

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2018 MEETING

The Henderson County Board of Social Services conducted their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 18th, 2018 at 12:00 PM in the North Conference Room (C2140) of the Human Services Building. Present from the Board were Chair Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Vice-Chair Penny Summey and Judy Smith. Present from the DSS staff were Jerrie McFalls (Director), Kevin Marino (Social Work Program Administrator), Sandy Morgan (Economic Services Program Administrator) and Karen Vale (Clerk for the Board). Guest presenter Rachel Cummings was also present. Board Member Tyra Kirby and Administrative Officer Joseph Maxey were absent.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM by Chair Hensley.

Public Input: None

Adjustments to the Agenda: None

Approval of Minutes: Chair Hensley asked for any changes to the minutes, none were requested. Vice-chair Summey made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. All present were in favor and the motion passed.

Board Education: Rachel Cummings, Foster Care Social Worker, shared her experience utilizing the new I Pads, the accompanying smart pencil and Bluetooth keyboard. While many of the forms necessary for a complete foster care folder are currently unavailable, the ease of use in some areas has been a time saver. The I Pads are wi-fi compatible and each unit also has a data card from Verizon if wi-fi is unavailable. The I Pad has been very useful in keeping up with dictation, monthly contact records and family service agreements. They can also be used at the Henderson County Courthouse to complete work while the social workers are waiting for their cases to be heard. Their Outlook calendar can also be set up to sync with their agency provided phone to ensure all appointments are set up. Many social workers are currently training/practicing in the NC FAST Sandbox in preparation for the roll out for child welfare investigations and assessments into NC FAST on January 21st. Director McFalls reminded the board that a lot of research went into our decision to go with the I Pad's. County IT was very involved in looking at products and ensuring that HC DSS purchased the tool that would best help us have a successful NC FAST implementation. We committed to the HC Commissioners that we would not spend the allocated funds until we were assured that the State and NC FAST contractors were dedication to the product. Chair Hensley suggested that this information be shared with the Commissioners in the near future. Rachel went on to share that during recent NC FAST trainings with neighboring counties, several positive comments have been made about Henderson Counties overall readiness for NC FAST implementation and how the staff directly impacted are supporting each other and treating this as a positive experience.

Directors Report (Attachment II): Chair Hensley asked if there were any questions/comments regarding the submitted reports. Mrs. Smith asked about the modifications to the State/County MOU that required a new signature by the Commissioners on 12/12/18. Director McFalls stated that she appreciates that the State recognizes that their statistics are not valid, and work needs to be done to help both the State and the County to be able to come to the same numbers regarding growth measures. State consultants have not provided information to HC DSS as to areas we are excelling and areas that will require improvement.

Mrs. Smith also asked for background information regarding Crossnore. Director McFalls explained that Crossnore utilizes licensed groups homes and individual families for children in foster care placement. They are expanding into Henderson County and have hired Tonya Blackford, previously the Director of Safelight, to lead their team. They will help expand the number of therapeutic foster homes available in Henderson County. They currently have campus' in Boone and Winston-Salem. While they are currently not a clinical provider of services, with the elimination of congregate care providers, they will move to become a clinical provider to ensure payments as managed care becomes a reality in NC. The federal government has decided to stop paying for children in congregate care homes to prevent children from growing up in these homes. Director McFalls explained that we have used congregate care homes in the past for children that needed a higher level of therapeutic care than we had foster homes available, and if we had a sibling group of 3 or more, it was better to place them together in a congregate care facility over splitting them up to go into individual foster homes for short term placement. All funding will have to come from the County with no reimbursement from the State or the Federal government for any children placed in a congregate care that is not identified as a clinical provider.

Low Income Energy Assistance Program began for qualified applicants on December 1, 2018. To date not many applications have been received. The program eligibility will change on 1/1/19 and more county residents will be eligible to apply. That may cause an increase in lobby traffic and application processing among the IMC staff. Mrs. Morgan stated that the same clients apply for the program year to year and are aware of the guidelines. The Adult Services staff do a great job of referring their clients to the program.

Old Business:

- **DSS Board Vacancy:** The Social Services Commission has notified HC DSS that no action was taken during their last meeting to fill the appointment left by the resignation of Frank Wilson. The Commission does have an application and will put it on the agenda for their January 9, 2019 meeting. They will notify us as soon as an appointment has been made. Chair Hensley is going to reach out to our district representative on the Commission to see if she can gather any more information and will pass on the information to Director McFalls.

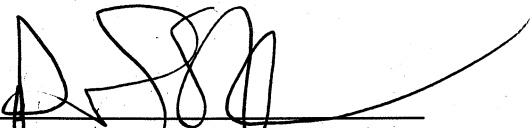
New Business:

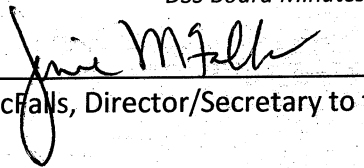
- **None**

Mrs. Smith made a motion at 12:52 pm to move the board meeting into a closed session, Vice-Chair Summey seconded the motion, all present were in favor and the motion carried.

The board meeting returned to open session at 1:32 pm on a motion from Vice Chair Summey, seconded by Mrs. Smith.

Next Meeting and Adjournment: Chair Hensley reminded the board that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 12:00 PM. Mrs. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vice-Chair Summey seconded the motion. All present were in favor, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:33 PM.



Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Chair

Jerrie McFalls, Director/Secretary to the Board

: JGM

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report (December 2018)
- II. Family First Prevention Services Act Letter from Dr. Mandy Cohen dated 11/5/18
- III. MOU Modification Letter from Michael Becketts dated 11/14/18
- IV. Employees of the Month (December 2018)
- V. Statistical Report (November 2017 – November 2018)
- VI. Program Administrators Report (October 2018)
- VII. FY18-19 5-Month YTD Report dated 12/14/18
- VIII. DSS Staff Committee Assignment Table (December 2018)