

Henderson County Department of Social Services



Henderson County Board of Social Services
1200 Spartanburg Highway Hendersonville, NC 28792
February 23rd, 2021 @ 12:00 PM

Agenda

- Call to Order.....Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Board Chair
- Public Input..... Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Board Chair
- Adjustments to the Agenda..... Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Board Chair
- Approval of the January 19th, 2020 Minutes*Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Board Chair
- Board Education – Fostering Hopes Presentation.....Alex Williams, Director of Fostering Hopes
- Reports (Questions Only)
- Director’s Rpt./Statistical Rpt./EOM.....Jerrie McFalls, Director
- Program Administrators Report..... Jillian Humphries, Joe Maxey, Lorie Horne
- Old Business
- COVID-19 Agency Impact Update.....Jerrie McFalls, Director
- New Business
- Director Recruitment Process.....Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Board Chair
- Adjournment (Next meeting: March 16th, 2021 at 12:00 PM)Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Board Chair

* Designates Board Action Necessary

Henderson County Board of Social Services Mission Statement

To provide services that will improve the safety, health, well-being, independence, and quality of life for the residents of Henderson County.

Henderson County Board of Social Services

February 23rd, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Board Chair Dr. Jennifer Hensley at 12:02 pm.

Board Members Present	Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Chair Melinda Lowrance, Vice-Chair Judy Smith, Member Margaret Stone, Member Josh Simpson, Member
Staff Leadership Present	Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board/Director Lorie Horne, Social Work Program Administrator Joseph Maxey Jr., Administrative Officer Jillian Humphries, Economic Services Program Administrator Karen Vale, Clerk to the Board
Guest	Alex Williams, President of Fostering Hopes

B. Public Input

None

C. Adjustments to the Agenda

Chair Hensley asked that a closed session pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11(a)(1) be added under "New Business".

D. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Hensley asked if there were any changes to the open session minutes from the January 19th, 2021 meeting, Mrs. Smith suggested several grammatical changes. Mrs. Stone made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected, Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. All Board members agreed, and the motion passed.

E. Board Education

Fostering Hopes Presentation

Dr. Hensley introduced Alex Williams, President of Fostering Hopes. Mr. Williams shared two videos about the program. He also shared that 30-35% of children coming into foster care in Henderson County are sent out of county for placement. Included are children placed in an approved relative placement (kinship) as well as children placed in approved foster homes, PRTF's, and group home facilities. Fostering Hopes entered into a contract with HC DSS on 2/1/21. This contract focuses on two main areas: recruitment/education of foster parents and the retention of foster parents. Mr. Williams explained to the Board that Fostering Hopes is not a licensing agency, their goal is to educate people about the foster care needs in the community. There are many avenues to help the foster care programs aside from becoming a licensed foster parent: respite care, sponsoring a foster child, assisting a meal train that has been organized to help a foster family, and inviting a speaker to your church to educate about the foster program. Mr. Williams believes that in two years HC DSS, in partnership with Fostering Hopes, will be able to drastically limit the number of children that are being placed out of county. The retention rate for licensed foster parents will also increase through the additional support

programs. Additionally, these changes will also ensure that less money is sent to out of county placements.

Dr. Hensley asked what the biggest reason is for children to be sent out of county for placement. Mr. Williams responded that the lack of homes to serve particular demographics of children: including teenagers, large sibling groups, and children that need a therapeutic placement. There are very few homes in Henderson County that are licensed therapeutic foster homes. Program Administrator Horne reiterated the two main reasons children in HC DSS custody are placed out of county is due to the level of care that child needs not being available in Henderson County and children are often placed with a family member that lives out of county. Dr. Hensley followed up her original question by asking what the goal is for Fostering Hopes regarding therapeutic homes in Henderson County. Mr. Williams responded by sharing that he will be meeting the HC DSS Supervisor Tina Morgan about how to get more foster homes in Henderson County licensed for therapeutic care. They will be exploring agencies that work with families to train them in this higher level of care and these homes can be licensed by the appropriate agency. Henderson County DSS cannot license therapeutic foster homes. Mr. Williams is contacting several agencies and exploring options that would increase the number of available homes for therapeutic foster care for the children that come into Henderson County DSS custody. In closing, Mr. Williams encouraged board members to go to their website, FosteringHopes.org, to learn more about their goals and contact information. Dr. Hensley thanked Mr. Williams for having the passion to do this work.

