

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, May 16, 2017, at 9:30 A.M. Present were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Ms. Laura B. Gordy, Vice-Chairman; Robert D. Crockett; Mrs. Elsie Mackie; Mr. John Sparkman; Mrs. Nicolette Hickman; and Mrs. Vicki J. Weakley, Secretary.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order. Ms. Major welcomed Ms. Gordy back as she was in the hospital during the April 18, 2017 meeting. Mrs. Mackie gave the Invocation.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of April 18, 2017**. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the Minutes of April 18, 2017 were approved as written. Ms. Gordy abstained as she was not present at the April 18, 2017 meeting.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Fraud Update**. Mrs. Weakley stated the recoupments for the month of April 2017 were still not available in our system. Mrs. Mackie inquired whether Fraud Investigator Jack Thomas would be able to do his entire report in the system after the problem has been solved. Mrs. Weakley stated “theoretically”. Mrs. Mackie wondered whether there was a certain monthly or yearly time frame to do this. Mrs. Weakley stated the payments people make, per their agreements, are entered into the system and then the computer takes it from there. If a payment is late, or a client does not make a payment, then they will receive a computer generated notice that their taxes are going to be intercepted, unless they come and talk with the Fraud Investigator. The Fraud Investigator can stop the intercept, if the person comes into the agency and does a new agreement. If that is not done, the computer system allows the tax intercept to occur.

Mr. Sparkman stated he thought they accepted lottery winnings. Mrs. Weakley stated she had not heard any discussion relative to lottery winnings.

Mrs. Mackie inquired if every claim that goes in automatically goes towards the tax intercept if they are late or do not make a payment. Mrs. Weakley stated they will get a computer generated letter if they are late or do not make a payment. They have one time and one time only to re-enter into an agreement to avoid the tax intercept.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Director’s Update**. Mrs. Weakley stated she attended the Eastern Shore Disaster Preparedness Regional meeting and the VLSSE Conference, at The Homestead in Hot Springs. At the Eastern Shore Disaster Preparedness meeting they recommended we have tornado drills and she will be working on this.

Mrs. Weakley stated we had the Federal Child and Family Services Review. They did a quick overview and when they completed it. They basically stated the items found which gave them concern were the same items the identified across the state. The two big items are 1) they do not think there is enough involvement with fathers of children we bring into custody so they want us to identify ways to get them more involved, and 2) we typically run a “clear search” when we bring a child into custody that identifies relatives of a child and then we contact the relatives to see if any of them would be interested in providing a home for the child. We do this process at the beginning, when a child comes into custody. The State now wants us to contact those relatives who previously said they couldn’t take the child into their home and see if they had changed their minds, every six months. No one across the State had been doing this.

Mr. Sparkman inquired how the State would know the relatives of a child. Mrs. Weakley stated the system searches tax records, property records, etc. It will not identify all of the relatives, but it does a significant job.

Mrs. Weakley then reviewed the Adult Programs Quality Review, which was a Regional (not Federal) review. We did not do particularly well on this review but Mrs. Weakley anticipated this would improve. Initially they found us 100% out of compliance. After we pointed out several issues they found us 80% out of compliance. There were some things they claimed were not in the record which were in the record, so that percentage may change, but she is not anticipating the 80% to drop much lower. Mrs. Mackie inquired why we were out of compliance; i.e., documentation or was it actual things that had not been carried through. Mrs. Weakley stated when they originally called about Review, she pulled the records. We had over 150 extremely overdue cases, which we have corrected. The only case she found overdue was one where everything had been documented; however, it was not within the time frame. The rest of the issues seem to be training issues. We had a mini training session with the Regional Specialist to correct this. An example is: When a case comes into adult services you have to choose whether it is new, closed or open. There has been some confusion about the definition of those terms. New means the person has never been called in to our agency before. Staff was marking them as new, if it was newly opened. The Regional Specialist has also provided us with some cheat sheets, people can refer back to, so things will be done correctly in the future. They will return in six months to determine whether we have made the corrections.

