

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, November 20, 2018, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Chairman; Ms. Reneta Major, Vice-Chairman; Ms. Elsie B. Mackie; Mr. John Sparkman; Mr. Robert B. Martin; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary. Mr. Robert Crockett was unable to attend the meeting.

Ms. Gordy called the meeting to order. Mr. Martin gave the Invocation.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of November 20, 2018.** On motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, the Minutes of November 20, 2018 were approved as written.

Ms. Gordy continued to **Item 4 – Introduction of New Employees: Brittany White – Benefit Program Specialist II – Eff. 11/1/18 and Shannon Phillips – Benefit Program Specialist II – Eff. 11/16/18.** Mrs. Weakley introduced Mrs. Brittany White who had previously been an emergency worker in our Energy Assistance Unit but now she was a Benefit Program Specialist II and Mrs. Shannon Phillips Benefit Program Specialist II. Mrs. Mackie inquired whether Mrs. Phillips was in the Families and Children’s Unit supervised by Mrs. Michelle Hart. Mrs. Weakley then stated both new employees were in the Adult Benefit Unit supervised by Gar Kellam. The Board Members welcomed them to the Agency.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 5 – Fraud Report.** Ms. Gordy inquired if there were any questions relative to Fraud Investigator Frances Bailey’s report. Mr. Sparkman stated he had a question. He said the report was longer than normal and there was a statement about “debt collection” and having to coordinate with the State. Mrs. Weakley stated when they went into the new computer system they didn’t initially include all of the fraud information and it was a little confusing. The State is now in the process of fixing that. There have been some things we have had to do manually and the new document imaging system should, but doesn’t, allow them. We are trying to get this issue resolved.

Mr. Martin inquired about the “savings” statement on the fraud report and whether that was money we get back or money we haven’t spent. Mrs. Weakley stated it is a combination of both. Some clients come on a monthly basis and pay back money owed to us or sometimes it is recouped from the money they currently get; i.e., Food Stamps are reduced.

Mrs. Mackie stated the Board had heard reports from all Supervisors but she thought it would be nice if our new Fraud Investigator Frances Bailey could give a report after the first of the year. Mrs. Weakley stated she would speak with Mrs. Bailey about doing a presentation.

Ms. Major stated if Mrs. Bailey is doing the “front end” part of fraud and we delivered the benefit we would save the agency money. Mrs. Weakley stated our previous Fraud Investigator Jack Thomas initiated, during the Energy Assistance cooling season, a home visits to homes of clients who requested an air conditioner. If the client already had an air conditioner at his/her residence, that saved the expense of that unit, but it would not be money coming back to the agency as we stopped it prior to the air conditioner being installed.

Ms. Gordy continued to **Item 6 – Director’s Notes.** Mrs. Weakley stated she attended an HR Webinar on management tools. She further stated the State is starting to send Directors more statistical information on whether the agency is completing tasks in a timely manner; i.e., evaluations and all employees are in our LETS system and appropriately connected with worker numbers, etc. They are paying close attention to these issues and are sending monthly reports, rating agencies 1, 2 or 3.

Mrs. Weakley further stated there had been glitches with the system; i.e., anyone volunteering or doing an internship had to be put into the system; however, they do not have an evaluation (EPPE). The system currently is unable to differentiate between interns/volunteers, emergency hires and employees, so we were being marked down for not entering an evaluation or probationary period for all employees. The State is trying to work out these glitches. Those agencies receiving a score of "3" would be contacted by State HR to determine what needs to be done to fix the errors.

Mrs. Weakley stated she attended the State DSS Board meeting and they approved Accomack DSS to be partially deviating, on the weather and holiday schedule. We will not have the official paperwork about the approval until after their next meeting which will be held in January 2019.

Mrs. Weakley also attended and helped facilitate CPMT training to help case managers to get back in line with concerns identified on the CSA audit; a regular CPMT (Community Policy and Management Team) meeting; an Emergency CPMT meeting. She stated a large volume of ACDSS staff attended the ACES trauma training, held by Healthy Communities, which encourages all of us to recognize that both employees and non-employees have been exposed to some type of trauma in their lives and that it impacts the way they interact with others. This trauma contributes to why clients are angry when they walk through the front door, before they have talked with us. We anticipate there will be some legislation and some policy changes surrounding the trauma informed care as this is a State DSS concern.

Mrs. Weakley thanked the Board Members for attending the Board training. She also attended the DSS Commissioner's listening session at NCDSS concerning opioids and other substances. We anticipate seeing some policy changes surrounding this issue. We, in Accomack, have not seen the kind of impact of opioids as they have seen in other areas of the State. Some areas have seen a 20% increase in their foster care caseloads due to opioid issues; however, we have not seen any increase, at this time.

Mr. Sparkman inquired whether the State is leaning towards drug screenings for welfare recipients. Mrs. Weakley stated she does not think so, but we do have certain restrictions on what benefits clients can receive if they have been convicted of a drug offense. We do drug screen families we work with, especially if we have their children in foster care and there is a substance abuse concern. We have an agreement with ESRH to assist in this endeavor.