F. Reports

Director's Monthly Report (Attachment IV)

Dr. Hensley asked if there were any questions regarding the information provided in the Director's Report. Mrs. Stone requested information on the new board member training requirement that is part of Senate Bill 89. Mrs. Stone was unable to attend the training offered during the Social Services Institute her first year on the board, and there has not been another opportunity due the cancellation of the SSI in 2020 due to COVID precautions. For 2021 it appears the SSI will be conducted virtually, with opportunities for board members to attend. Director McFalls reminded the board that this legislation is still being considered, it has not become law. She encouraged board members to visit the NC Legislature website at ncleg.gov to check on the progress of these and any other bills of interest.

February Employees of the Month (Attachment VII)

Mrs. Stone asked if staff pictures could be placed alongside the narrative for each employee of the month to help with recognition. Karen will make that change for next month.

January 2020-January 2021 Statistical Report (Attachment VIII)

No Discussion

February Program Administrator's Report (Attachment X)

Chair Hensley asked if there were any questions and/or comments about the program administrator's report. She would like to know if there was any feedback/update from the meeting held on 1/26/2021 with DHHS staff, County Manager Steve Wyatt, Assistant County Manager Amy Brantley, HC

Commissioner Chair Bill Lapsley, Director McFalls, Program Administrator Jillian Humphries, and Program Managers Debby Freeman and Marlene Wilkerson regarding the REDA audit report. Director McFalls responded that no further information has been provided since the meeting. She also shared with the other board members that the REDA audit was a 10-month audit cycle for calendar year 2019 where the State reviewed 20 cases per month for 10 months. Overall, HC DSS has six errors with a total of \$253.00 that had to be paid back. Most errors involved staff not offering Family Planning Medicaid to clients. PA Humphries is working with staff to ensure this step is not missed in the future. Additionally, the Reasonable Compatibility Policy that was discussed in the meeting was sent out to all the counties in early February, after the meeting. Mrs. Stone asked if the results from the audit would be made public, Director McFalls responded that the State doesn't usually publish audit results, but we can check with the State and see if the results are available.

Vice-Chair Lowrance asked for an update regarding rental assistance funds for Henderson County. Director McFalls responded that she has reached out to Senator Chuck Edwards regarding an allocation for Henderson County. She believes we will see some funds but has not been given a specific dollar amount. Pisgah Legal Services and 211/United Way will oversee the disbursement of any funds received. Director McFalls added that a new State office has been created to monitor the disbursement of the funds to the counties.

Vice-Chair Lowrance asked about the vacancies in the Social Work – Foster Care job class. PA Horne responded that the vacancies had been filled, with a start date of 3/15/21. The filling of these positions as well as the vacant Social Work – Investigative/Assessment & Treatment – Floater position has created two vacancies in the Social Work – Investigative/Assessment & Treatment job class. A job announcement for those vacancies was published on 2/22/21.

G. Old Business

COVID-19 Agency Impact

Director McFalls shared that one staff person is currently out of the building on a 10-day quarantine, and one staff person returned to the building today. The management team is working on a plan to bring all staff back into the building safely. Approximately 55 staff members have received both shots of the vaccine. Staff on the A/B schedule or who wanted to work at home without a school or medical accommodation will be back in the building on 3/1/21. We are waiting to see the outcome of the HC School Board meeting on 3/8/21 to determine when the staff under a school accommodation will return. Vice-Chair Lowrance asked if there was a timetable for the remaining staff to be vaccinated. Director McFalls responded that staff are part of Phase 3 of the vaccination rollout, so any staff not yet vaccinated by that time will be able to secure appointments when Henderson County opens Phase 3. As a follow-up question, Vice-Chair Lowrance asked how often "foggers" are used in the building. Director McFalls responded that she is not aware of the County using "foggers" in the building.