Mr. Crockett stated on the flip side you are going to get gigged no matter what when you are out of compliance, but with 80% they know there is a problem. Mrs. Weakley stated she knew that going into it. She had previously informed the Board we had a supervisory change that made a significant impact on what was happening. Unfortunately, you cannot go back and fix what has already happened. Mrs. Mackie then stated the workers in that unit are seasoned workers and we cannot blame it entirely on a supervisor. Mrs. Weakley stated you cannot but if a lot of the issues were timeliness issues and no one is paying attention that can get out of hand quickly. All of those things have been corrected.

Mr. Crockett inquired whether any of the issues were safety issues. Mrs. Weakley stated no and that most of the issues were documentation issues. There were several instances where they said we were out of compliance; however, we are in the process of going back to show them we were not out of compliance as we could not enter things into the system, because the system went down. It would go down intermittently, and would be down for hours at the time. Workers were documenting contacts in Microsoft Word, waiting for the computer to get up and running, so they could transfer the stuff over to the system. When she Regional Specialist pulled the cases and viewed everything from her office in Virginia Beach, the information wasn't documented in the computer case. Most of the issues were documentation and clerical issues.

Ms. Major inquired who did the review and Mrs. Weakley stated Regional Specialist Carey Raleigh. Mrs. Weakley stated anticipate a significant improvement when they come back in six months to review cases again.

Mr. Crockett stated it needs to be stressed and emphasized that documentation is important. Mrs. Weakley stated staffing has been difficult, the elderly population is growing and the issues have become more complicated. We have been short staffed, which we hope to correct, soon. The new Acting

Supervisor has assumed the supervisory role, but continues to have an ongoing caseload, until new staff can be hired.

Mrs. Weakley stated Adult Protective Services is overseen by the Department of Rehabilitative Services so we have an additional agency to deal with, that has control over the computer system, etc.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 6 – Update from VLSSE Conference.** Mrs. Weakley stated the VLSSE – Virginia League of Social Services Executives - was held the first week of May at The Homestead. This is located in Rockbridge County and the final review of Rockbridge DSS came out the same week. She had shared previously with the Board the concerns raised from issues at Rockbridge DSS. Mrs. Weakley stated no one was charged, legally, as a result of the incidents at Rockbridge. Much of this was related to the Statute of Limitations having expired. One of the major focuses has been DSS boards, as the board at Rockbridge had not been meeting and in fact refused to appear when asked by the Director. State DSS has designed new training with some online e-learning and some in person training. They have established criteria for the selection of board members and what the requirements are to remain on the board. They have created a checklist for board members to complete within three months of becoming a part of a board. Our Regional Specialist has offered to do training on the Shore, for new Board members for Accomack and Northampton County DSS if the two Boards request that.

The Commissioner met with one of the Delegates the day of the Conference, to discuss how DSS is addressing the issues related to the investigation of Rockbridge County DSS. They anticipate there will be some new legislation proposed. It is the State's intent to charge workers with malfeasance and take their pensions, if a similar situation occurs in the future.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 7 – Compensation Plan 2017-2018.** Mrs. Weakley stated the Board needed to approve the Compensation Plan for the upcoming year. There were not many changes from the previous year. The State is giving a 2% increase, but no additional local increase, will occur. We do not currently provide merit increases and we are not doing an internal alignment. Ms. Major inquired how often an alignment of salaries could be done. Mrs. Weakley stated once a year; however, we do not have the money in the budget to do one, at this time.

