

## Henderson County Board of Social Services

### February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

#### A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Chair Simpson at 12:01 pm.

Board Members Present	Josh Simpson, Member Melinda Lowrance, Member Judy Smith, Member Stephen Gwaltney, Member Rebecca McCall, Member
Staff Leadership Present	Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board/Director Lorie Horne, Social Work Program Administrator Melissa Novack, Finance Officer Debby Freeman, Economic Services Program Administrator Deborah Johnson, Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk
Guest	None

#### B. Public Input

None

#### C. Adjustments to the Agenda

None

#### D. Approval of Minutes

Chair Simpson asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 regular meeting, there were none. Mrs. Lowrance moved to approve the minutes as written, Mr. Gwaltney seconded the motion and the motion passed.

#### E. Board Education

##### **Child Support Overview**

Darlene Tipton, Child Support supervisor, spoke to the board about Child Support Services. The unit is comprised of seven total staff. We provide services to child support to anyone in the county. It is not based on income. It must be a custodian of the child which means that if you are a caretaker of a grandchild, niece, or nephew you can still apply for services from Child Support through DSS. Those with a private court order already established for child support, can apply to Child Support Services, and can ask us to enforce the order. Child Support handles interstate cases also. We can ask another state to enforce child support orders.

Services we provide:

- \*We locate

- \*Paternity

- \*Establishment of orders

\*Enforce Orders

\*Collect on Orders

The Child Support unit currently has about 2000 cases, serving approximately 1800 children.

Child Support collections are approximately \$4 million per year. We collected \$3.85 million last year.

The collections go to Central Collections in Raleigh. They disperse the money via direct deposit or debit cards. Work first collections go back to the state.

Child Support does not deal with custody or visitation. Child Support requires wage garnishments for back payments. A lot of non-custodial parents change jobs frequently, so we must make changes for collections. Non-custodial parents are required to notify us of a change. As a federal program, we do have locate services to help locate non-custodial parents.

Child support attends court twice a month. The first day is called a negotiation day. Our county attorney, Sarah, is there also. We bring delinquent non-custodial parents in to show cause why they have not made their payments. The first court date also works with parents to try to get payment and establishments of orders. There is no judge present at the first meeting.

The court date is the hearing date with the judge. The judge is the only one who can deviate on ordered amounts of payments. Child Support's main objective is getting money to the children. Sometimes Child Support uses tax intercepts but tries not to use the pulling of licenses.

In Public assistance cases, Child Support reviews orders to see if income has changed and if the amount needs to be adjusted. With a change in circumstances, cases can be reviewed when custodial parents' circumstances change. Mrs. Tipton stated that there is a \$50 minimum order per month, even if there is no income that can be proven.

If clients get behind in child support payments, the federal government can garnish tax refunds. Child Support can do liens on savings accounts to get back payments.

When clients apply for services, if they are a nonpublic assistance client, there is a \$25 application fee. That fee can be reduced to \$10 if they are below the poverty line. There is no fee if the client is on public assistance. Clients can apply on-line on the state website and apply at DSS.

## F. Reports

### **Director's Monthly Report (Attachment I) Questions Only**

Mr. Simpson asked if limited staff in nursing home monitoring is affecting our Adult Services. Director McFalls stated that the state does monitor our nursing homes so if they have limited personnel, they are not able to monitor as closely as needed, incidents can occur that could increase adult protective reports.

Mrs. Lowrance asked Director McFalls if she attended the Partnership for Health discussing youth behavioral health. Director McFalls stated that she was not able to attend but Libby Myers, Program Manager, attended. Director McFalls asked Jodi Grabowski to add the Board members that requested to be added to the email group.

**January Employees of the Month (Attachment II)**

**Questions only**

None

**December 2022 – December 2023 Statistical Report (Attachment III)**

**Questions only**

None

**January Program Administrator's Report (Attachment IV)**

**Questions only**

None

**Financial Report December 2023 (Attachment V)**

**Questions only**

None

**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Personnel Report**

**Questions only**

None

**G. Old Business**

**DSS Staffing Update**

Director McFalls stated that we currently have fourteen vacancies. Two vacancies in Social Work, ten vacancies in Economic Services, one Administrative Assistant 2 and one Processing Assistant three. We have three new employees scheduled to begin work on Monday. If the scheduled new hires come Monday, we will be down to twelve openings including Darlene's retirement.

**Medicaid Expansion**

Program Administrator, Debby Freeman, stated that we have 2570 MXP cases as of February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Case workers have an average 1078 cases per month that must be recertified. Only 11% of those certifications went through straight through processing. What doesn't go straight through, the workers have to investigate and key the information to be approved or denied.

**H. New Business**

**Budget Update**

Director McFalls stated we received our budget estimates from the State February 15th. We will be meeting with county finance on February 22nd. As Medicaid numbers increased during the pandemic, so have food stamps. Our state consultant was on site at the beginning of February. She showed us the new data base that the state has developed to report the number of cases per county and the number of cases that are recommended per case worker. According to the state representative, our staff has more than twice as many cases as they should. Waivers will be ending

that allow electronic signature and require an interview. This will increase the amount of work per case.

We will be asking for additional food stamp workers. We will be asking for three new IMC 2 positions and three new IMC 1 positions. We would get 50% reimbursement for workers. Food stamps is not a capped program, but the state has estimated that that benefits will go up 5 million dollars this upcoming year. The number of applicants is increasing again.

Due to the high number of cases per worker, it increases the chances for an error. If there is an error, the client must pay back the benefit they received even if the error is due to worker error. The client must pay back the funds, not DSS.

We are working on getting the numbers together to reconcile what will be needed for the budget to ask for additional positions.

Mr. Gwaltney asked that the federal money reimbursement be made available to the board. The board requested that the budget be available electronically before the next board meeting.

**DSS Elected Board Member**

Director McFalls informed the board that Judy Smith's position will be ending in June. Clerk Deborah Johnson will email board members the Board Nomination forms.

**Closed Session**

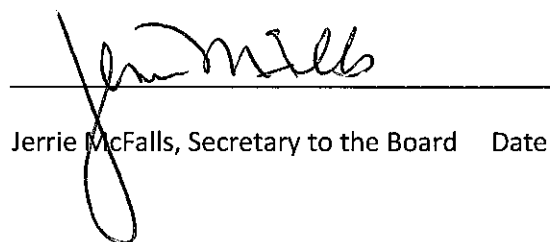
Chair Simpson made a motion for the board to go into closed session. Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. The board went into closed session at 1:03 p.m.

1. **Adjournment**

Chair Simpson asked if there were any additional items for discussion. There were none presented. Chair Simpson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Judy Smith seconded the motion. All present were polled and the motion passed. Chair Simpson adjourned the meeting at 1:23 pm.

  
Josh Simpson, Chair

3/10/24  
Date

  
Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board Date

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report –February 2024
- II. February Employees of the Month
- III. Statistical Report – January 2024
- IV. Program Administrators' Report –February 2024
- V. Financial Report – January 2024
- VI. 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Personnel Report