

DUPLIN COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MINUTES
Regular Scheduled Meeting
Thursday, August 27, 2020
8:30 AM

The Duplin County Board of Social Services met in a regular scheduled meeting on August 27, 2020 conducted by phone as a result of COVID-19. Prior and Public Notice of the meeting was given in accordance with G.S. 143-318.12.

Board members present for today's meeting were Mr. Mike Wallace, Chairman, Ms. Angela Mainor, and Mr. Gary Ange. Mr. Jesse Dowe had joined the meeting when the Board returned from closed session. Ms. Susan Thigpen, DSS Director, was also present for the meeting. The invocation for today's meeting was given by Ms. Susan Thigpen.

No changes or amendments were added to the agenda and there were no public comments received.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Angela Mainor and seconded by Mr. Gary Ange and minutes were approved for the July 23,2020 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Gary Ange to enter into closed session in order to discuss the Employee Engagement Survey as permitted under N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11. The motion was seconded by Ms. Angela Mainor and passed. The open meeting resumed following a motion made, seconded, and approved to conclude the closed session meeting.

New Business

Budget Report – The agency continues to work diligently to have repairs made to the building during this time. The gutters were worked on recently and painting has resumed and the front lobby is nearly finished. Randy Norwood, the Duplin County Facilities Coordinator, is currently following up with issues specific to the replacement of windows in the building and hopes to be able to move forward with this project in the next few months.

Income Maintenance and Child Support –The agency's portion of the single county audit recently started with a review of Medicaid cases and our auditor commented on the amount of progress she noted from last year in eligibility determinations and case management. Only one eligibility error was identified and while there were some

technical errors, these do not involve eligibility decisions, have no paybacks and some of these findings have been challenged and may be overturned

Child Support is now issuing Show Cause Orders and Orders for Arrest since court is running on a fairly consistent basis. Since there has been no court in the past six months it will take a significant amount of time for the agency to catch up on establishment and enforcement in child support. Daycare is currently reflecting a 125% spending coefficient but this current overspending is related to the waiver of parent fees and other changes as a result of COVID that ended on August 31st. There is currently no waiting list for subsidized childcare and the state consultant has noted that there is no reason to be concerned about our spending at this time since funds can be reallocated as needed.

Personnel – Turnover continues to be an issue at Duplin County Social Services and there are a number of vacancies at this time. Management is currently exploring various ways to meet case requirements with reduced staff and there has been no decrease in timeliness figures specific to eligibility (re)determinations in spite of these vacancies.

Child and Adult Services – Child welfare saw another decrease in the total number of reports and assessments opened in July. There has been an increase in the percentage of domestic violence and substance abuse cases that are coming into the agency, which has been a statewide trend during the pandemic. The agency is unsure how the return to remote learning in public schools will impact reports but expects there will be no significant increase until the county moves to the Plan B format of combined virtual and classroom learning.

Director's Update

In order to accommodate employees with children returning to school through remote learning, a plan was developed allowing employees to flex their 40 hours in any way between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Monday – Saturday and 12:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on Sundays. Comp, petty, and vacation time can also be used as needed. Seven employees are currently working set flex schedules while two others are currently flexing on a day by day basis until they are able to determine what schedule will best meet their children's educational needs.

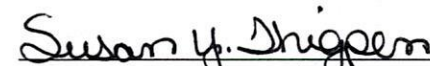
Medicaid for Coronavirus (MCV) has been implemented and applications can be completed either by paper or electronically and will be submitted to the state for processing. There will be some functions assigned to county IMCs but these responsibilities have not been clearly outlined at this time.

Counties are continuing to struggle with developing plans to utilize the CARES Act funding provided to CPS and APS due to inconsistent and ambiguous information received from the NCDHHS to date. This continues to be a topic of ongoing discussion between directors and the state and additional guidance is expected over the next several weeks.

Food and Nutrition Services will soon be releasing the DSNAP capacity within ePass and providing counties with a Playbook for administering DSNAP in the event of a declared disaster. There is no information at this time suggesting that additional PEBT benefits will be provided to parents with school-age children.

A motion was made by Mr. Jesse Dowe and seconded by Ms. Angela Mainor and passed to adjourn our meeting until the next regular scheduled meeting on September 24, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.


Mr. Mike Wallace, Chairman


Director & Clerk to the Board

The foregoing minutes were adopted on: August 27, 2020