Mrs. Weakley stated she had also attended the VLSSE (Virginia League of Social Services Executives) conference. She stated they discussed many issues and she will be discussing some of these issues at future board meetings. This would include putting some protocols in place in the event Board Member was investigated by the agency for child or adult abuse. She gave an example of an incident that occurred in another locality, and the difficulty they had resolving the issue, because they had no protocols in place. We are already covered in some areas; i.e., some agencies do not have any rules for attendance, but Accomack County has already put these expectations in place. Mr. Sparkman asked if some of the protocols would go through the County Board of Supervisors. Ms. Major stated yes and no as this Board has jurisdiction about making calls. She knew the County had a blanket policy but these would come before Social Services. Mrs. Weakley stated every new employee has to complete the Child Abuse form to determine whether they have ever been convicted of child abuse in the past, but we had never

required that of the ACDSS Board. This is something that the State feels we should look into.

Ms. Major stated she and Ms. Gordy sit on the Eastern Shore Area on Aging Board and this was something they have been doing plus fingerprinting. This is nothing out of the ordinary for Boards to do. Mrs. Weakley stated the possibility of anyone related to someone on this Board is never going to be investigated by CPS (Child Protective Services) is probably wishful thinking. Unfortunately, if you have something like this to happen, that Board Member could be part of the discussion and it could compromise the agency. The suggestion is that now is the time to do this, as there has not been an issue. Mrs. Weakley stated she would pull all of the pieces together so the Board can discuss it the first of next year.

Mrs. Weakley then stated we had a Child and Family Services Review on October 18, 2018. They come to the agency periodically and review cases; this time they only reviewed one case. They went to the client's home and talked with the client and with the foster parent in that situation. They get everyone's perspective and determine whether we did everything correctly. We did very well on that review. She further stated they were at the Agency this morning reviewing 16 additional cases. Part of the issue is with IV-E, which is part of the Social Security Act, and has paid for certain children in foster care. There will be a Federal Review coming up in 2019. We are in the period of review at the present time, so the cases we are working with now, will be up for review. Virginia is facing a \$28,000,000 penalty because the last review, two years ago was the first time we had ever passed a IVE review. The Feds only allow five mistakes across the State. There are certain errors that are "fatal errors" and if those mistakes are made, there is nothing we can do to fix it. There are some minor errors we can go back and fix; however, any "fatal errors" would get us into trouble.

Mrs. Weakley stated on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, the Head Start kids came to our agency to Trick 'R Treat and some of our workers dressed up. They walked through the building and workers were in the hallways handing out candy to them. In the afternoon we had a staff covered dish luncheon so we could continue to build teamwork.

Mrs. Weakley stated the Regional Food Stamp Specialist came to the agency and facilitated some training with the front clerical unit and some benefit workers. She further stated the Regional Food Stamp Specialist and the Regional VaCMS Specialist had been to the agency on November 19th for some additional training as to how to do some of our tasks a little better in the face of Medicaid Expansion. Benefits staff is having a time keeping up with the renewals in view of the vacancies we have had.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 7 – Medicaid Expansion**. Mrs. Weakley stated Medicaid Expansion has seen a lot of foot traffic in this agency. The State was trying to keep this from happening, but people still prefer to speak to a real person. We are getting a lot of people coming into the agency or calling to see whether Medicaid Expansion applies to them. We are encouraging clients to apply online or by phone. Some the State has automatically flipped into Medicaid Expansion. For example, Families First Medicaid, which only covers birth control and family planning, participants are being automatically put into the new Medicaid Expansion, without having to apply. Governor Northam has opted for Virginia to become a determination state, so as people are applying online, the Feds are determining whether they are eligible. When the application gets to us, it is already done. We will then be responsible for the redeterminations. We have been assured if any errors occur they will fall on the

Family Partnership Meetings (FPM) that occurred during the 2nd QTR of LFY 19 – (June 1, 2018 – August 31, 2018). At the Conference she learned that although FPMs are a required component; a number of agencies are not doing them at all. Family Partnership Meetings are held when a child is in custody, or about to come into custody. All family members come together with a facilitator to try and make a plan to determine what is going to happen with that child or what is going to happen with the family in order to keep the child in the home. Each meeting is entered into the system and when the State reviews it; the agency receives a monetary reward.

Ms. Gordy proceeded to **Item 9 – State Board Action**. Mrs. Weakley stated she mentioned it earlier. She had copied what she had so far, which is the draft of the State Board meeting minutes. We will receive the official minutes after they are approved in January 2019. At that time it will be brought to the Board and placed in our policy manuals for future reference.

Ms. Gordy continued to **Item 10 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon**. Ms. Harmon stated we just completed the month of October 2018 and for October our expenditures were \$313,972.23. Our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$203,506.55 and our Total Local Balance to Date was \$582,792.45. Mr. Sparkman inquired whether there were any problems and Mrs. Harmon stated there were none.

On motion by Mr. Sparkman, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Director's Consult, as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2.3712.

On motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Board returned to Open Session (Mr. Martin – yes; Mrs. Mackie – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes; Ms. Major – yes).

Ms. Gordy stated the next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 18, 2018, at 9:30 A.M. Ms. Gordy wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

On motion by Ms. Major, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

APPROVED: Laura B. Gordy

ATTEST: Vicki J. Weakley