H. New Business

Director Recruitment Process

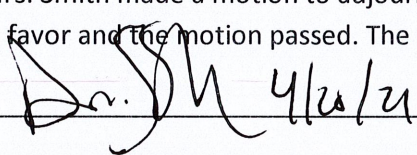
Chair Hensley, Director McFalls and County HR staff will review the current job description for the Director position. After initially planning to retire on 7/1/2021, Director McFalls has decided to delay her retirement until the agency is back on track after COVID.

Mrs. Stone made a motion at 12:55 PM to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of chapter 132 of the General Statutes; Vice-Chair Lowrance seconded the motion, all board members approved.

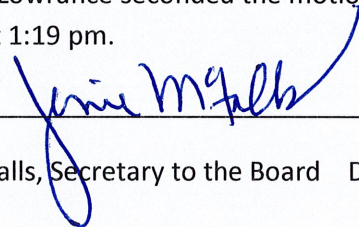
The Board returned to open session at 1:18 PM on a motion from Vice-Chair Lowrance, seconded by Mrs. Smith.

I. Adjournment

Mrs. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vice-Chair Lowrance seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:19 pm.



Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Chair Date



Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board Date

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report – February 2021
- II. Employees of the Month – February 2021
- III. Statistical Report – January 2020 – January 2021
- IV. Program Administrator's Report – February 2021
- V. Financial Report – 7-Month YTD

Monthly Director's Report to Board of Social Services



February 2021

Submitted by:
Jerrie McFalls, Director

~ The NC Legislature convened on January 13, 2021. Several bills have been introduced that could impact the Department and our clients.

- Senate Bill 36 COVID Relief Bill: This bill was passed in both chambers and signed by the Governor. It is now law. We are hopeful that Henderson County will receive an allocation for emergency rental assistance from the Federal allocation to the State of \$546,596,104.40. Counties and cities with a population of more than 200,000 received a separate allocation.
- Three bills were filed in the Senate on February 11, 2021:
 - S 88 (2021-2022) NC FAST CHILD WELFARE CASE MGMT/PED STUDY. AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS CHANGES REGARDING THE CHILD WELFARE CASE MANAGEMENT COMPONENT OF NC FAST, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM EVALUATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
 - S 89 (2021-2022) REGIONAL SUPERVISION/REFORM/CWTC. AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS PROVISIONS RELATED TO SOCIAL SERVICES REFORM AND MAKE APPROPRIATIONS TO TRANSITION TO REGIONAL SUPERVISION, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE NORTH CAROLINA CHILD WELL-BEING TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL.

If passed, this bill will: Amend GS 108A-9 to require members of the county board of social services to attend education and training sessions provided for new members during the first year they serve on the board, effective April 1, 2022. Requires all current county board of social services members to have participated by April 1, 2024.

Require the Division of Social Services to collaborate with key stakeholders, including the four specified entities to create formal education and training sessions for new county boards of social services members, including a segment on potential liabilities. Requires the sessions to be available statewide by September 1, 2021.

- S 90 (2021-2022) SOCIAL SERVICES REFORM/CWTC Recs. AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO CONDUCT VARIOUS STUDIES AND MAKE REFORMS TO IMPROVE SOCIAL SERVICES, THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, AND CHILD WELFARE SERVICES; TO IMPROVE INTERCOUNTY COLLABORATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES; AND TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE NORTH CAROLINA CHILD WELL-BEING TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL.

You can read these bills and any bill that has been filed by going to the NC Legislature website at ncleg.gov

~ NCACDSS has approved a change in their legislative advocacy strategies. Instead of contracting with a lobbyist, a contract with Cansler Collaborative Resources, Inc. (CCR) is underway. CCR will assist NCACDSS in developing and implementing strategies to deal with a changing service environment.

