



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Mike Dasher, Chair
Diana Hales, Vice Chair
Jim Crawford
Franklin Gomez Flores
Karen Howard

COUNTY MANAGER: Dan LaMontagne

Chatham County Board of Social Services Meeting Minutes December 16, 2020

The December meeting was conducted by GoToMeeting due to COVID-19. Members in attendance: Richard Edwards, Chair; Tom Droke; Vice Chair; Valerie Broadway, Member; Carl Thompson, Member and Jennie Kristiansen, Director.

Richard Edwards called the meeting to order.

Carl Thompson motioned to approve the November meeting minutes with a second motion from Valerie Broadway; with all in favor.

The monthly data report card due was not reviewed due to the continued unavailability of data from the cyber incident.

On December 16th, three DSS employees received computers although most technology was not accessible. One of the document management systems was restored December 15th and the network drive was restored but was not fully functional. DSS computers were to be deployed on December 18th.

Economic Services Updates:

On December 1st, the application period opened for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program for individuals who are elderly or disabled. Some beneficiaries received an automatic payment if they received last year and had not had a change in circumstances. All applicants from last year were called by caseworkers to let them know how they could apply remotely (i.e. phone, mail in, etc.). The process seemed to drastically reduce the number of people walking in. There were many phone calls received and some additional cell phones were added to accommodate the call volume. Cell phones remained a primary method of communication because voicemail was still down.

Family Services Updates:

The Christmas programs for both adult and children's services went well despite some of the technical difficulties with email and phones. The format was changed with a drive through format for both donors and recipients. The response from the community was overwhelming.

In child welfare, there were a number of statewide initiatives underway as a part of child welfare transformation. Ms. Kristiansen sent out a recent "Practice Notes" publication that provided a good summary.

Additional foster care and adoption cases were scheduled to be "tested" as a part of the annual single county audit. After the exit conference, the accounting firm that conducted the audit discovered that additional DSS foster care and adoption cases would need to be reviewed. Some of the records were maintained on the county document management systems that have been unavailable. The county may have to request an extension past the end of the year if the additional information cannot be submitted on time. Efforts were being invested in trying to meet this deadline.

With no further items to discuss, there was a motion to adjourn from Tom Droke with a second motion from Carl Thompson; with all in favor.

The next board meeting will be held Wednesday, January 20th at 3:00pm via GoToMeeting.



Chair

3/24/21
Date



Secretary

3/30/21
Date