

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
MINUTES OF MARCH 20, 2018 MEETING

The Henderson County Board of Social Services conducted their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 12:00 PM in the East Conference Room (C2104) of the Human Services Building. Present from the Board were Chair Penny Summey, Vice-Chair Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Frank Wilson and John Boyd. Present from the DSS staff were Jerrie McFalls (Director), Kevin Marino (Social Work Program Administrator), Trina Hill (Program Manager Adult Services), Bob Jones (IM Supervisor 3), Joe Maxey (Administrative Officer), and Karen Vale (Clerk to the Board). Sandy Morgan (Economic Services Program Administrator) and board member Tyra Kirby were absent.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM by Chair Summey.

**Public Input:** None

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** No changes were requested. Dr. Hensley made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Boyd seconded the motion. All present were in favor, the minutes were approved.

**Directors Report (Attachment I):** Director McFalls reviewed her submitted report. Regarding P4-NC FAST, several directors from the extended pilot counties are reporting a lack of information from NC FAST at the State level. HC DSS is still set to roll-out on 11/26/18.

In addition to the submitted report, Director McFalls addressed the current media reports regarding the issues at the Department of Social Services in Cherokee County. Staff from North Carolina Dept. of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) have taken over administration of the child welfare program due to improper use of CVA's (custody visitation agreements) facilitated by child welfare staff and their county legal department. Civil legal actions filed in district court allege that parental rights were violated. Director McFalls stated that HC DSS has never utilized CVA's. HC DSS files the necessary petition with the Court system requesting custody if we feel the child(ren) need to be placed outside the home. This protects the parents "due right to process" and allows the Court to protect the child(ren) involved. Dr. Hensley asked about the length of time this has been going on; according to media reports, Cherokee County DSS has been utilizing CVA's in this manner for over 10 years. Director McFalls shared that these CVA's allowed children to be placed with alternative families to avoid the child(ren) coming into DSS custody. It has been reported that each case that utilized a CVA will have to be reviewed. There could be far reaching effects for the child(ren) involved, some of which are alleged to be in inappropriate homes, homes that are out of state or children may have been in a stable placement for many years. A Dear County Director Letter issued to DSS Directors from the Division of Social Services on 12/20/2017 stated that counties should not engage in facilitating CVA's. It will be most beneficial for the assessment of this issue to include both the work of the County Department of Social Services and the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS)/ Division of Social Services in the provision of child protective services.

Due to the absence of Program Administrator Morgan, the report on Economic Services was included in this month's director's report. Director McFalls reviewed several personnel transitions and our current struggle with the timely processing of Medicaid applications. HC DSS has failed the state issued report card for January (87%) and February (84%); passing is 90%. Waivers have been requested, citing the factor's hindering timely processing. As of this morning, NC DHHS has granted

our request for a waiver for January 2018, but no word yet on the waiver request for February. Application processing for March is currently at 92%. Director McFalls shared a possible option to reach more people, that will ensure we continue to pass the report card: staff can attempt home visits to secure the necessary information when phone calls and mail are unanswered. HC DSS is also considering a type-to-text option that would allow caseworkers to reach out to clients via cell phone text messaging. Even if the client doesn't have minutes available for talking, the texting feature continues to work. This would provide documentation for the caseworker that they attempted to talk to the client and all mandates could be met. For the current situation we have also moved a caseworker from one of the Food and Nutrition units to a Medicaid unit and taken the Medicaid unit out of the unit rotation for accepting CIP/LIEAP applications.

Director McFalls reviewed the March Employees of the Month (**Attachment II**) and asked Mr. Marino to share about Mrs. Horne and Mrs. Bailey; Mr. Jones shared about Ms. Xiong.