Employees of the Month: The February Employees of the Month list is attached.

FEBRUARY EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Kimya Dunson (IMC 2 - Family Programs Maintenance): "Although we've been dealing with unprecedented barriers over the last several months, Kimya has continued to keep up with her work. She has remained patient, consistent, and has graciously helped when needed without any complaints. She has kept a good attitude throughout the challenges that have been presented to us during this time."

Kerri Russell (SWS 3 - CPS Team 4): "Kerri is such a great support to her co-workers and social workers. She is easy to approach and she never minds to help with talking through situations that come up. She constantly helps with answering questions and if there is a time that she does not know the answer, she uses her investigative skills to get an answer. She advocates for the needs of her team and her co-workers; she comes prepared to meetings with thoughtful questions and she provides good feedback and has great insight."

Melissa Novack (Acct. Tech 3 - Administration): "Melissa maintains a relentlessly helpful and positive attitude in support of her co-workers. She always makes time for her teammates concerns, even when those concerns don't fall under her direct purview, offering to assist above and beyond to help resolve the issue. She is an asset to the agency and an example of excellence."



HENDERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
MONTHLY COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

PROGRAM AREA - MONTHLY CASE COUNT	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	% Change From Prior 12 Mths
Food Stamp (FNS) Cases						4897	5017	5275	5351	5111	5090	5258	5391	
FNS Apps Taken	380	288	536	553	257	228	254	304	273	375	391	304	269	-22.1%
Individuals Served						9956	10180	10635	10827	10275	10172	10543	10790	
Work First Employment Cases	10	9	10	10	6	4	4	5	6	7	7	9	7	-3.4%
Child Only Work First Cases	94	93	93	94	94	95	93	94	95	95	92	90	90	-3.7%
Crisis Heat/Cooling (CIP)	211	127	61	19	17	23	31	36	69	144	124	159	151	
Low Income Energy (LIEAP)	498	208	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	463	361	
Medical Assistance Cases ^{2&4}														
Participants						15770	15933	16334	16486	16655	16794	17019	17171	
Applications Received	640	461	553	598	362	394	433	370	393	421	457	487	511	10.1%
Medicaid Transports	2524	1945	2236	1383	579	1130	1152	1161	966	1168	778	1409	1121	
Individuals Transported	267	250	244	78	88	135	116	143	125	145	131	84	107	
Child Support Cases	2492	2495	2455	2458	2449	2413	2392	2397	2380	2365	2364	2368	2353	-2.7%
Child Support Collections	\$368,313.16	\$313,677.72	\$377,517.60	\$312,194.50	\$387,578.46	\$397,311.73	\$372,688.49	\$391,349.72	\$333,695.71	\$335,662.71	\$337,233.05	\$338,251.17	\$303,713.44	-14.6%
Child Day Care	526	574	618	618	618	463	461	470	608	418	418	452		
Child Day Care Expenditures ¹	\$241,977	\$270,416	\$279,391	\$449,954	\$470,338	\$295,885	\$289,095	\$268,179	\$268,179	\$199,026	\$231,033	\$216,700		
CPS Investigations Initiated	110	105	99	54	70	63	66	76	88	91	79	77	70	-14.1%
CPS Investigations Continuing	136	120	118	73	80	64	78	89	107	107	95	103	113	15.9%
CPS -In-Home Case Mgt	37	35	35	40	39	41	40	41	37	33	34	31	33	-10.6%
CPS-Children In Custody (0-18)	146	156	157	163	162	168	177	171	167	170	172	173	170	2.9%
CPS-Foster Care (age 18-21) ³	11	10	10	11	10	10	10	14	15	15	16	15	14	14.3%
APS Open Cases	33	30	14	15	25	19	26	23	23	46	49	37	57	101.2%
Spec. Asst. In-Home	129	125	123	124	124	127	126	123	122	123	126	126	127	1.7%
Guardianship Cases	25	25	25	26	26	26	25	25	25	25	24	25	25	-0.7%
In-Home Aid Services(Contract)	92	93	92	89	91	91	88	88	85	83	81	82	82	-6.7%

