

Henderson County Board of Social Services

July 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Director McFalls at 12:03 pm.

Board Members Present	Josh Simpson, Member Melinda Lowrance, Member Judi Smith, Member (via Phone) Rebecca McCall, Member
Staff Leadership Present	Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board/Director Lorie Horne, Social Work Program Administrator Joseph Maxey Jr., Administrative Officer Debby Freeman, Economic Services Program Administrator Deborah Johnson, Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk
Guest	None

B. Oath of Office

Director McFalls opened the Board meeting to order. Clerk Deborah Johnson administered the Oath of Office to member Josh Simpson. Mr. Simpson was reappointed by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners for another term.

C. Board Election

Director McFalls reminded the members that the Board elections would take place today. Director McFalls asked for nominations for Board chair. Member Melinda Lowrance nominated Josh Simpson as Chair. Member Rebecca McCall seconded the motion. Director McFalls polled all members and all members present voted yes. Member Josh Simpson was declared Chair. Director McFalls opened nominations for Vice-Chair. Member Rebecca McCall nominated Member Melinda Lowrance as Vice-Chair. Josh Simpson seconded the nomination. Director McFalls polled all members present. All members present voted yes. Member Melinda Lowrance was declared Vice-Chair. Director McFalls turned the meeting over to Mr. Simpson.

D. Public Input

None

E. Adjustments to the Agenda

None

F. Approval of Minutes

Chair Simpson asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the June 20th regular meeting, there were none. Mrs. Lowrance moved to approve the minutes as written, Mrs. Smith seconded the motion and the motion passed.

F. Reports

Director's Monthly Report (Attachment I)
Questions Only

Mr. Simpson inquired about the status of Medicaid Expansion. Director McFalls stated that the budget has not passed from the state of North Carolina. The expected vote on budget is Mid-August. We received some money from the state to start hiring for those positions needed for Medicaid Expansion. The training period is 6, 9, or 12 months for new Medicaid workers. We have posted our Medicaid expansion positions.

Tailored Plans were scheduled to roll out October 1st but have been delayed. The Secretary has not given a date that Tailored Plans will roll out. Tailored plans would take another group of people from NC Medicaid Direct, over to Tailored Plans, where they would have managed care. As of now, there isn't adequate contracts with Insurance providers and medical providers that will allow them to serve the people in Tailored plans. Services will continue as they are now.

House Bill 815, The Loving Homes Act, is a session law now. HB 674, Child Advocacy Centers is a law but is not effective until July 1, 2024. Mrs. Smith asked about the bill concerning the parent's bill of rights, SB 49. Director McFalls stated that bill had been vetoed by the Governor of North Carolina.

June Employees of the Month (Attachment II)

Questions only

None

May 2022 – May 2023 Statistical Report (Attachment III)

Questions only

None

June Program Administrator's Report (Attachment IV)

Mrs. Smith asked, at what age does child services end and adult services begin? Lorie Horne stated that at age 18, the child would fall under adult services. If a child turns 18 and has disabilities, adult services will continue services for that child.

Mrs. Lowrance asked Lorie Horne if Henderson County DSS was being affected by the shortage of social workers as reported as a statewide problem in North Carolina. Lorie Horne stated that we are being affected as we currently have ten vacancies in the social worker positions. Our case numbers currently are very high. The number of applicants we are receiving for the number of vacancies is very minimal. We are only receiving one or two applications per posting and they are not always qualified.

Director McFalls stated that we are sending our postings to the Schools of Social Work. We have a collaborative with the Schools of Social Work so that they do some of the training for DSS Social Workers, especially in Child Welfare.

Currently, our salaries are still below Transylvania County and Buncombe County. We recently lost another social worker to Transylvania County. Transylvania County was able to pay him three more dollars per hour. We offered a position to a Social Worker currently employed by Buncombe County, and we were six dollars below what she was being paid by Buncombe County currently.

Mrs. Lowrance asked if this was causing a hardship for our employees. Director McFalls stated that we are working to try to alleviate some of the workload. We recently hired two auxiliary workers to initiate cases and work on call.

Financial Report May 2023 (Attachment V)
Questions only

Finance has not completed the financials for FY 22-23

Personnel Report Fourth Quarter
Questions only (Attachment VI)

Director McFalls stated that the Personnel Report for the Fourth Quarter and Fiscal Year 22-23 was included in the Board Packet. The turnover rate to date is with retirements and without retirements. In Economic Benefits we had a turnover of fourteen people and in social work, a turnover of fifteen people.

Director McFalls called the Board's attention to the resignations and separations from this last quarter as most of those resignations only worked part of the year. They worked a very short period. One employee only worked one day. One employee had been here seven years but had to resign due to health reasons.

G. Old Business
DSS Staffing Update

Director McFalls stated that we currently have twelve vacancies. Ten of the vacancies are in Social Work. Two vacancies are in Economic Services.

Mr. Simpson asked if we could use unused salaries to increase pay more for social workers? Director McFalls stated that we hire based on internal equity. To be fair to all employees, we cannot give more money to bring someone in. Mr. Simpson inquired how Buncombe County can pay so much more than Henderson County. Director McFalls stated that each county is responsible for their own pay grade. Buncombe County is consolidated so they don't have to comply with OSHR. Some counties have consolidated DSS and Health, and then gone back. We are State supervised, but County managed.

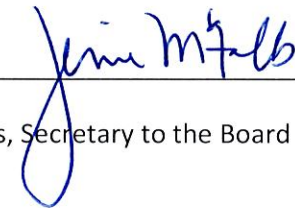
H. New Business
Energy Outreach Plan FY 23-24

Director McFalls reminded the Board that the energy plan is reviewed and approved by them each year. The plan outlines how funds will be distributed and what tools will be utilized to educate the citizens about qualifications and application process. Chair Simpson made a motion to approve the energy plan as written, Mrs. McCall seconded the motion. All board members present were polled, voted yes, and the motion passed. Chair Simpson and director McFalls will sign the plan and it will be forwarded to DHHS as required.

I. Adjournment

Chair Simpson asked if there were any additional items for discussion. There were none presented. Mrs. Lowrance made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. All present were polled and the motion passed. Mr. Simpson adjourned the meeting at 1:05p.m.

 8/15/23
Josh Simpson, Chair Date


Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board Date

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report – July 2023
- II. July Employees of the Month
- III. June– June 2023 Statistical Report
- IV. Program Administrators' Report – July 2023
- V. Financial Report – July 2023
- VI. Personnel Report – FY 22-23 Fourth Quarter