

Macon County Social Services Board

January 18, 2019

Minutes

Call to Order

Patrick Betancourt called the regular meeting of the Macon County Social Services Board to order in the Administrative Conference Room of the Department of Social Services. Members in attendance were Lisa Leatherman, Darlene Green, Evelyn Southard and Patrick Betancourt, Secretary to the Board. Cathy Makinson, Business Officer designated to record the minutes was on an excused absence.

Minutes

Evelyn Southard made motion to approve December minutes, second by Darlene Green, minutes approved.

Financials

As Business Officer, Cathy Makinson was not present for the meeting the Board decided that detailed financials would be reviewed in February. However, Energy Assistance updates were provided by Patrick to the Board. Patrick attributed the revised Energy Assistance procedures, the additional allocations to both CIP and LIEAP this SFY, and the additional allocation to Duke's Share the Warmth fund with helping to stretch energy dollars this winter. Issues to be specifically addressed in February will include a budget preparation update. Financials were provided in Board books.

Program Reports

Angel Potter, Lead Worker, and Jennifer Alexander, Supervisor for the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Program provided an update to the Board on potential impact of the government shutdown to FNS recipients. Recipients of FNS will receive their February allotment on Sunday, January 20 and are receiving communication from various sources explaining that the February benefits are arriving early and this is not an "extra" allotment but rather the only benefits available for the month of February. Angel also explained that because benefits are loaded on recipients EBT card on a day of the month based on the last number of the head of household's SSN, some recipients will actually receive February's allotment before they receive January's allotment leading to additional confusion. Recipients are being cautioned to budget their benefits wisely for the month and that additional benefits will not be available in March unless the shutdown is resolved. Angel and Jennifer explained that "robocalls" are being made to recipients with this information and that DHHS has reached out to the retailers association to make them aware of this information. Additional information is being provided in flyers posted at the Department as well as social media outlets. Angel and Jennifer agreed to reach out to Macon County CareNet to assure that they are aware of the impact in case recipients began requesting assistance because they expended all of their benefits early in February.

Old Business

Patrick updated the Board on the Space Needs Analysis and Capital Improvement Plan by providing a brief review of the Department Head Meeting with Mosley Architects held Friday, December 21, 2018. A Space Needs Analysis questionnaire was completed by both the Dept. of Social Services and by Senior Services and provided to County Administration on January 14, 2019. Samples of questions asked on this questionnaire include: anticipated changes to services and functions over the next five years; listing of position and space currently occupied with growth projections over the next five, ten,

and twenty years; features needed to assist in best possible customer service delivery; supporting data for foot traffic in public spaces; etc. In addition to this Space Needs Analysis questionnaire requested by Mosley Architects, County Administration also required the Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) for each Department to be updated. A CIP for Senior Services will be submitted today.

Patrick provided the Board an update on the Closed Session item from last month related to Director's Qualifications. Patrick informed the Board that at this month's NCACDSS meeting a motion was made to abolish the vote from December's meeting regarding the modifications. Additionally, Patrick explained that the Association would be convening a committee to draft qualifications in consultation with a third party consultant such as Drake Maynard. The committee would be charged with enhancing the current qualifications sufficiently, so that the revisions could be advanced as a legislative agenda item in order to have D.S.S. Director hiring qualifications codified in statute. A recommendation was made that Patrick provide the Board information on how suggestions (especially those that can support potential applicant pools in smaller and more rural counties) regarding those qualifications could be forwarded to the committee for consideration.

Patrick updated the Board on last month's agenda item regarding a Workman's Comp claim of a social worker who was bitten by a dog while visiting a home and needed medical attention. A meeting with Patrick, the county attorney, the county HR Director, the county manager, and the Department's attorney occurred on January 15th. At that meeting, the county agreed to make a request of the third party administrator that subrogation of the claim not be pursued so as to not negatively impact the placement of a foster child in that home. A request was made and the adjuster for the claim agreed to suspend pursuit of subrogation.

Finally, Patrick updated the Board that based on Commissioner Beale's and Mike Norris' nomination to the VAYA Health Board of Directors, Patrick had received an invitation to attend a portion of this month's Vaya Health Board retreat in Asheville on January 25th and 26th. At this retreat the Board will vote on nominees for Board service. At this time, there are more nominees than open Board vacancies. Patrick will inform the Social Services Board of the Vaya Board of Director's decision regarding his nomination. Along these lines, Patrick also updated the Board that the President Elect for the Rotary Club of Franklin (Rich Peoples) passed away yesterday. This means that as President Nominee, Patrick's service as Rotary President would be moved up a year and begin on July 1, 2019.

New Business

Patrick provided the Board a review of the Social Services Working Group (SSWG) that was convened as a result of HB-630 passed in June of 2017 and signed into law. Patrick briefly discussed that the working group was facilitated by staff at the UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Government and that the working group had recently released its final report to the Legislature last month. Patrick explained that initially the SSWG did not address the issue of NC FAST because of the complexity of the issues surrounding the enterprise system but eventually decided that they had to speak to the overwhelming concerns of the system related to child and adult welfare services. Patrick provided the Board the report's specific recommendations regarding NC FAST:

- *Immediately reexamine the plan to use NC FAST for the aspects of the child welfare and adult services programs that require case management functionality. Success of social services system reform requires an information system that adequately supports county administration, allows*

counties to share information with one another, enables the state to support and monitor program administration at the county level, and provides clear and reliable information to the public. Reevaluation of the use of NC FAST is critical and time-sensitive.

- *Continually improve all NC FAST modules.*

Additionally, the Directors' Association voted in January to fully endorse these two recommendations in a letter from the Association to DHHS Leadership and the General Assembly. Concern was expressed that, with the additional roll-out of counties into Intake and Assessment functionality of P4 (child welfare module), the endorsement letter by the Directors' Association would not have as much impact as the Association would hope.

Finally, Patrick briefly discussed meeting with the County Manager, the County Planning Director, the Transit Director and Jennifer Hollifield at Senior Services earlier in the week to discuss the impact of the roundabout construction. While the meeting was very brief, it became clear to Transit and Senior Services that the need for additional parking both now and during construction was a very real need. There was discussion about resurrecting the idea of off-site parking with a shuttle service to address the parking concerns. Transit and Senior Services agreed to document overflow parking needs as well as develop a cost estimate to provide to the county.

Closed Session

Lisa Leatherman made a motion to go into Closed Session to discuss personnel information as allowed under G.S. 143-318.11. Evelyn Southard seconded, and motion carried.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 20, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the DSS Administrative Conference Room.

APPROVED BY:

Chairman | Date

Secretary | Date