Director McFalls then highlighted several areas of the February Statistical Report (**Attachment III**). CPS Investigations Initiated is up 10.8% over the period, more reports are being screened in. CPS In-Home Case Management has also gone up, 15.3%. Social workers are continuing to work with families to ensure the children stay in the home and out of DSS custody. CPS-Foster Care (ages 18-21) continues to rise as more young adults are taking advantage of the program. Guardianship cases have stayed the same, but continue to drop for the 12-month period. Mr. Boyd asked about program areas that would see a drop as more people are securing jobs. Director McFalls stated that the Work First Employment program would see a drop as well as Food and Nutrition services, clients don't necessarily need food stamps if they are working.

**Program Administrators Reports (Attachment IV):** Social Work Program Administrator Marino reviewed his report. The Social Worker Appreciation Breakfast was held on 3/14 and each social worker was presented with a gift.

Trina Hill, Program Manager – Adult Services, presented a report on the 2018 Point In Time Count for Henderson County (**Attachment V**).

**Focus Area Updates:** Chair Summey asked if there were any new updates to the topic areas.

- Dr. Hensley – Child Welfare/CCPT: None
- Mr. Wilson – Diversity/Minority: None
- Mr. Boyd – Housing/Sustainability: Availability for reasonably priced rentals is hard to come by in Henderson County.
- Mrs. Kirby – Aging/COA (input from Program Manager Hill): None
- Mrs. Summey – Mental Health/Substance Abuse: None

**Old Business:**

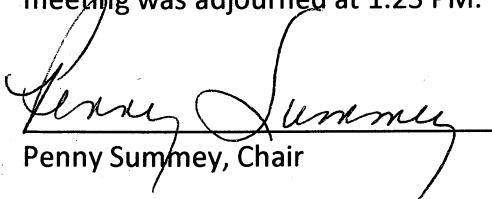
- Point-In-Time Count Recap: Presented during the program administrator's reports.
- Times-News Article Submission: Dr. Hensley's article will be submitted to the Times-News this afternoon. The board would also like the article to be sent out to the social work staff via email. Karen will take care of this by the end of the week.

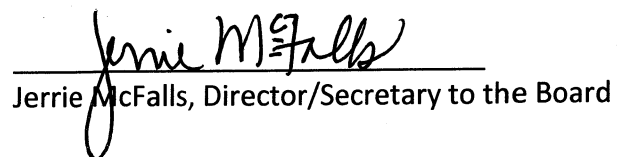
**New Business**

- FY 2018 -2019 DSS Budget\*: Mr. Maxey presented the proposed budget to the board for approval (**Attachment VII**):
  - Estimates from the State and Federal government have stayed flat, no major increases or decreases
  - Requesting one new vehicle
  - One Additional Social Worker – Investigative/Assessment & Treatment has been requested
  - The delay in NC FAST implementation for Child Welfare will require the move of previously budgeted monies into a capital account to hold for the new budget year
  - Director McFalls has met with Assistant County Manager Amy Brantley regarding a budget line addition for potential chargebacks from the State due to audit findings. At this time, we will not budget for those events
  - As written, the HC DSS budget will reflect a decrease of \$200,000 of direct county funding.
  - Director McFalls anticipates county budgets will be reviewed at the commissioners meeting on 5/16 and put forward for a vote on 6/4

Mr. Boyd made a motion that the board approve the budget as written and submit to the county managers office. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, all present were in favor. Director McFalls will let Ms. Brantley know that the DSS board has approved the proposed budget.

**Next Meeting and Adjournment:** Chair Summey reminded the board that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 12:00 PM. Dr. Hensley made motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, and all present were in favor. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 1:23 PM.

  
Penny Summey, Chair

  
Jerrie McFalls, Director/Secretary to the Board

: JGM

**Attachments:**

- I. Director's Report (March 2018)
- II. Employees of the Month (March 2018)
- III. Statistical Report (February 2017 – February 2018)
- IV. Program Administrators Report (February 2018)
- V. 2018 Point In Time Report
- VI. FY17-18 Eight Month Report (July 2017 – February 2018)
- VII. FY 2018 -2019 Proposed Budget