

**Cherokee County Department of Social Services**

**Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March 16, 2019**

**I. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Cherokee County Department of Social Services was duly called and held on April 16, 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.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Modification of Agenda**

There were no modifications made to the agenda.

**IV. Agenda Adoption**

Commissioner Roy Dickey 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.

**V. Public Forum**

There were no Board or public comments or questions.

**VI. Minutes March 19, 2019**

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

**VII. Director's Report**

Director McGee provided a review of the Director's Report provided in the Board Packet.

The following items were covered:

**1. NCFAST Update**

Director McGee provided an update of NCFAST which indicated 93.55% CPS initiation rate and 100% foster care visits. The House Bill 320/SB212 is moving forward and has resulted in a temporary halt, ordered by legislature, and legislature has also ordered for the State to analyze the issues related to in-home and foster care.

**2. State Child Welfare Consultation and Training**

Director McGee discussed the State Child Welfare Consultation and Training. Staff attended 7 hours of Title IV E Training. New employees in the Family and Children's Department attended Pre-Service Training in Buncombe County.

### **3. REAL Training- First Cohort Group**

Director McGee discussed the training that launched on April 2, 2019 in Sylva that focused primarily on the western counties of North Carolina. Director McGee discussed an upcoming meeting on April 17, 2019 with Tri-County College President, Dr. Tipton Rogers to discuss the feasibility of training at the college.

### **4. Judicial Update**

**A.** Director McGee discussed with the Board the Court Improvement Project meeting on March 27, 2019 with a follow-up meeting on May 31, 2019, in Haywood County.

#### **B. DSS Court: March 29, 2019**

- Attorney Duncan provided a judicial update for the March 29, 2019 DSS court date. There were 26 cases with consents obtained in 4 of those cases. There were 2 Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) hearings, with one being successful, and one being continued after our evidence.
- There was a total of 19 continuances which effected 7 cases; 1 was for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) staff in another court hearing; 1 for services of subpoenas; 1 for the mother being in detox; 3 to have a forensic evaluation completed; 1 for adjudication; 5 (not in custody) for compliance with in-home services; 3 for new CPS report in the home; 4 for the foster care parents to intervene.
- There was 1 Responsible Individual List (RIL) appeal dismissed for failure due to the party not appearing before the Court.

#### **C. Child Support Court: March 22, 2019**

- Attorney Duncan provided a judicial update for the March 22, 2019 Child Support Court.

- There were a total of 36 items on the calendar and 1 add on from the detention center; 9 were dismissed for compliance; 1 dismissed for a motion filed by the defendant; 11 were continued – some due to work, some for payments, 8 hearings- 1 for intervention, 3 for establishments, 4 to deny the defendant’s motion to be released; 3 Orders for arrest issued for failure to appear/comply.

#### **D. Adult Protective Services Hearings**

- There was 1 hearing continued for further investigation; 1 hearing awarding Cherokee DSS limited guardianship; 1 continued in Buncombe County for a Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE).

### **5. Medicaid Audit**

Director McGee discussed how management is continuing the process of obtaining a quote from The Snowden Company, Inc. for coverage related to Medicaid benefits claiming liability, In addition, Management is analyzing options for managing increased liability including reorganizing and reclassifying Lead Worker position(s) as Quality Assurance/Training.

### **6. Child Abuse Prevention Month**

- **Child Abuse Prevention:** Director McGee discussed the Child Abuse Prevention Event held at 12:00 P.M. on Wednesday, April 24, 2019, at the Cherokee County Courthouse. The event is a collaborative effort with the Cherokee County Board of County Commissioners, District Attorney, HAVEN, the Guardian ad Litem, and the District Judges.
- **Walk Me Home:** Director McGee discussed the fundraiser taking place on Saturday, May 18, 2019 for the children in Cherokee County DSS custody. In 2016, the Walk Me Home fundraiser raised \$21,000.00 for the needs of children in Cherokee County Foster Care. To date, the event has raised \$2,875.00. This year our goal is to raise \$10,000.

**VIII. Statistical Report**

Director McGee provided the statistical report for March 2019. DSS currently has six vacancies, one new hire, and two resignations.

**IX. New Business**

Director McGee presented the Board with a document and a power point presentation regarding the DSS Budget Recommended Change Highlights.

**X. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 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 May 21, 2019 at the Department of Social Services.