1 - New category as of 7/1/2014

2- New category as of 3/1/2015

3- New category as of 1/1/17

4- Medicaid # s revised beginning 7/2017

Program Administrators Report for February 2021

Social Work

Adult Services had another busy month in January. They receive 53 reports with 33 screened in for evaluation. Of these 33 screened in reports 9 were caretaker neglect, 20 self-neglect, 5 exploitation of asset and 1 exploitation of the person.

Currently we have four families in MAPP class, this class will be completed by March 4th and the next class will start in May.

We are excited about a new partnership with Fostering Hopes, a local non-profit. Fostering Hopes will be developing and implementing a recruitment strategy in partnership with the Department. The goal will be to increase the number of families interested in becoming licensed; with focus given to meeting specific needs around the ability to serve large sibling groups, teens and expanding diversity. Fostering Hopes will be working to develop and sustain community-based support programs specifically designed to support the work of foster parents. These support programs will include, but not limited to, resourcing of the existing Foster Care closet, meal trains, and parents' nights out. Fostering Hopes will also work with the Department to identify an appropriate partner to help support the work of licensing therapeutic foster parents within Henderson County. Our goal is to increase the number of foster families in Henderson County and decrease the number of children that are placed out of county.

The Foster Care unit participated in a IV-E and MAC (Medicaid Administrative Claiming) state monitoring in January. There were 10 IV-E cases and 4 MAC cases reviewed. All cases were found to have no errors, kudos to the foster care teams! They have also been busy completing a 100% internal review of all IV-E cases ahead of a pending Federal IV-E monitoring for the state sometime in the spring.

The Foster Care unit started the new year off with three vacancies and have filled all three positions. However, two of these positions were filled with internal applicants which then created two new openings in CPS, one investigative position and one in-home position. A vacancy announcement for these positions will be sent out by County HR in the next few days.

Economic Services

Food & Nutrition

- Due to ongoing COVID waivers, Food & Nutrition cases with 6 months certifications will be auto certified by the State through June 2021.
- The FNS Maintenance Team will continue to work certifications of 12 and 36 months.
 - In addition, the FNS Maintenance Team (given the decrease in work through June) will be the main contacts for LIEAP Pandemic payments, as well as ongoing LIEAP and CIP applications.
- Clients are continuing to get allotments up to the maximum amount for their household size. In addition, the maximum amount was temporarily increased by 15%.
- The State is working on continuing the P-EBT program for a limited time. This is the program that provides additional benefits to students receiving free or reduced lunch and have spent a part of this school year learning remotely.

COVID-19 Considerations

- All programs continue to have various waivers allowing easier processing of benefits. These mainly relate to telephonic interviews/signatures and client statement for verifications.
- We continue to restrict client access to the front lobby. Nearly all interactions can be completed via phone, text, or email. Occasionally, we need to see a client while they are here. In these cases, we use one of the front offices, utilizing social distancing and available sneeze guards on the table.
- In an effort to reduce contact between staff, around half of economic services staff have returned home to work remotely full time. The remaining staff are remaining in office by choice. All leadership remains in office unless there is an accommodation in place.

