

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services Board:
Sara Welch
Memory Dossenbach
Cecil Wilson
Peter Varney
Maria Soto

ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Session Meeting Minutes December 20, 2023

Members in attendance: Cecil Wilson, Vice President; Sara Welch, Member; Memory Dossenbach, Member; Peter Varney, Member; Maria Soto, Member; Jennie Kristiansen; Director; LeAnn McKcoy, Planner/Evaluator and Nancy Burgess, Executive Assistant.

Cecil Wilson called the meeting to order.

June, July, August, and September Meeting Minutes were approved with a motion from Sara Welch, a second motion from Memory Dossenbach with all in favor.

November Meeting Minutes were approved with a motion from Peter Varney, a second motion from Memory Dossenbach with all in favor.

Maria Soto was sworn in as a new member.

There was a motion to appoint Sara Welch as Board Chair from Peter Varney, a second motion from Memory Dossenbach with all in favor.

There was a motion to appoint Memory Dossenbach as Vice Chair from Sara Welch, a second motion from Peter Varney with all in favor.

The Board reviewed the Board Meeting Schedule for FY2023-2024. There was a discrepancy with the June 2024 meeting falling on the Juneteenth holiday. There was a motion to move the meeting to June 12, 2024 from Peter Varney, a second motion from Memory Dossenbach with all in favor. A Public Notice will be posted to announce the new date for this meeting.

Members reviewed the monthly data report.

Economic Services Updates:

Medicaid Expansion has gone very smoothly overall. There has been an increase in applications, most of which have been completed online. As of December 14th, almost 282,000 people had enrolled statewide (approximately 500 new applications per day). Also 39,000 prescriptions have been filled and claims are being paid which means that people are accessing healthcare. There have been problems with the Enrollment Broker and calls dropping. The Enrollment Broker is responsible for assisting beneficiaries in selecting a Medicaid plan. The Division of Health Benefits is also working to update website banners and information so that enrollees know where to go for questions. Approval has been received from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for all children under age 19 to be

automatically extended for 12 months. Children who are being reviewed in December, January, and February have already been automatically extended in NCFAST and March will be completed this week. Children represent about half of the caseload statewide and so this will ease the workload burdens on counties so that they can focus on adult recertifications and new applications. As of today, 350 applications have been received for Medicaid Expansion. The majority of these are coming through the Federally Facilitated Marketplace which will slow down when open enrollment ends on 1/15/23. Only 52 applications have been in person.

There are several other major Medicaid projects underway. The Continuous Coverage Unwinding of the program modifications implemented during the Public Health Emergency will be continuing until April. Also, DHHS announced the approval of a consolidation agreement between Trillium Health Resources and Eastpointe Human services, two LME-MCO's serving the central and eastern parts of the states. When this merger is complete, the total number of LME-MCO's statewide will be four. Vaya Health will continue to serve Chatham County. The other Medicaid project is the Tailored Plan Launch which was scheduled for October 2023 and has been delayed.

On December 1st, NC began accepting applications for the Low-Income Energy Assistance program for older adults and people with disabilities. As of this week, Chatham County had taken 59 applications, 71% of which were approved. The total allocation is approximately \$302,000, \$134,000 was issued as an automatic payment to individuals who received a benefit last year and are currently receiving an FNS benefit. Approximately \$153,000 is remaining.

For the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP), 66 applications have been taken with 73% approved. There is currently almost \$78,000 remaining in CIP.

Family Services Updates:

NC exceeded federal benchmarks on foster care visits with children during federal fiscal year 2022-2023. The Administration for Children and Families requires that 95% of children have a monthly visit with their social worker and that 75% of those visits take place in the home of the child. NC's data indicated that 96% of children receive a visit monthly and that 93% of those visits take place in the child's home. In Chatham County, 99% of children received a social worker visit every month.

The week of December 11th counties were informed that Curam, the system that the Child Welfare Information System is built upon will be requiring a major update and that the version that NC uses (and has significantly customized) will no longer be supported by Curam. There is currently a contract in place with Deloitte to evaluate other solutions that has been planned for several years. This update now will require these plans and timeframes to be modified. Work is currently underway to explore what other options are available and how this could be sequenced with counties.

Agency Updates:

The DSS Workforce Committee hosted a holiday spirit week, raising money for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. Each day employees dressed in a different type of holiday attire and could donate funds to purchase "jeans passes" (for employees to wear jeans to work). Thus far, employees have donated over \$400.

Karen Voncannon, supervisor for Food and Nutrition at DSS received the 2023 Chatham County Employee of the Year award and was recognized at the Board of Commissioners meeting this week. Ms. Voncannon has worked for DSS for over 20 years and was described as compassionate, caring, and diligent in the award nomination. Ms. Kristiansen emailed the media release to the DSS Board for their review.


The Christmas Wishes and Christmas Dreams programs were very successful this year. Over 500 children and 60 adults received Christmas gifts.

The board discussed contacting candidates that were not selected as members for the vacancy that Marie Soto filled.

The board discussed the process for the Directors Mid-Year Evaluation.


With no further items to discuss there was a motion to adjourn from Memory Dossenbach, a second motion from Memory Sara Welch with all in favor.

The next meeting will be held January 17, 2024 in the ground conference room of CCDSS at 4:00.



Vice-Chair

1/17/24
Date



Secretary

1/17/24
Date

