

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, June 19, 2018, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Elsie B. Mackie; Mr. John Sparkman; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Director.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order. Ms. Major stated Mr. Crockett would be absent as he was picking up his grandchildren. Ms. Gordy gave the Invocation.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of May 15, 2018**. On motion by Mr. Sparkman, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Minutes of May 15, 2018 were approved as written. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Approve Amended Minutes of April 17, 2018**. On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Amended Minutes of April 17, 2018 were approved as written. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Presentation by Benefits Intake Unit Supervisor April Major**. Chairman Reneta Major welcomed Benefits Intake Unit Supervisor April Major. Ms. Major stated she was the Intake Supervisor and she had six Benefit Program Specialists under her and one Fraud Investigator. She further stated they manage the SNAP/TANF/MEDICAID programs and take new applications. They also do fraud and foster care programs. Ms. Major stated she had prepared booklets for the Board Members. She further stated TANF applications have to be processed within thirty days. SNAP applications are to be processed within thirty days. Mrs. Weakley stated Ms. Major did not need to assume everyone knew the meanings of SNAP and TANF. Ms. Major stated TANF was our cash assistance program and stood for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and SNAP was formerly our Food Stamp program. As stated the TANF applications have to be processed within thirty days and SNAP applications processed within thirty days unless they are expedited. We then screen them by shelter expenses vs. income and resources putting their application in front of someone else who had also applied. Medicaid applications are to be processed within 45 days unless they are pregnancy related and then they are processed within ten days provided we have everything that we need and the disability related Medicaid applications could be pended up to 90 days waiting for a disability decision from Social Security or Richmond.

Ms. Major stated she wanted to give the Board Members some numbers for the month of May for the amount of applications they processed in each of the programs. TANF brought in nine applications and as of June 15th we have had ten so far so we have already passed our number for May.

For SNAP in May we brought in 105 applications and 40 of those were expedited. In June so far we brought in 78 and 29 of those were expedited. Medicaid brought in 74 applications for May and for the month of June through June 15th we brought in 51 applications. Ms. Major stated she cannot say enough about her team because they are doing all of the hard work. When we are given an opportunity to talk about what we do we are readily available so she decided to do a newsletter so everyone could see and read about her unit. She stated they spend a lot of time at the agency with each other and we have become a family. Our Fraud Investigator Frances Bailey had her baby and she has been out since May 15th. Investigations have been ongoing and since she has been out, Ms. Major had initiated 24 fraud investigations – 13 of those have been closed. The amount of TANF overpayments was \$5,516 and we saved \$2,752 in TANF. The amount of SNAP overpayment was \$10,887 and the amount we saved in SNAP was \$5,642. The whole team has gone out on investigations. Cruz, Bennett, Santos and Lewis thus far have been out and the others are prepared to go out on investigations as well. Cooling started June 15th and

every application that requires a fan or an air conditioning unit we investigate. I could not do it without my team so they are helping me get it done. Mr. Sparkman said he noticed Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon perk up when Ms. Major mentioned the savings.

Ms. Major stated she was really excited that the Board had taken an interest in what they did as a unit and she appreciated the opportunity to go before the Board. She asked if anyone had any questions.

Ms. Gordy said she appreciated the newsletter as she liked to read the articles when she went home.

Mrs. Mackie then stated they were just doing intake and then passing the applications to the ongoing unit. Ms. Major stated that was correct. Mrs. Mackie then asked if all applications were up to date and everything was going well. Ms. Major stated they have issues with pending cases because it is a VaCMS issue and has nothing to do with workers. Mrs. Mackie stated that had not changed a lot.

On behalf of the Board Ms. Major thanked Ms. April Major for her presentation.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Adult Abuse Prevention Month**. Mrs. Weakley stated May was Adult Abuse Prevention Month and the APS unit was involved in two activities. One was on Chincoteague – the 18th Annual Older American Extravaganza and luncheon and there were 300 attendees. The second activity was our Adult Services Supervisor Nadine Greenley and Family Service Specialist Ill Bessie Floyd participated in that and passed out pillboxes to everyone who went. Next year we will do something else. They did a community awareness thing on Chincoteague and that was of May 16th. We also had the event at the agency on May 16th and a couple of Board Members were present. She handed out the purple flashlights and stated she also had one for Mr. Crockett in case anyone would see him. We had the Regional Specialist come and give an overview of adult services. We had 50 people in attendance which included some law enforcement, hospital staff, nursing facility staff, community outreach workers, Hospice staff, home health and personal care agencies and a couple of Board Members. It was a nice way for the community to learn more about what we do.

