

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, December 20, 2016, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Vice-Chairman; Ms. Nicolette Hickman; Mrs. Elsie B. Mackie; Mr. Robert Crockett; Mr. John Sparkman; Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Assistant Director; and Mrs. Mary E. Parker, Secretary.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order. Mrs. Hickman gave the Invocation.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the Board went into Closed Session to discuss a Personnel matter. The motion carried.

At this time Mr. Crockett departed the meeting due to another commitment.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of November 15, 2016**. On motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the Minutes of November 15, 2016 were approved as written. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Fraud Update**. Mrs. Parker stated Fraud Investigator Jack Thomas was moving right along. She further stated he is paying for his position.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Director's Update**. Mrs. Parker stated on December 12, 2016 she and Assistant Director Vicki Weakley attended the Eastern Regional Director's meeting in Newport News. She further stated Doug Morgan, the new head of the employee part of Human Resources for local agencies, did a presentation. There will be some changes and she received an email covering some of the changes they are proposing. It is something that needs to be reviewed by each local board and discussed. They stated several things that are true and one is there will be no money tied to this from the State.

They also said because there is no money tied to it by the State, there will be a lot of salary compressions. Mrs. Parker stated we have definitely had this occur at our agency. We have dealt with it once with salary alignment. They are possibly considering increasing the starting pay for the positions because it is so out of line with other State job descriptions. They have given us a printout of what they are proposing; i.e., one is a 4.4% increase and then it goes up to 7.6% and then to 10% which is the maximum increase. If you do not move the other people who have been here for a while you have a worse salary compression. You do not know where you are going to be cut and you do not know how deep it will be. It is certainly something that needs to be addressed. If we continue like we have in the past and not get raises for staff and just give them bonuses, which is good; however, it does not affect our baseline salary, workers will never move upward. Plus, the other piece is we have employees who progress in their positions so they begin to do more and more and take on more responsibility. If they are doing that and you are aware they are doing that and you do not recognize it and elevate their position from a position II to a position III or IV, you are not treating your employees as you should because you are not recognizing the value of the job they are doing. That also increases the cost of salaries. This is a lot to digest and since Mrs. Parker was retiring on December 31, 2016, she wished the Board her very best in handling the situation at hand. This is definitely something that needs to be considered as the employees are not being treated fairly.

Mrs. Weakley stated Mr. Morgan is pushing that we go to the 10% raise; however, he reminded us there is no additional money. Mrs. Parker further stated Mr. Morgan was recognizing a problem which we already realized.

Mrs. Parker stated licensing was another issue discussed; however, they only discussed childcare because the person who is responsible for licensing for adult facilities was not present at the meeting. That will be discussed at a later date.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 6 – Assistant Director's Update.** Mrs. Weakley stated she had attended the Healthy Communities Executive Board meeting, Truancy and CPMT meetings. Mrs. Weakley stated she is now Chair of the CPMT. She further stated she attended the first Drug Task Force meeting and they will be meeting monthly about addressing substance abuse issues on the Shore. She also stated she had attended the Eastern Regional Director's meeting with Mrs. Parker.

Mrs. Weakley further stated we are in the process of restructuring the benefits section. We anticipate having what we will call a tri-take; i.e., a triage and intake unit which will handle all of the changes which clients report to us which will enable the rest of the workers to do just recertifications and renewals and not be bothered all day long about other cases they are not working on at that time. This will be a unit that specifically deals with all of those changes. They are striving to get rid of all of the overdue applications because that is a big issue for us and staff is feeling pretty stressed between the VaCMS changes and the number of cases we have coming into the agency. It is also not helping as we are down three benefit workers. The posting for those positions ended on December 19, 2016 and we should be interviewing and hiring three new workers soon. Unfortunately, we cannot proceed with much of the restructuring until after we get the new workers onboard. The nice thing is when she looked a few days prior to the closing of the advertisement for the three positions, she saw at least four workers who had applied with experience. She was excited as that has not occurred for a long time.

We did a preliminary meeting with the benefit workers and rolled out what they would be doing with the new tri-take or triage unit. Workers appeared to be pleased about it and a lot of workers informed me later they were relieved and could feel the morale in the room rising as they were talking.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 7 – Revised Schedule for VaCMS Conversion.** Mrs. Parker stated she had thanked Chief Deputy Commissioner J. R. Simpson for making her dream come true as she wanted to be gone prior to TANF and SNAP going live on VaCMS. Mrs. Parker stated we had some issues that week with workers not being able to get into VaCMS. She further stated a Broadcast was out that day stating, " **don't lose hope this is just a hiccup and we are working to correct the problems.**"

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 8 – Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Changes Effective December 1, 2016.** Ms. Major stated the Fair Standards Act (FLSA) was supposed to have been effective on December 1st. Mrs. Parker stated it was supposed to be effective December 1st; however, a Judge in Texas filed a suit in court to block it so we are in a holding pattern and we have no idea when it will be resolved. Mrs. Parker stated the salary cap was the big thing pertaining to this suit.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 9 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon.** Mrs. Harmon stated for the month of November our Total Local Expenditures were \$294,259.78. Our Year-to-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$269,179.80 and our Total Local Balance to Date is \$486,667.20. Mr. Sparkman inquired whether we were on budget. Mrs. Harmon stated we are doing fine. The month of December is when the State requires us to do a mid-year review of our budget. If there were budget lines with excess funds, they requested us to return some of those funds. For the budget lines where we need

more funds, we submit a VRS request to get additional money. She could see where the foster care, subsidized adoption and State adoption programs had used quite a large amount so she requested funds for those lines. We are sending back around \$35,000 from the VIEW program and approximately \$20,000 from the Auxiliary Grant program.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 10 – Budget Care – FY18**. Mrs. Parker stated she could not distribute it to the Board Members as she had not finished with it yet. She thinks we are okay unless the health insurance changes our needs.

On motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Voluntary Entrustments (Foster Care Cases #001-054479000 and #20895862) and Court Custody (Foster Care Case #21113964), as permitted by the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3712.

On motion by Mrs. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, the Board confirmed the following Voluntary Entrustments and Court Custody cases discussed in Closed Session (Mrs. Hickman – yes; Mrs. Mackie – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; Mr. Sparkman – yes):

- I. Voluntary Entrustment:
 - a. Foster Care Case #001-054479000
 - b. Foster Care Case #20895862
- II. Court Custody:
 - a. Foster Care Case #21113964

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 17, 2017, at 9:30 A.M.

Ms. Major stated this was the last meeting Director Mary E. Parker would be attending. The Board Members wished her much happiness in her retirement. Mrs. Parker thanked the Board Members for their nice retirement gift and for being such a great Board.

On motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM.

APPROVED: Reneta Major

ATTEST: Vicki J. Weakley