

**Cherokee County Department of Social Services**

**Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March 19, 2019**

**1. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Cherokee County Department of Social Services was duly called and held on March 19, 2019, at 6:30 P.M., at 4800 West Highway 64, Murphy, N.C. 28906.

**Present were:**

Gary Westmoreland, Chair

Roy Dickey, Vice Chair

Cal Stiles, Member

Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, Member

C.B. McKinnon, Member

**Staff present were:**

Amanda Tanner-McGee, DSS Director

Andria Duncan, DSS Attorney

Amanda Rhodes, Clerk

Chairman Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Clerk to the Board, Amanda Rhodes, recorded the minutes.

## **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

## **3. Modification of Agenda**

There were no modifications made to the agenda.

## **4. Agenda Adoption**

Commissioner Westmoreland made a motion to accept the Agenda, Commissioner Cal Stiles 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, with a unanimous vote, the Board approved the agenda.

## **5. Public Forum**

There were no Board or public comments or questions.

## **6. Minutes January 17, 2019**

The February 19, 2019 DSS Board meeting minutes were approved, Commissioner Eichenbaum made a motion to accept, Commissioner Stiles 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, with a unanimous vote the Board approved the February 17, 2019 DSS Board meeting minutes.

## **7. New Business**

Director McGee presented the Employee Stay Survey that DSS employees completed. The purpose of the survey was to receive honest feedback from DSS employees with any concerns and/or suggestions regarding their employment with DSS. There were 45 received surveys out of a possible 65. Director McGee discussed compiling a chart to reflect the results of the survey.

## **8. Directors Report**

Director McGee provided a review of the Director's Report provided in the Board Packet. The following items were covered:

**a) NCFAST Update**

Director McGee provided an update of NCFAST which indicated February's report showed a 96.97% CPS initiation rate and 100% foster care visits. Director McGee presented the letter issued on February 22, 2019 to the General Assembly to "seek support in implementing one of the recommendations of the Social Services Work Group". The letter was copied to the County Commissioners Associations, Associations of County Boards of Social Services, DHHS Leadership and DSS Directors. On March 11, 2019, House Bill 320/SB212 was introduced to suspend further expansion of NCFAST for Child Welfare and Adult Services.

**b) State Child Welfare Review**

Director McGee discussed the State Child Welfare Monitoring Staff completed a review of In-home cases on February 19, 20, 21, 2019. There were no corrective action items. There are practice/policy areas identified for improvement through training, supervision and practice support.

**c) State Child Welfare Consultation and Training**

Director McGee discussed the State Child Welfare Consultation and Training. CPS Investigators, Kendric McDonald and Sabrina Cunningham attended Child Forensic interviewing training in Raleigh February 4-8, 2019. Assistant Director Lisa Wells and Social Worker, Cherie Ryon attended Step by Step training in Hayesville on February 21-22, 2019. CPS In-Home Social Worker, Shawn Payne and Social Worker, David Layfield, began Pre-Service training in Candler which will concluded on March 15, 2019. DSS has submitted applications to qualify as State trainers for select programs.

**d) Judicial Update**

- Director McGee provided the Board with Sean Perrin's email in regards to the CVA update.
- Attorney Duncan provided a judicial update for the February 19, 2019 DSS court date. There were 24 cases with 17 orders achieved which included four cases achieving permanency, three obstructions due to noncompliance and one neglect petition

continued. One adjudication was continued due to jurisdiction and discovery; one permanency case was continued due to the respondent mother appearing and requesting court appointed counsel; one termination of parental rights case was continued in order for the opposing counsel to contact the respondent father in prison.

- Child Support court was held on March 8, 2019. There was a total of 30 cases with three being continued for lack of services on the parties involved; five were continued to comply, six continued to monitor income withholding for employment; one continued to obtain court appointed counsel; two continued fur to other states no providing information; six were dismissed for compliance. There were four cases resolved and three orders for arrest for failure to appear/pay.
- There were no Adult Service court hearings. There are two new Adult Protective Services filings with hearings set for March 19, 2019 and April 3, 2019.
- The Court Improvement Initiative meeting for District 30 is scheduled for March 27, 2019 in Jackson County.

#### **e.) Medicaid Audit**

Director McGee discussed options in regards to managing the increased county liability relating to the amendment in State law 2017-57 section, 11H.22.f referred to as Audit of the County/Medicaid Eligibility Determinations, effective January 1, 2019. DSS is currently in the process of obtaining a quote from The Snowden Company, Inc.

#### **f.) Child Abuse Prevention Month**

- Director McGee presented the Child Abuse Prevention Proclamation for the DSS Board's approval and signature. Director McGee discussed how DSS is hosting a Child Abuse Prevention event at the Cherokee County Courthouse the last week of April, 2019 in collaboration with the Cherokee County Board of County Commissioners, District Attorney, HAVEN, the Guardian ad Litem, and the District Judges.
- Director McGee provided information about the Walk Me Home fundraiser for the children in DSS custody which will take place on Saturday May 18, 2019. The 2016 Walk Me Home fundraiser raised \$21,000 for the needs of children in Cherokee County Foster Care.

## **8. Statistical Report**

Director McGee provided the statistical report for February 2019. DSS currently has four vacancies, no new hires, and one resignation. Director McGee discussed how the statistics on the February, 2019 report does not reflect the government shut down.

## **9. Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:43 P.M. with Commissioner Roy Dickey making a motion to adjourn, Commissioners Cal Stiles 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and all in favor. The next DSS Board Meeting is scheduled for 6:30 P.M. on April 16, 2019 at the Department of Social Services.