

**HANOVER COUNTY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES**

January 25, 2022

Location: 12304 Washington Highway, Ashland, Virginia

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gooding called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Board Members present (in person): Edward Gooding; Bernadette Cornelius; Vandi Hodges; Dan Johnson; Alice Miller; Faye Prichard; Don Ward.

Board Members absent: Sheila Crossen-Powell.

Also in attendance (in person): Lisa Seward, *Deputy County Attorney*; Jim Taylor, *Deputy County Administrator*; Les Beasley, *Budget Management Analyst*; Jennifer DeVaughn, *Fraud Investigator*; Ginny Ferguson, *Quality Assurance Coordinator*; Amy Taylor, *Administrative Assistant*.

Also in attendance (via Teams): Daricka Jones, *Deputy Director*; Bernie Jordan, *Business Operations Division Director*; Devon Parham, *Family Services Supervisor*; Kelly Adkins, *Benefit Program Supervisor*; Bobbi Waugh, *Benefit Program Specialist*; Jannita Hill-Tuttle, *Benefit Program Specialist*; Aidan McClanahan, *Benefit Program Specialist*; Louise McDonald, *Intern*.

II. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER AND STAFF

Mr. Don Ward, *newly appointed Board Member from the Henry District*, introduced himself. He has resided in Hanover County for over sixty years. Mr. Ward retired from the Virginia Employment Commission. Currently, he is a member of the Ruritan Club and serves on the Zoning Appeals Board. Mr. Ward also volunteers with the Boy Scouts, Hanover Fire/EMS and the Sherriff's Department.

Ms. Daricka Jones introduced herself as the new *Deputy Director* for Social Services. She began her new role on December 16, 2021 and has been with the agency for fourteen years. Ms. Jones has served in several different positions within the Department. She looks forward to working toward the goals of Social Services and the County.

Ms. Kelly Adkins, *Benefit Program Supervisor*, introduced herself. Previously, Ms. Adkins was a Benefit Program Specialist Senior and began as a Supervisor on January 16, 2022.

Ms. Aidan McClanahan, *Customer Services Agent*, introduced herself and began on January 16, 2022. Ms. McClanahan previously worked for Henrico County.

IV. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 30, 2021 MINUTES

Ms. Cornelius moved to approve the November 30, 2021 SSAB meeting minutes. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

V. FEBRUARY IS ELIGIBILITY APPRECIATION MONTH

Recognition Letter from the Board to Benefit Programs Specialists

Ms. Cornelius moved to approve the letter, Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

VI. MARCH IS SOCIAL WORK APPRECIATION MONTH

Recognition Letter from the Board to Family Services Specialists

Ms. Cornelius moved to approve the letter, Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

VII. LETTER TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

In light of the recent appointment of Mr. Don Ward for the Henry District and the upcoming appointment of Mr. Timothy Tillman for the Chickahominy District, it was decided that there was no need for a letter to the Board of Supervisors.

VIII. PRESENTATION: ENERGY ASSISTANCE

Ms. Bobbi Waugh and Ms. Jannita Hill-Tuttle presented information about the *Energy Assistance Programs*.

Ms. Waugh explained that there are three components of the *Energy Assistance Program*, which usually become available in October:

- Fuel Assistance** which helps with the cost of heating homes for eligible households.
- Crisis Assistance** which helps with heating emergencies including: utility deposits, heating bills, heating fuel, and repair/replacement of heating equipment.
- Cooling Assistance** which helps with cooling equipment repairs/purchases and payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment.

Cooling Assistance is offered on a first come, first served basis and runs from June 15th – August 15th. In order to qualify, the household must have at least one vulnerable person (a person 60 years old or older, a child under the age of 6, or a disabled person).

The maximum benefit amounts for **Cooling Assistance** are:

- One Portable Fan \$50
- Air Conditioner/Installation \$550
- Repair Central Air/ Heat Pump \$300
- Security Deposit \$200
- Installed Fan \$350
- Repair Installed Fan \$100
- Electric Bill Payment \$400 (this amount is determined annually)
- Pick Up One Air Conditioner \$350

Fuel Assistance begins the second Tuesday in October and continues through the second Friday in November. This assistance is for eligible households to help with immediate home energy

needs. The resources include: wood, heating oil, kerosene, electricity and gas. **Fuel Assistance** is not intended to meet the household's total heating costs. The benefits are determined and paid directly to the vendor at the end of December.

Crisis Assistance begins on November 1st and ends March 15th for households with no heat or those in imminent danger of being without heat. These interventions must be resolved within 48 hours or within 18 hours if there is a life-threatening situation. Due to the Public Health Emergency, a disconnect notice is not required but there must be a past due bill or less than 20% of fuel remaining.

