

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

Ms. Major called the meeting to order. Mr. Crockett gave the Invocation.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of February 20, 2018.** On motion by Mr. Robert Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Elsie Mackie, the Minutes of February 20, 2018 were approved as written with the exception of Page 7 – **“The next regular Board meeting will be held Tuesday, April 17, 2017, at 9:30 A.M.”** The Minutes will be corrected to reflect the correction of Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 9:30 A.M.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Introduction of Office Associate III – Jessica Bennett (Promotion from Office Associate II) – Effective March 1, 2018.** Mrs. Weakley stated Ms. Bennett had been promoted to Office Associate III which was vacated by Ms. Andrea Hunter who moved out of state. On behalf of the Board Mr. Crockett congratulated Ms. Bennett on her promotion. Ms. Bennett stated she enjoyed her work.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Report from Child Welfare Supervisor Sylvia Stanley.** Ms. Stanley supplied a brochure to give the Board a picture of what Child Welfare does. The Child Welfare Unit has three programs – Child Protective Services, where they investigate cases of abuse and neglect, foster care and adoption. Last year the Unit completed 208 referrals of Child Protective Services, Family Assessments, Prevention referrals and courtesy interviews for other agencies/states. From January of 2017 to October 2017 there were 59 cases that were founded, for abuse or neglect. When cases are founded they offer services to the families. Sometimes families feel they do not want our services. We cannot force them to accept services, but we can offer the services. We also have cases that are unfounded, but we assess the need for services, so we offer prevention services. Many families are receptive to that.

We also provide parenting classes and we are currently scheduled to start the week of March 26, 2018. If families need to learn some parenting skills, we refer them to the parenting class.

The CPS Unit had previously created a newsletter and they are starting to do the newsletter again. She stated she would have copies available for the April meeting.

Ms. Stanley informed the Board, that at the present time we have 12 children in foster care. We have Family Partnership meetings when kids come into foster care and try to find family homes for them. In the past when they contacted family members they would say “I don’t want to deal with it.” Now families are coming to the Family Partnership meetings and more families are becoming involved in the children’s lives. This also helps the children maintain contact with their biological families.

Mr. Crockett inquired whether if any foster family ended up adopting a foster child. Ms. Stanley stated yes and that is contributes to the agency losing so many of our foster parents, as they adopt and then decide to take a break from foster care. This is really good for the child as he/she has been with the family for some time and has established a bond, with them.

The unit also provides services for parents who have children who come into foster care. Our goal is to return the children to their families/prior custodians.

We try to resolve situations that caused the children to come into foster care. We currently have 10 approved foster resource families, and are in the process of approving another family which would bring the total to 11.

We recruit for foster families and also provide in-service training. Families need to be updated on policy and other changes, so the agency provides in-service training, to keep them up to date. The agency also provides birthday gifts to our foster children.

The unit also provides Independent Living services, for teenagers in foster care. We have a worker provides Independent Living training and workshops for our teens. Currently we have three teens between the ages of 13 and 17 in our program.

Ms. Stanley stated the unit also does a foster care and adoption newsletter, which she plans to have for the Board Members at the April 17, 2018 meeting.

The unit currently has four children with a goal of adoption. This means the parental rights have been terminated and we are looking for families for them. We had two adoptions that were finalized last year. We have two children who are in the adoption process. We are hoping within the next 30-60 days one of the adoptions will be finalized.

We have 14 children who are receiving adoption assistance; i.e., services like a monthly adoption assistance payment, Medicaid, enhanced maintenance and any special needs that arise.

On the back of the brochure it shows some of the Child Welfare Unit special projects. We have a representative on FAPT (Family Assessment Planning Team), which meets every month to staff cases for funding. They also have a representative on the Multi-Disciplinary team relative to sexual abuse cases. This team includes a representative from the Commonwealth Attorney's office, Court Services, our agency and others to discuss these cases including whether they should be prosecuted.

Ms. Stanley stated they also have a representative on the Safe Kids Coalition. We provide Easter baskets, with donations from ACE Hardware, in Exmore We also are involved with the Salvation Army Back-To-School project. Every year they give approximately \$50.00 per child. This year we were able to serve 40 children with new school clothes. We also do the Back-To-School supplies. For the past several years Oceanview United Methodist Church in Wachapreague has been giving a donation, to help with this. This past year they gave \$300.00 and we were able to help 32 children with that project.

We also do Thanksgiving baskets and gift cards. It is amazing how much the community gives during the holidays. People will call and say we want to give food, a turkey or gift cards. We also do a large Christmas project – The Adopt-A-Family, where we were able to serve 11 families. The Angel Tree served 257 children and the Toy Closet served 753 children.

Ms. Stanley stated the month of March is Social Worker Month. The unit also tries to celebrate good things to help alleviate stress (such as Social Worker Appreciation and birthdays.)

Ms. Stanley stated April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and we are working on some activities to show our community facts about child abuse. The month of May is Foster Care Month and they are working on activities for that month, as

well. The unit is looking at possibly having a reception for the foster parents, and combine it with foster parent recruitment.

Ms. Stanley gave each Board Member a list of the Child Welfare Unit workers with numbers in case they ever needed to contact a worker.

The Board stated it was a very good report and thanked her for the presentation. Mrs. Weakley stated Ms. Stanley's Unit was currently down three workers. We have not replaced Ms. Walker's position and Ms. Abigail Allen had retired; however, she had been working part time and we have not replaced Ms. Stanley's previous position.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 6 – Fraud Report**. Mrs. Weakley stated she also attached a Broadcast to show how they determine the fraud allocation; i.e., 40% is based on caseload size which is comprised of major programs like childcare, fuel, SNAP (Food Stamps) and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and 60% is based on performance criteria.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 7 – Director's Report**. Mrs. Weakley stated for the previous month she attended several meetings. She went to the Accomack County Board of Supervisors meeting and thanked those who were in attendance at that meeting and helped approve the CSA Coordinator position. Mrs. Weakley stated Mrs. Frances had been optimistic that the Northampton County Board of Supervisors would approve the CSA Coordinator position as well. Mrs. Weakley stated she was also working with Northampton County DSS Director Mozella Frances to get Eastern Shore Rural Health to help with drug screenings. They will not currently do them without a doctor's order and at the present, it is quite complicated and time consuming to get someone in to see a doctor without the order and by that time the person would be clean again. Mrs. Weakley stated she had also attended the Arcadia/Quail Run Planning Team meeting. She assumed everyone was aware the facility had closed. She further attended the CPMT Planning Retreat; CPMT meeting; two Comp Plan trainings; and an Eastern Regional Director's meeting.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 8 – March is Social Worker Month**. Mrs. Weakley just wanted the Board to know this; however, Ms. Stanley had mentioned it in her report.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 9 – Financial Statement – Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon**. At this time the entire Board sang Happy Birthday to Administrative Office Manager Shirley Harmon. For the month of February our Total Expenditures were \$289,775.34. Our Year-To-Date Total Local Adjustment was \$400,432.24 and our Total Local Balance to Date is \$379,066.76. Mr. Crockett stated there did not appear to be any red flags.

On motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Crockett, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Personnel – Director Consult, as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3712.

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

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 17, 2018, at 9:30 A.M.

On motion by Mr. Crockett, seconded by Mrs. Mackie, the meeting adjourned at 10:33 A.M.

APPROVED: **C. Reneta Major** _____

ATTEST: **Vicki J. Weakley** _____