

**HANOVER COUNTY
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
MINUTES
March 25, 2014**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Hutto, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

The following members were present: Robert Barnette, Sue Dibble, David Hobbs (3:35 p.m.), Larry Huber, Michael Shannon Sr. (3:47 p.m.); Lynn H. Saunders (3:35 p.m.), and G. E. "Ed" Via. Also in attendance: Jim Taylor, Deputy County Administrator; Dennis Walter, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Tamara Temoney, Assistant Director; Jacque Althizer, Budget Management Analyst Senior; Judy Davis, Family Services Specialist Supervisor; Alonda Gregory, Benefit Programs Supervisor; Daricka Jackson, Benefit Programs Manager; Julie Dubee, Family Services Specialist II; Veronica Hernandez, Benefit Programs Specialist III; Nadia Morgan, Customer Service Agent II and Robin Riley, Administrative Assistant.

II. CITIZENS' COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

Ms. Davis introduced Ms. Dubee who joined HDSS on March 1, 2014. Ms. Dubee is experienced in foster care, adoption and prevention, and court-ordered services. She earned a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of South Carolina and previously worked at Louisa County DSS.

Ms. Gregory introduced Ms. Hernandez who joined HDSS on February 16, 2014. Ms. Hernandez previously worked at Henrico DSS and is also bilingual.

Ms. Ellis-Wilkerson introduced Ms. Morgan who joined HDSS on January 1, 2014. Ms. Morgan previously worked at the City of Richmond DSS.

IV. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 28, 2014 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Huber moved to approve the January 28, 2014 Board Meeting Minutes. Ms. Dibble seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

V. MARCH IS SOCIAL WORKER APPRECIATION MONTH

Ms. Hutto read a letter of appreciation from the Social Services Advisory Board to the HDSS Family Services Specialists (Social Workers). The letter was approved with no objections.

VI. APRIL IS OFFICE SERVICES SUPPORT EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION MONTH

Ms. Hutto read a letter of appreciation from the Social Services Advisory Board to the HDSS Office Services Support Employees. Ms Saunders asked what employees this recognition addressed. Dr. Temoney said it applied to administrative staff. The letter was approved with no objections.

VII. LOCAL CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN: ACTION NEEDED: RECOMMENDATION THAT FY 15 PLAN BE APPROVED

(electronic copy of draft plan sent to Board members 3-24-14)

Mr. Walter explained that HDSS is a fully deviating agency and it would be appropriate for the Board to approve the Plan as presented. It is contingent upon approval by the Board of Supervisors and County and State Budgets. Mr. Taylor said it would be appropriate for representatives of this Board to speak to the Board of Supervisors (BoS) in support of this Plan. The BoS meeting begins at 7 p.m. and guests should arrive by 6:30 p.m. to sign up for speaking. Mr. Barnette said he will attend the meeting and Ms. Hutto said she planned to attend.

Mr. Barnette moved to approve the Local Classification and Compensation Plan for FY 15 as presented. Ms. Dibble seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Ms. Saunders moved for this Board to support the proposed merit increase. Ms. Dibble seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

VIII. BUDGET UPDATE

Ms. Althizer said there are not changes for the 2015 budget. There is no overage in the 2014 budget. Salaries are getting a bit close due to turnover of staff with high leave payouts. Some employees were transferred to DSS from other departments and carried their leave balances forward. Leave payouts are not included in the budget, and a budget transfer may be needed to cover these costs. DSS is working on this issue.

Dr. Temoney said that two CPS staff members are leaving in April. One is retiring and one has other employment. The positions are posted for hiring.

IX. HANOVER DSS SCORECARD

(electronic copy of Dashboard sent to Board Members 3-19-14)

Dr. Temoney asked if there were any questions regarding the Dashboard information and there were none. Staff continues to work diligently in the area of TANF Federal Work Participation Rate. There is a volunteer on site at the DSS Bell Creek office who is currently working with the Benefit Programs staff. She is a VIEW client who is volunteering in order to complete the required number of work participation hours. A confidentiality agreement has been signed. The VIEW staff is continuing to seek resources to assist the medically exempt population, and DSS has contacted two agencies as prospective partners in this effort.

