

**DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**Minutes**  
**January 23, 2013**

The Durham County Board of Social Services held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 23, 2013 9:00 a.m., at 220 East Main Street in conference room 609 Right. The following DSS Board Members were in attendance: Chairman Newman Aguiar, Vice Chair Dr. Tara L. Fikes, Helen J. Berry, Commissioner Wendy Jacobs and Jane Volland.

The DCDSS Department was represented by the following: Director Michael Becketts, Renee Boston, Cynthia Cason, Pinky Davis-Boyd, Linda Hicks, Betty Hughes, Marie Johnson, Victor Isler, Toni Pedroza, Lynn Thomas, Rhonda Stevens, Catherine Williamson-Hardy, Bob Wallace, Jovetta Whitfield and Montrella Springfield.

Commissioner Michael Page, Deputy County Attorney Cathy Moore, Deputy County Attorney Carol Hammett, Assistant County Attorney Danielle Briggs and Assistant County Attorney Kathy Everett-Perry attended the Board meeting.

Board Chair Newman Aguiar called the meeting to order. Chair Aguiar welcomed Commissioner Wendy Jacobs to the DSS Board. Brief introductions were given by attendees.

**Public Comments**

No public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chair Tara L. Fikes offered the motion for approval of the minutes from December 19, 2012 meeting. Board member Jane Volland seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

**Director's Report - Michael Becketts**

Director Becketts provided a written report with highlights and challenges over the past month along with the DSS Action Items Report.

- A meeting was held with Food and Nutrition Services Staff to discuss the impact of NC FAST. Meetings will be held daily with FNS staff until major issues are resolved.
- Staff had an opportunity to complete a survey issued by Durham County. Two hundred fifty DSS staff completed the survey. DSS fell below the average in ten areas. There were concerns about the low participation from staff. The results were distributed to the DSS Board and Senior Leadership. The County-wide results will be available shortly.

#### Presentation to Commissioner Michael Page

Chair Aguiar welcomed Commissioner Michael Page to the meeting. Chair Aguiar recognized the commitment and support to DSS during Commissioner Page's tenure on the DSS Board and Board of County Commissioner's Chairman. A plaque was presented to Commissioner Page on behalf of the DSS Board and Social Services. Other DSS Board Members commended Commissioner Page for his work. Commissioner Page thanked the DSS Board and staff.

#### Child Care Priorities

Director Becketts met with David Reese, Executive Director of the East Durham Children's Initiatives (EDCI). They are looking at several partnerships to support EDCI. One is supporting a State grant application, along with creating a priority area on the wait list in DSS Child Care Subsidy. Expanding the priority list has to come back to the DSS Board for approval. Director Becketts will contact David Reese and invite him to the March DSS Board Meeting.

#### Medicaid Expansion

A Memorandum on Medicaid Expansion is in the board packet. The deadline to submit a letter of support has passed. Under the Affordable Care Act, more people will be eligible for Medicaid which will cause increase caseloads in Medicaid. If the Medicaid Expansion is rejected low income citizens will not receive Medicaid. A letter of support will be drafted from the DSS Board.

#### FY 2013/2014 Budget

Ms. Pedroza has scheduled budget training for the DSS Board on February 6, 2013. The deadline is March 8, 2013. The DSS Board has scheduled a special meeting on February 22, 2013 to review the FY 2013/2014 budget.

#### **DSS Board Report - Chair Newman Aguiar**

a. Disproportionality Minority Conference (DMC)- Board Member Jane Volland

The DMC Conference is scheduled for January 25, 2013 at Durham Public School Staff Development Center. Community leaders will be participating on panels and workshops will be available. The information is on the website.

b. Open Meeting Statues - Assistant County Attorney Danielle Briggs

The DSS Board requested clarity in areas of communication as it relates to Open Meeting Laws. Assistant County Attorney Briggs conveyed the statues and made suggestions to the DSS Board. The DSS Board may consider implementing work sessions and look into phone conferences. If work sessions and phone conferences are implemented, media advisories are required for public notice and minutes recorded.

c. Letter of Support

A letter will be drafted from DSS to support a grant application from the Durham County Criminal Justice Resource Center to the Governor's Crime Commission.

d. Assistant Director's Reports

Engage staff in conversation and report on challenges and triumphs at the board meeting. This will give the DSS Board an opportunity to hear from staff and better understanding within the agency. Programs within each division will report on a monthly rotation. Assistant Directors will continue to provide written reports.

**Assistant Directors' Update**

a. **CSE, Finance and Facility Support-Antonia Pedroza**

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

The DSS Board is requesting sharing the challenges and triumphs with the Budget.

b. **Family Economic Independence-Rhonda Stevens**

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

Informed the DSS Board of challenges and triumphs in Child Care Subsidy with the waiting list, more information on Medicaid and Food and Nutrition changes with NC FAST and the No Face to Face Interview pilot.

Ms. Stevens will schedule time to update board members Commissioner Wendy Jacobs and Helen Berry on NC FAST.

Director Becketts attended the Board of County Commissioners Work session and informed them of the challenges with the implementation of NC FAST.

There will be a roundtable discussion at the Durham Congregation in Action (DCIA) Conference on February 26, 2013.

**c. Customer Accountability and Program Development-Catherine Williamson-Hardy**

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

**d. Family Safety and Permanence-Jovetta Whitfield**

A written report has been submitted to the DSS Board.

A triumph for Family Safety and Permanence is the LINKS Coordinator working with two youth transitioning out.

A challenge is vacancies in Child Protective Services. The goal is to have all interviews completed by the end of February. Positions are being shifted in this area. Implemented case rotation assignment. Vacancies in other areas are due to staff retiring.

Foster homes licensing currently have 16-20 potential families in process. Assessments should be completed and forwarded to the State. Staff are pushing recruitment in churches.

Vacancies

Director Becketts provided a detailed vacancy list.

There are challenges with recruitment which include applicants declining offers due to salary. The Board requested information on hiring range.

Chair Aguiar inquired about additional questions or concerns requiring the DSS Board attention.

Board member Jane Volland moved to adjourn to closed session.

The Board will adjourn to Closed Session to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee, pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) and to consult with the County Attorney's Office regarding the matter of Gerri Robinson vs. County of Durham et. al pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3).

Commissioner Wendy Jacobs seconded and the board moved into closed session with a unanimous vote at 10:59 am. The Board returned to open session, no action taken. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Chairperson

---

Date

---

Secretary to the Board

---

Date