

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services Board:
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ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Session Meeting Minutes June 12, 2024

Members in attendance: Sara Welch, President; Peter Varney, Member; Cecil Wilson, Member; Mike Zelek, Chatham County Health Department Director; Jennie Kristiansen, DSS Director and Nancy Burgess, Executive Assistant.

Sara Welch called the meeting to order.

Jennie Kristiansen and Mike Zelek presented members of the board with the outcomes of the 2023 Community Child Protection Team and Child Fatality Prevention Team reports.

There was a motion to approve the May Meeting Minutes from Peter Varney with a second motion from Cecil Wilson, with all in favor.

The members reviewed the monthly data report.

Economic Services Updates:

SUN Bucks payments for children will start being issued on June 24th and will be \$120 per child. NC was one of only three states in the southeast region to participate in the program. The program is also funded with private dollars from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, Smithfield Foods, The Leon Levine Foundation, Dogwood Health Trust, Cone Health Foundation and Brighthouse Financial.

Food and Nutrition Services beneficiaries will start receiving text messages to provide "nudges" when they are due for their recertification. This project is a part of NC-DHHS's SNAP Outreach Plan, and Benefits Data Trust (BDT) will conduct the text message outreach. The project launched June 12th. The project will continue, as long as there is funding and will also explore dynamic texting (two-way) vs. static texting (one-way).

Chatham County did not pass the Medicaid Report Card for timeliness in April for MAD (Medicaid for Adults with Disabilities) was 80% (standard is 85%). A waiver was requested because there were late applications due to client requests for extensions. According to policy an extension must be granted but NCFAS does not have the functionality to stop the clock and so the application will be captured by the system as late.

Three providers were selected through an RFP for the Non-Emergency Medicaid (NEMT) contract including Chatham Transit, Sister 2 Sister, and Archangels Transit. Archangels Transit is a new provider based in the Triad and has been offering transportation services for over 20 years including Medicaid transportation in other counties.

Family Services Updates:

Much of the work in child welfare is currently focused on audit preparations. As mentioned last month, one case was selected for the federal Child and Family Services Review and now one case has been selected for the federal IV-E audit.

The week of June 10th the Adult Services Unit hosted an Elder Abuse Awareness month event at the Center for Healthy Living (formerly the West Chatham Senior Center). Information was shared about scams and food and vendors were available for residents to get more information.

Agency Updates:

DHHS sent out revised Memorandums of Understanding to be signed by counties and contain expectations of both DSS agencies and DHHS. These include performance requirements. The NC Association of County Departments of Social Services advocated for some changes to the agreement for this year. This includes the development of training for DSS security officers (there is no training currently) and the convening of a workgroup to study workloads across programs. An Adult Services workload study is actively being considered by DHHS. Counties asked for advance notice and more lead time with a hold harmless provision if policy was issued in a timely manner and DHHS declined to add this in, citing delays from the federal government.

The new eCourts system has launched in Chatham County and the Child Support, Adult Services, and Child Welfare teams are all impacted. Currently, there are many challenges in working in the new system and it is requiring additional time particularly for some supervisors and the attorney.

The DSS Equity Committee hosted a Lunch and Learn a few weeks ago on the topic of bias. About 15 employees attended.

Divya Mehta, Lead for NC Fellow has organized a series of volunteer days with CORA Food Pantry. Employees served as "shoppers" assisting the neighbors (visitors to CORA) with their food selection and offering information about what options were available. She has also started a series of Community Resource Calls, a 30-minute information session with a local agency. Her last day with DSS is June 28th.

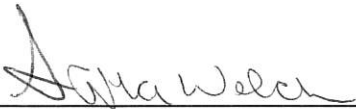
The carpeting through DSS is being replaced. Work began at the beginning of the month and is scheduled to continue for several more weeks. While this is a project welcomed by employees, it will require everyone to vacate and to pack up workspaces.

There was a motion to enter a closed session to discuss a personnel issue from Peter Varney with a second motion from Celil Wilson, with all in favor.

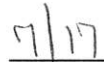
Cecil Wilson motioned to exit the closed session with a second motion from Peter Varney, with all in favor.

With no further items to discuss there was a motion to adjourn from Peter Varney with a second motion from Cecil Wilson, with all in favor.

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



Sara Welch, Chair



Date



Jennie Kristiansen, Secretary



Date