Mrs. Weakley further stated starting pay is calculated by using the State compensation decision and experience ratio worksheets. There is no increase at the end of probation or training periods. Promotional increases are usually between 5%-10%. All employees receive the same percentage ratio. We can consider compensating someone more based on their credentials; however, we do not do this very often. A redefinition increase is something they are reviewing at the State level; i.e., creating a career ladder. The only way now a II can become a III is if a III leaves the position and then we have a competitive interview process. Also, if a worker starts doing new job duties and does them well, for a time and then we ask the State to redefine their position as something other than what it was. That is not considered a promotion, but is considered a redefinition. At that time Mr. Crockett stated the problem with this would be trying to control the budget. For example, he stated when he was Sheriff for Accomack County they had 10% of their sworn law enforcement who could obtain the title of Master Deputy. They would have had no supervisory role but it is an elevation. However, you can control your budget because 10% of that number is the limit. If we have a system where anyone can obtain that level and you have 30 employees, it would be hard to predict from one year to the

next what your true budget would be as far as payroll. The State is looking at ways to address the issues.

Mrs. Weakley further stated **Item J – Demotion for Discipline** – would be a minimum percentage loss of 5% with a maximum percentage of 15%. **Item K - Demotion for Performance** - would be the same percentages. **Item L – Temporary/Acting Pay** - would be 5% or for additional supervisory responsibilities it would be 10%.

**Item M – Adjustment for Attainment of Use of Critical Skill** - There is a 5% increase for anyone who is bi-lingual – Spanish, or Creole, and English. **Item N – Competitive Salary Offer.** We will consider a competitive salary increase if someone is offered another job.

**Section V: On-Call Compensation** – Workers receive \$16 for an 8-hour shift and earn comp time for each hour of direct services while they are on-call.

**Section VI: Evaluation Date** – All employees are evaluated annually on their anniversary date or evaluation date.

**Section VII – Sick Leave Accumulation Payment** - The most we will pay is \$5,000, when someone leaves, for unused leave. Mr. Crockett stated there is a State law as to what you can pay when someone retires with vacation time or comp time. He did not see that in this compensation plan. Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon stated it is in our HR Manual.

**Section III – Disability Leave Program** – Mrs. Weakley stated our Board did adopt the Disability Leave Program in Chapter 4 of the HR Manual.

**Section IX – Range Revision** – Mrs. Weakley stated we do not have the money for the revision this year.

At this time Mrs. Mackie asked whether a person filling in temporarily for a supervisory or non-supervisory position gets 5%-10%. Mrs. Weakley stated 5% for non-supervisory and 10% for supervisory. Mrs. Mackie then asked if that person is then promoted would he/she will get another 5 or 10% on top of that. Mrs. Weakley stated if he/she is the person who gets the job, yes he/she would get an additional 5 or 10%. Mrs. Mackie then said that could add up to around 20% and Mrs. Weakley stated it was possible.

Ms. Major stated this was an action item. On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the Compensation Plan 2017-2018 was adopted as written. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 8 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon.** For the month of April our Total Expenditures were \$343,492.37. Our Year-to-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$555,185.61 and our Total Local Balance to Date is \$206,887.39. The month of May is the last month of the State's Fiscal Year. Mr. Crockett inquired whether Ms. Harmon anticipated any expenses out of the ordinary or large items being used between the date of the meeting and the end of the year. Ms. Harmon stated just the balance due on the new telephone system. Mr. Crockett stated if we were on budget we would be at 92%; however, we are at 82% and we are in a very good position.

Ms. Gordy said she wanted to thank the Board and staff for the nice gifts Office Supervisor Linda Rew carried to her after her stay in the hospital. She stated it

was a large pot of red geraniums which she placed at the entrance to her back door and a large box of pastries. She greatly appreciated everyone thinking of her and she wanted to thank them. Mr. Crockett said the only thank you needed was she was present at the meeting.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Personnel (Leave Without Pay) –and G. F. Horne Update.

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

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mr. Sparkman, the Board approved the following Personnel issues – Leave Without Pay (Mrs. Hickman – yes; Mrs. Mackie – yes; Ms. Gordy – yes; Mr. Crockett – yes; and Mr. Sparkman – yes):

The next regular Board meeting will be held Tuesday, June 20, 2017, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mrs. Hickman, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 A.M.

APPROVED: **C. Reneta Major** \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: **Vicki J. Weakley** \_\_\_\_\_