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CHEROKEE COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

4800 West U.S. Highway 64, Murphy, NC 28906

828-837-5527

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**Cherokee County Department of Social Services**

**Board Meeting**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**July 16, 2024**

1. **Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Cherokee County Department of Social Services was duly held on July 16, 2024, at 5:02 P.M. at 4800 West Highway 64, Murphy, N.C. 28906.

**Present were:**

Bo Phillips, Chair

James Jallah, Member

Pat Ivie, Member

Dixie Carter, Member

Catherine Yost, Member

**Staff present were:**

Amanda T. McGee, Director

Andria Duncan, Attorney

Daunita Maennle, APS Social Work Supervisor

Brandy Clonts, Administrative Officer

1. **Public Forum**

None

1. **DHHS MOU 24-25**

Director McGee discussed reasons she believes that the correct course of action is to suggest to the County leadership that the County sign the 2024-2025/2025-2026 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Director McGee further suggested that the MOU be submitted to DHHS with a letter outlining concerns about system-wide barriers, external to DSS, that have a negative impact on the ability of DSS to achieve benchmarks. Concerns were noted related to the delivery of required training and the problems with the court system. A motion was made by Mrs. Pat Ivie, seconded by Mr. James Jallah, to make the recommendation to the County and the Commissioners that Cherokee County sign the MOU with the draft letter to Secretary Kinsley presented to the Board for review. The motion carried.

1. **Directors Report and DSS Up-dates**

* Board Reports were reviewed and explained by Director McGee.
* County 2024-2025 Budget, COLA and Pay Plan Adjustment –

5% adjustment was applied to the overall pay plan. All DSS employees received a 2% COLA as of 7/1/2024. Motion was made by James Jallah. Seconded by Dr. Cathrine Yost to ask the county leadership for updates or information about a longevity plan throughout the 2024-2025 year. Motion carried.

* Adult Protective Services Placement Funding Gap Crisis-

APS Supervisor Daunita Maennle explained the crisis that is occurring for adults who need placements but are denied due to the gap between social security and Medicaid limits. Director McGee and Supervisor Maennle will set up a legislative meeting to discuss the Adult Protective Services placement crisis.

* Legislative Up-Date

Director McGee provided updates on key proposed legislation and what the expected impacts would be on DSS.

* Court System Challenges

Director McGee explained the challenges with the 43rd district including multiple continuances which cause late adjudication and untimely permanence. One of the root causes for these challenges is low pay for parent defenders and correlated lack of attorneys available to carry DSS cases.

1. **Approve Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes from June 18, 2024 were approved.

Motion was made by Dr. Cathrine Yost. Seconded by Mr. James Jallah.

1. **Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM with Dr. Cathrine Yost making a motion to adjourn, Mr. James Jallah seconding the motion, with all in favor.