



Macon County Social Services Board

Thursday, July 18, 2024

Regular Meeting Minutes

Welcome/Call to Order

Patrick Betancourt called the regular meeting of the Macon County Social Services Board to order. Members in attendance included Anne Hyder, Cara Smith, Patrick Betancourt (Executive Officer and Secretary to the Board), Beneth Aiken, and Amy Sanderfur. Member not in attendance was Mike Williams due to an excused absence. Guest in attendance was Lynne Kurimay.

Seating of New Board Member and Oath of Office

Macon County Clerk of Court, Shawna T. Lamb, gave the Oath of Office to new board member, Cara Smith.

Selection of Board Chair and Meeting Schedule

Discussion was had regarding the selection of the Board Chair. Anne Hyder had discussed this with Mike Williams before today's meeting and he made a motion for Anne to continue to be the Board Chair. Cara Smith made a second motion in agreement. For State Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the Board. The Board members in attendance suggested 3rd Tuesday of every month moving forward would work best for those who are present's schedule. This will be the tentative schedule once we discuss with Mike Williams to see if that will work for him as well. Through email discussions, the Board ultimately decided to move to the 3rd Friday of each month with the meeting starting at 10:00 a.m. Regarding the change in meeting dates and time, Patrick notified the Clerk to the Board of the County Commissioners, notified NC Dept. of Health & Human Services liaison to the Social Services Commission, and asked MCIT to update the county website.

Proposed Agenda

Patrick requested to add two items to the proposed agenda today: recent social media activity regarding the agency and a follow up to last month's discussion regarding employee pay. Agenda was approved on motion of Cara Smith and second by Anne Hyder.

Minutes

June minutes were approved on motion of Anne Hyder and second by Cara Smith.

Fiscal/Budget Update

Amy Sandefur and Patrick reported briefly on the new fiscal year's budget. Amy Sanderfur and Lynne Kurimay are still going through the process of ensuring that all items are going to be covered. There was discussion regarding the ongoing support of the County Manager in regards to the agency's needs. Patrick briefed the Board on the anticipated shortfall of Child Welfare "bridge funding" in the next few month. Patrick reminded the Board that this funding stream was put into place by DHHS after the passage of the Families First Prevention Services Act in which states would be unable to claim federal IV-E dollars for children placed in certain congregate settings 10 days after entering care. The federal intent was to support states in their reallocation of IV-E dollars to the implementation of evidence-based prevention models. This federal law was passed in 2018 and because DHHS has not yet implemented a state-wide prevention model, this "bridge funding" was intended to support counties with the IV-E shortfall.

However, as the General Assembly did not allocate recurring funding to support this, DHHS anticipates there is roughly only three months of funding remaining. Amy and Patrick helped to differentiate this "bridge funding" with Emergency Foster Care funds, which were budgeted by the General Assembly in order to assist with avoiding children living in the offices of departments. This allowed the department to offer enhanced rates to foster families in an attempt to have placements for children. The funds were released from the state in January 2024 however, our department was not notified until May of 2024. Therefore we have only spent 15% of that allocation.

Crawford Senior Center Activities and S.C.O.P.E Certification Overview

In lieu of the scheduled agenda item due to Kim Crawford not being able to attend today, Patrick discussed the recent social media activity related to a specific foster care case as well as with non-profit organizations intended to support children in foster care. He informed the Board about threats made to agency staff by families with whom the department is required to serve and the steps being implemented to remedy the situation. Cara Smith inquired about the support offered to staff who are dealing with these issues. The Board was then updated on the multiple local non-profit agencies who are working with the agency.

Personnel Update/Agency Exits Data

Beneth Aiken shared personnel updates. There were three departures from the agency, Stephanie Anderson and Jacob Doster, then Brenda Norman retired from the agency. There was one transfer within the agency from Adult Medicaid to Child Support, Christie Cabe. There were no personnel changes at Senior Services. Patrick gave the Board an update to the pay scale conversation and his email to Commissioner Antoine. At the time of this meeting, no response had been given from the Commissioner but an email from Macon County HR Director requesting a meeting with department heads.

A motion to move into closed session made by Cara Smith, second by Anne Hyder. A motion to return from closed session was made by Anne Hyder, second by Cara Smith.

APPROVED BY:

 Aug. 20, 2024  08-19-24
Executive Officer/Secretary Date Board Chair Date