Dr. Temoney commended the Benefit Programs staff for working hard to maintain timeliness standards. Approximately 42,000 applications through Healthcare.gov have not yet been disseminated to local agencies and the impact is unknown at this time. The transformation outcomes in the Services units are moving in the right direction. The CPS ongoing contacts measurement exceeds the State standard. Permanency staff may be asked to assist in the CPS unit due to the upcoming vacancies. All foster care staff have some CPS skill sets and currently participate in the “on-call” rotations. APS staff can also perform investigations.

Mr. Barnette asked how long it takes to fill a vacancy. Dr. Temoney said it sometimes takes a few months depending on when the candidate gives notice to their current employer. Applications are reviewed daily. If there are 4-5 promising applicants, interviews will be scheduled and the job posting may be kept open in case none of the applicants are viable candidates.

X. DIRECTOR’S UPDATE

Dr. Crossen-Powell attended the CSA conference in Roanoke March 23-24. DSS won an adoption appeal – thank you to Mr. Walter and the County Attorney’s office. The State upheld HDSS’ decision in this appeal. The PSSF (Providing Safe and Stable Families) grant application was completed and community needs assessment performed. This is a five-year funding to help support families and prevent out of home placements.

The new Family Services Specialist staff member is very experienced in social work.

Ms. Hodgson, CSA Coordinator, has been working closely with the CSA auditor. Mr. Taylor said that DSS should be recognized for supervision of the CSA Coordinator position which was previously with Community Resources. The presentation given to the Board of Supervisors on the Comprehensive Services Act will also be given to this Board.

HDSS computers were “refreshed” and approximately 40 “new to the employee” computers were installed.

A review was conducted by Dr. Temoney and Family Services Specialist Supervisor of cases where children are in residential placements. The purpose of the review was to determine how to transition the child(ren) from one point to the next. The ACCURINT system is being used to locate relatives for placements or a permanent family contact connection if the child(ren) cannot be placed in the home. Staff is ensuring they are in contact with treatment facilities. Mr. Barnette asked how many are in foster care. Dr. Temoney said there are currently 23 children in care, and as of Monday, there will be 22. One child is now age 20 and working toward transitioning to permanency. Staff members are in court today with the possibility of another child coming into care. About 75% of the children are age 14 or older and transitional living plans are being reviewed.

The EITC (earned income tax credit) program (tax preparation) is being held Tuesday evenings and will end April 8th. 81 returns have been prepared:

\$ 45,111 EITC
\$103,924 Federal refunds
\$ 16,819 State refunds

There are a few people who owe taxes this year and will have to pay. Ms. Saunders asked how long people have to wait on tax preparation nights. Dr. Temoney said the wait is not too long and a number system is being used. Mr. Taylor said the community outreach person at MRMC is interested in providing meal preparation service next year (previously offered by the Extension Office) to offer healthy cooking samples to individuals waiting for tax preparation. Volunteers from the Commissioner of Revenue's office are providing tax preparation this year along with HDSS employees.

Mr. Barnette asked if there was any population of homeless veterans in the community. Dr. Temoney said that there is no distinct population of military seeking services within the County and that they are mostly concentrated around military bases. Ms. Jackson said that the question about military veteran status is asked during SNAP interviews.

Staff members participated in the Human Services Strategic Planning process.

Mr. Taylor said that the new County web site will be rolled out Monday, March 31st: www.hanovercounty.gov.

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Announcements: Reverend Shannon

- On April 15, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., there will be a session on Medicaid, Medicare and the Affordable Health Care Act at Shiloh Church.
- The second Sunday in July, there will be a fish fry beginning at 12 Noon. This event will be focused on the homeless, people living in hotels, etc.
- Several church groups are open to assisting with mentoring services for foster children, providing support for outings in the community. The church has insurance for these services.

Ms. Saunders advised that she can also provide this information to MCEF churches.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The Board meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m. by Ms. Hutto.

Victoria Hutto, Chair

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 27, 2014, 3:30 p.m.