Administration

No report submitted

**Henderson County Department of Social Services
FY20-21 7 MONTHS YTD JAN21 - (022221)**

TARGET = 58.3%

DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL FY 12-13	ACTUAL FY 13-14	ACTUAL FY 14-15	ACTUAL FY 15-16	ACTUAL FY 16-17	ACTUAL FY 17-18	ACTUAL 2018-19	ACTUAL 2019-20	BUDGET 2020-2021	YTD SPEND 2020-2021	% SPENT	\$ UNSPENT
SALARIES - WAGES, OT, TEMP	6,675,430	6,822,428	7,179,068	7,179,338	7,477,098	7,553,754	7,849,280	8,076,196	8,601,836	4,728,324	55.0%	-3,873,512
DEFERRED COMP - SUPP, ITERS & 401K	519,736	551,487	591,834	563,817	636,219	654,785	708,049	833,486	1,039,219	550,735	53.0%	-488,484
INSURANCE - MEDICAL & DENTAL	1,845,802	2,079,280	2,089,895	2,050,190	2,160,256	2,243,185	2,287,467	2,099,836	2,504,138	1,242,272	49.6%	-1,261,866
UNEMPLOYMENT & WORKERS COMP	191,262	126,452	95,351	53,849	60,374	82,422	123,599	81,594	93,288	40,486	43.4%	-52,802
SOCIAL SECURITY (FICA)	485,558	495,573	527,147	519,084	540,337	545,069	566,159	582,366	661,300	339,831	51.4%	-321,469
STAFF TRAINING	22,972	23,460	21,363	29,320	43,424	49,668	52,019	34,265	70,000	19,401	27.7%	-50,599
STAFF	9,740,760	10,098,679	10,504,658	10,395,598	10,917,709	11,128,883	11,586,573	11,707,743	12,969,781	6,921,049	53.4%	-6,048,732
TECHNOLOGY (IT) - CAPITALIZED & NON-CAP	182,013	237,928	215,713	162,227	166,555	288,605	106,714	152,837	304,869	219,506	72.0%	-85,363
***SUPPLIES - OFFICE, CLING, FOOD, DP, FURNITURE & DUES	156,036	159,567	223,383	284,504	178,221	267,041	125,735	104,835	184,366	292,140	158.5%	107,774
TELEPHONE - AGENCY SYSTEM & STIPEND	110,054	118,303	123,525	80,537	103,696	97,738	111,656	147,477	149,663	70,178	46.9%	-79,485
POSTAGE	59,643	61,131	35,256	53,606	39,650	41,001	44,025	45,341	50,000	15,107	30.2%	-34,893
MAINT & REPAIR - BUILDING, GROUNDS & EQUIPMENT	8,488	2,791	17,437	4,397	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTED SERVICES	448,887	551,002	772,476	573,428	599,967	644,263	538,747	489,949	695,427	228,854	32.9%	-466,573
OUTSIDE SERVICES - PRINT'G, MED/LEGAL/PROF/RESEARCH/JUDICIAL/ADV	39,316	38,701	54,609	58,012	74,726	82,702	71,884	121,597	151,000	78,499	52.0%	-72,501
CLIENT TRAVEL ^B - MILEAGE, FUEL & VEHICLE EXPENSE	117,636	118,153	118,911	140,182	132,864	103,720	106,488	77,621	93,750	29,085	31.0%	-64,665
RENT (EQUIPMENT & PROPERTY)	83,680	80,989	85,660	74,450	43,343	43,368	39,061	32,617	82,000	13,559	16.5%	-68,441
INSURANCE/BONDING	122,750	104,118	119,193	106,257	103,321	106,953	100,722	95,452	100,279	98,735	98.5%	-1,544
GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE	28,800	28,800	28,800	32,800	40,800	35,699	26,400	26,400	42,000	15,400	36.7%	-26,600
FOSTER CARE TRAINING	5,657	4,499	5,122	8,070	5,479	4,358	6,882	6,929	12,000	1,278	10.6%	-10,722
ADMINISTRATIVE	1,180,947	1,268,053	1,584,370	1,416,243	1,322,067	1,426,843	1,171,599	1,148,218	1,560,485	842,835	54.0%	-717,650
TOTAL STAFF & ADMINISTRATIVE	11,103,719	11,604,661	12,304,742	11,974,069	12,406,331	12,844,331	12,864,886	13,008,797	14,835,135	7,983,390	53.8%	-6,851,745

Line Item Transfers

*** Includes \$2,770.50 for COVID-related supplies paid by Federal grant to the County.