Mrs. Weakley stated she was sure the Board had seen the sign for APS and the purple pinwheels that were displayed by the front door. She doesn't know if they have decided what they want to do next year but they might build on what they did this year.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 7 – No Fraud Report**. Ms. Major stated Benefit Intake Supervisor April Major had given us a report.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – Director's Notes**. Mrs. Weakley stated in the past month she attended the Purdue Community luncheon; the APS "Faire" here at the agency; the CPMT (Community and Policy Management Team) meeting audit which went better than the last one; however, it wasn't great. Mrs. Weakley stated they had anticipated that would occur as we had not been able to do everything requested. Ms. Major inquired whether the cases pulled were from the local DSS agencies or other agencies. Mrs. Weakley stated the auditor randomly pulled cases but she tried to make it even between cases from Accomack and Northampton. It ended up being more Accomack cases pulled because ESCSB and Juvenile Services cover both Counties. We listed them as the agencies that represented the cases and did not necessarily say this one was in Accomack or Northampton. Mrs. Weakley stated she believed

when we are able to hire a CSA Coordinator, it will make things better. Up to this point we have not had anyone to go and pull records, look at them and make sure everything is there. A number of things were missing in the records and the Specialist is going to give us a list of the items missing and give us an opportunity to fix the problems.

Mrs. Weakley stated she attended the D-SNAP Conference (Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program) in Virginia Beach and it was overwhelming. They had people from the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, West Virginia and Florida that all had to deal with disasters and implement the disaster food stamp program. They spoke with us about the difficulties they ran into and the problems that occurred. She was not really sure about how to plan for all of those things. For example, in the Virgin Islands there were a couple of things they did not predict. One-third of their staff was killed during the event so they were already down staff members when it came to implementing the program. Also, another issue - probably what we would have to deal with on Tangier Island - is their backup was to fly items into Puerto Rico but that was hit two days after the Virgin Islands and it was difficult getting supplies to them. A complicated thing was this agency is expected to continue to run the Child Protective and Adult Protective Services programs like normal even in a disaster. We all know when people are under stress they are more likely to abuse the elderly or children so we have to keep those programs running. She thought the D-SNAP program catered mostly to people already on assistance; however, that is not correct. D-SNAP is for everyone who is not on assistance but had their food destroyed in the event. This cannot be up and running until power is restored and if there is no grocery store available, it doesn't matter because they cannot get them.

Mrs. Weakley was further informed DSS is not only responsible for running the D-SNAP program but also is responsible for all volunteers who come into the area and all volunteers who make donations, etc. Even if we do not lose any staff in the event, we still do not have enough staff to cover everything. She will be in the process of working with Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator Doug Jones so we will know how to handle and respond to it. Some of the people who spoke stated West Virginia was prone to flooding which also applies to the Shore. It did not occur to her that when we have flash flooding all of the bacteria is disturbed and lots of people get sick. They had a lot of people lined up to volunteer; however, a lot of them got sick.

They had a contingency plan but you never know when someone is going to get sick. Florida representatives stated when they got hit they opened at 7 AM in the morning and people lined up at 6 AM and they closed at 6 PM at night; however, everyone was not seen. The second day people showed up at 5 AM and some did not get seen so the third day he said people showed up at 4 AM and it was the last day they ran it at that location as they move to different localities.

Mrs. Weakley stated we would be redoing our Disaster Plan and meeting with Mr. Doug Jones about how to handle the pieces that currently fall on our agency when we do not have the staff to cover everything. In August Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon will be attending a meeting explaining how to run everything at the agency plus paying staff who will be working from 7 AM in the morning until night in the event of a disaster.

Mrs. Weakley then stated she had attended a Regional Director's meeting. The big topic was Medicaid expansion and we still do not know exactly when that will start and what the requirements will be. We have already started getting phone calls; however, we cannot tell people when we will start taking

applications. The State had initially stated they would give us a six month notice and we would probably start in January 2019 so she expects to hear something soon.

Mrs. Weakley stated she also attended the CPMT meeting.

Mrs. Weakley stated at 1 PM that day the Eastern Shore Regional Director Jo Ann Wilson-Harfst and the Regional Specialists for each of the Child Welfare programs would be on site to review everything we are doing in those programs.

Mrs. Weakley stated she inadvertently forgot to put on the Agenda that we had a Parent Engagement Workshop with parents and families at ACDSS on May 22, 2018. We had thirty people who attended for pre-school employees and child care vendors and we had a good turnout.