The maximum benefit amounts for **Crisis Assistance** this season are:

- Dyed Kerosene \$999
- Island Pump Dyed Kerosene \$999
- Clear Kerosene \$999
- Oil \$999
- LP Gas \$999
- Natural Gas \$999
- Electricity \$999
- Coal & Wood \$775
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The maximum benefit amounts for **Crisis Assistance** for heating equipment this season are:

- Repair of Heating Equipment \$500
- Maintenance/Supplemental Equipment \$800
- Heating Equipment Replacement/Purchase \$1700
- Trip Charge (no work performed) \$50
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The monthly income levels to determine eligibility are:

Household Size	Maximum Income		Household Size	Maximum Income
1	\$1,610		11	\$7,285
2	\$2,178		12	\$7,853
3	\$2,745		13	\$8,420
4	\$3,313		14	\$8,988
5	\$3,880		15	\$9,555
6	\$4,448		16	\$10,123
7	\$5,015		17	\$10,690
8	\$5,583		18	\$11,258
9	\$6,150		19	\$11,825
10	\$6,718		20	\$12,393

During the 2021-2022 season, 526 households received **Cooling Assistance**. There were 673 households that received **Fuel Assistance** and 52 households that received **Crisis Assistance**. Ms. Jannita Hill-Tuttle introduced the **Energy Share Program** as being a year-round energy assistance program utilized as a last resort for those needing help paying their heating or cooling bills. The program also provides free energy and weatherization assessments. Dominion Energy oversees this program and solicits contributions to fund the program. Assistance with cooling

begins on June 1st and continues until September 30th. The maximum amount available was \$600 in 2021, which was an increase of \$300 from 2020. Assistance with heating begins on October 1st and continues through May 31st. The maximum amount available is \$600 this year.

The **Energy Share Program** pays for any type of heating or cooling bill. Applicants must have an emergency need such as a disconnection notice unless the applicant is 60 or over. Payments are submitted directly to the energy vendor. Dominion Energy is prohibited from disconnecting power until March 1, 2022 if a customer received assistance from SNAP, TANF or WIC benefits between January 1, 2019 through July 31, 2021.

The United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg collects and distributes funds as directed by the Energy Share committee. The committee is made up of citizens and community partners who meet twice a year. There are approximately 70 health and human services agencies that administer **Energy Share** assistance throughout Virginia. Contributions are collected through Dominion customers who can: add donations to their bill, write a separate check or make a donation in a special envelope sent along with bills in November and February.

In Hanover, **Energy Share** helped 122 households with heating assistance from October 1, 2021-May 31, 2021 totaling \$55,602.93. From June 1, 2021 to September 20, 2021, **Energy Share** assisted 54 households totaling \$14,886.16. Currently, **Energy Share** has provided \$35,017.20 which has assisted 79 households with heating costs.

Mr. Johnson offered to help identify community resources for wood donations.

IX. RESTRUCTURED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Ms. Jones reviewed the restructured Organizational Chart. The Deputy Director will now oversee the Benefits Programs along with the Child Care and Self Sufficiency Programs. This change was made to model the Virginia Department of Social Services which combines these Programs. This allows for a Program Coordinator position vacancy and that person will oversee the Services Programs.

X. BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Les Beasley provided a Financial Update for Social Services and Children's Services Act.

The Social Services Fiscal Year 2022 budget has the following remaining:

- Salaries and Fringe Benefits \$2,997, 179 or 62.9%
- Operating Costs \$237,217 or 78.5%
- Program Costs \$1,112,252 or 72.3%

The Social Services year to date expenses are the following:

- Salaries and Fringe Benefits \$1,769,450
- Operating Costs \$65,015
- Program Costs \$426,693

There is 52.5% remaining in the Social Services General Fund.

The Children's Services Act (CSA) has \$ 4,427,158 remaining of its Fiscal Year 2022 budget. The budgets for Parental Residential and Treatment Foster Care have less than 60% remaining. The other Residential, Congregate Care, Foster Care, Community Based Services and Non-Mandated budgets all have 60% or more remaining.

XI. HANOVER DSS DASHBOARD

Ms. Ginny Ferguson presented the Social Services Dashboard for December 2021 using the data from November 2021. The Online Medicaid Applications percentage remains below the standard due to our agency not receiving applications until they are already past due. This is not unique to our agency and has been repeatedly addressed with Virginia Department of Social Services who created the standard. Due to COVID, Medicaid Renewals continue to not be required, which accounts for the low percentage of timely reviews.

The Services Critical Outcomes report continues to reflect below standard percentages due to one child being adopted a few days after the twenty-four-month standard and a delay in placement of four children who had several court dates to establish parental rights.

XII. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

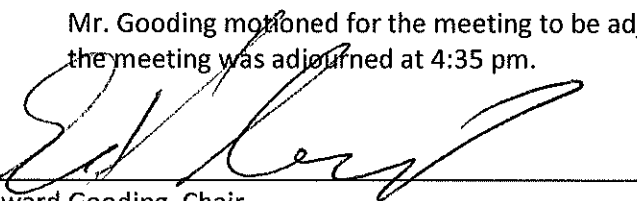
Ms. Daricka Jones reported on the following:

- We have had twelve employees test positive for COVID.
- Several of our staff volunteered at the Warming/Charging Shelter.
- The Financial Technician and Program Coordinator positions have been posted.
- We have two Refugee Resettlement cases.
- We hosted a Red Cross training for CPR/First Aid/AED/Blood Borne Pathogens.
- The Children's Act Review Committee met.
- We received \$2,700 from the Virginia Department of Social Services for Family Partnership Meetings held during the second quarter.
- Hanover Social Services covered EBT replacement for Henrico Social Services.
- The "Chiller" continues to have serious issues.
- We celebrated the holiday season with a week of themed activities ranging from hot chocolate one day to a holiday sweater contest later in the week;
- Our Benefit Program Supervisor position was offered to an internal candidate who accepted. She began on January 16th.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Gooding motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.

X


Edward Gooding, Chair

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 24, 2022; 3:30 p.m.