells asked who would be replacing Ms. Bright on this team. Ms. Shooter suggested the new program manager would be her replacement.

NCACBSS

Betsy Wells, NCACBSS President, advised they met January 11, 2019 in Burlington, NC. She shared the quarterly NCACBSS newsletter, created by Ms. Accor, with the Advisory Board. Ms. Wells advised NCACBSS and Directors Association work together for the Social Services Consortium. They pay Lobbyist to advocate on their behalf. Ms. Wells reviewed shared several of the Board's goals. She stated Ms. Accor may include in the next newsletter. She also advised one of their regions organized a cluster meeting in Pick County where she presented an overview of NCACBSS. In addition, several people, including Michael Beckett and Sharnese Ransome, provided information from the State at this cluster meeting. Ms. Wells advised the Social Services Institute will be held in Hickory July 30 – August 1, 2019. Ms. Allen reminded that Cleveland County has a wonderful conference center at the LeGrand. Ms. Accor stated she is the Director of the Western Region and suggested they were thinking of having a cluster meeting in Shelby. All members expressed support of having a meeting in our area.

Commissioners

Susan K. Allen, Chair. Cleveland County Board of Commissioners advised the Commissioners will be having a Strategic Goals and Work Session this coming Thursday. They will review goals completed last year and set goals for 2019. She believes it is good to reflect on

accomplishments made throughout the year. She thanked County Manager, Brian Epley, and his staff for their help and support.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the DSS Advisory Board at this time, Board members collectively made a motion, seconded by Dale Oliver, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to adjourn the meeting. The next regular meeting of the DSS Advisory Board is scheduled for **Monday, February 25, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Administrative Conference Room.**

Mary Accor, Chairperson
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Advisory Board

Melissa Hawk, Administrative Assistant II
Cleveland County Department of Social Services Advisory Board Clerk