On June 13, 2018 we participated in the Kids Count on the Eastern Shore Forum. We had 125 people attend and we used it as an opportunity to let people know we need foster parents and hopefully do some recruiting. Accomack County ranks 125 out of 133 Virginia Counties on four dimensions of child well-being which is not a good statistic. The forum is to help us look at how we can make things better.

Ms. Major stated she was in attendance and it was a good forum and an eye opening experience.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 9 - May's QAA (Quality Assurance and Accountability) Review**. Mrs. Weakley stated this was also in reference to the Child Welfare programs that occurred on May 9, 2018 but we did not get the report back until this month. The Specialist thanked us for our hospitality and our consistent and timely completion of the structured decision making tools - which pilot started back in 2006-2007. It was an attempt to address issues in child welfare that seemed to result in more children of color coming into foster care than white children. It seemed the entire child welfare system was more punitive on more African-American families than white families and workers were unintentionally making decisions that made that happen. Structured decision making evened the playing field and there is actually a program embedded in the OASIS program where child welfare documents everything. It takes each worker through a list of questions that have to be answered. At the end it tells workers whether the case should be opened for services. This takes the entire race issue out of the decision process and puts it on researched based questions. If these things are true you need to open this case for services and if not true, you do not need to do this. Not everyone in the State is using it or using it consistently.

The Specialist noted there have been a couple of instances not at ACDSS but across the State where people have actually made the decision and then gone back and tried to manipulate the tool to justify the decision they made. She noted we have been very good at completing the tool consistently and timely. In addition, she noted all of the CPS family assessments and CPS ongoing files she had observed were in consistent order which made it easier for her to review. She reviewed 10 CPS family assessment/investigation cases and 5 CPS ongoing cases and noted seven of the family assessment investigations and four of the CPS ongoing cases had no errors at all. The other errors were mostly documentation issues.

Ms. Major inquired how the transcription services were working. Mrs. Weakley stated some days it is working better than others. We do have some concerns as we have one worker who has a heavy accent and his stuff is not coming

back clearly and it is creating some issues for him. The APS workers like it better than the CPS workers. They are getting used to it. There were problems with there being a big delay when information called in and when it was returned. We thought it had been rectified but they said it was a problem with our email system. A lot was going into spam when they were trying to return the work back to workers or disappearing into cyber land. They said if you did not get it back in a timely manner – 24 hours – you should go to the transcription site and see if it was there. It seemed to resolve the problem but in the past week or so there has been another delay. The workers who use it seem to like it but we have had to convince workers to break the habit of writing it all down before they call it into the system. We have signed off on a couple of evaluations that this is the goal for the next year to learn to do it without writing it down first.

Mrs. Mackie stated she understood why some workers do it as you want to be sure you include everything but it does double their work. Mrs. Weakley stated at the moment we are at the learning curve piece not sure what to do about the accent thing. She has spoken with Carl Ayres at the State level as he is the main person with the transcription. He said he was going to look into it but she has not seen him to mention it again.

Ms. Major stated the State has spent a lot of money on the program and they want agencies to use it. Mrs. Weakley stated they had stated there would be consequences if we did not use it. They did not identify what the consequences were.

Ms. Major stated one of the things NCDSS has been doing is the person who uses the transcription services the most is recognized as the "Transcriptionist of the Month." Mrs. Weakley stated that was a good idea.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 10 - Library of Virginia (Certificate of Records Destruction) – Benefit Case Records (Closed/Deceased); Incident Reports; Grievances; Workman's Compensation – Purge – ACTION.** Mrs. Weakley stated the files dated back to 1988. On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, the Board voted unanimously to destroy the above records. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 11 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon.** Ms. Harmon stated we have closed out the Fiscal Year. We had a balance left in our administrative line. The month of May was the last month of the Fiscal Year and for the month of May our Total Expenditures were \$372,377.89. Our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$575,607.96 and our Total Local Balance to Date was \$203,891.04. We spent 86.56% of the budget for the year. Ms. Major inquired whether we had to return any money. Ms. Harmon stated they take everything that is left over.

On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, the Board went into Closed Session, for the purpose of discussing VA Adoption Assistance Agreement Case #208861310 and Fostering Futures Agreement Case #20166030, as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3712.

On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Board returned to Open Session. On motion by Ms. Mackie, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Board confirmed the matters discussed in Closed Session (Mrs. Mackie – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes).

On motion by Mr. Sparkman, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board approved the following (Mrs. Mackie – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes):

- I. VA Adoption Assistance Agreement Case #208861310
- II. Fostering Futures Agreement Case #20166030

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, the meeting adjourned at 10:46 A.M.

APPROVED: **C. Reneta Major**_____

ATTEST: **Vicki J. Weakley**_____