CHEROKEE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
4800 West U.S. Highway 64, Murphy, NC 28906
828-837-7455

Cherokee County N.C. Department of Social Services

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
For
September 22, 2026

5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order

Chair Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.
Members Present:
Bo Phillips – Chair
Dr. Catherine Yost - Member
Jaems Jallah – Member

II. Approval of the Agenda

On the motion of Dr. Yost, seconded by Mr. Jallah, the motion to add DSS Board meeting dates for November and December was added to the agenda.

III. Adoption of Minutes

Approval of the minutes for August was deferred until October.

IV. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

V. Old Business

A. Be The Village Event

Dr. Yost provided an update on the Be The village Event being held at the Hackney Warehouse on October 17, 2026, from 4:00 PM until 7:00 PM. A Silent Auction is planned and childcare will be available.

B. Farm Bill Update

Director McGee presented an update on the Farm Bill noting that the delay in the bill is being discussed. Republicans want one year delay, while democrats want two years. The bill made it out of committee; it will not be voted before the midterms. It is likely headed to conference with the House. Director McGee reviewed the October 1st start date of HR1 including the reduction in

federal administrative reimbursement. Director McGee reminded the Board that the Payment Error Rate cost share will be implemented October 1, 2027, unless a delay or reversal is implemented. States above a 6% PER will be required to share the cost of benefits. Director Mcgee reviewed the error rate progress for North Carolina going from over 10% to just over 7%. Cherokee County has zero percent error rate, however, one incorrect case out of two would move it to 50%. A stable workforce is needed for the staff to be able to continue to complete their work without errors. McGee presented a handout that shows what counties are projected to have to fund with the reduction in administrative costs and the potential cost of the benefit share. The benefit share will be contingent on what happens with the farm bill and the NC error rate. The PER is calculated as a statewide percentage. It is not county specific.

C. Draft Strategic Planning Working Paper Discussion

Director McGee presented the working paper with updated chapters 1 and 2. Members discussed the progression and agreed that moving forward with formulation of focus groups and surveys for the first two chapters is appropriate and approved of those next steps.

VI. New Business

Director McGee provided an overview of the renovations underway in the DSS Building. The renovations will add two offices on the third floor for Child Support (almost complete) which will expand the space on the first floor for Adult Services, add a large training room on the first floor (in progress), add a new CPS area with two supervisor offices (complete) and remodel the reception area with expanded space for interviews and add safety protections.

VII. Management Reports

A. Supervisor Reports

Katrina Plemmons reported on Food and Nutrition data. Daunita Maennle reported on the increase in reports in Adult Services and the increased complexity of APS and Guardianship cases due to changes in State policy. Gabriella Grant reported on CPS and the increase in CPS intakes and immediate response timeframes due to changes in State Policy.

VIII. DHHS MOU Data – April

Deferred to September – Reports not available

IX. DSS Service Report

Report reviewed and accepted.

X. Staff/Unit Accomplishments

XI. Adjourn

Chair Phillips moved the meeting to be adjourned at 6:35 PM. So moved, seconded by Mr. Jallah and passed unanimously.

CCDSS Board Report

SERVICE MONTH: September 2026

Budget — Fiscal Year

	Sep-26	% of Budget	Sep-25	% of Budget
Total Revenues (YTD)	$1,082,754.22	28.2%	$823,451.92	19.1%
Total Expenses (YTD)	$4,801,333.37	44.5%	$4,479,023.64	45.4%
Expenses without settlement	$1,872,761.94	21.6%	$1,550,452.21	18.0%

Services — Fiscal Year

Child Welfare	Sep-26	FY-YTD	Sep-25	FY-YTD
# of Child Abuse Reports Received	56	143	45	112
# of Screened In Reports	35	89	21	56
# of Screened out Reports	21	54	24	56
# of Other County Assists	7		7	
# of Open Assessments on last day of month	33		23	
# of Open In-Home (Case Mgmt.) Services Cases	2		3	
# of Children Entered Into Legal Custody	3	5	2	4
# of Children Left Custody	1	1	1	2
# of Children In Legal Custody	35		32	
# of Children Placed With Relatives	10		7	
# of Children Placed in Foster Homes/Other Placements	25		23	
# of Foster Care 18-21	4		2	
# of Licensed Foster Homes	10		10	
# of Agency Adoptions Completed	0	0	1	2
# of Non-Agency Adoptions Completed	0	0	3	3
# of Infants Affected by Substance Abuse	0	0	1	2
# of Child Family Team Meetings	13		28	

Adult Services	Sep-26	FY-YTD	Sep-25	FY-YTD
# of Adult Protective Services Reports	24	83	23	64
# of APS Reports Accepted for Evaluation	12	56	13	36
# of Representative Payees	16		18	
# of Current Guardianship Cases	20		22	
# of Adult Care Homes	2		3	
# of Unclaimed Bodies	0	1	0	0
# of Medicaid Transportation Clients	113		112	
# of Transit Accepted Trips	93	213	47	153
# of Transit Denied Trips	40	87	3	13
# of Medicaid Clients Reimbursed Trips	23	74	13	37
# of Third Party Trips	40	87	not tracked	not tracked

Child Support Enforcement — Fiscal Year

	Sep-26	FY-YTD	Sep-25	FY-YTD
# of Active Cases	554		570	
# of Paternity	5	14	1	5
# of Orders Established	8	17	7	18
# of Modifications Completed	1	0	0	0
# of Enforcement Actions Completed	46	57	30	99
# of Locate Actions Taken	7	32	8	33
Amount of Collections	$88,581.75	$176,389.20	$95,438.34	$260,281.24
ARREARS — Total Outstanding	**$2,673,479.37**		**Collected FY-YTD Arrears**	**$56,082.47**
Inherited Arrears	**$850,246.38**			
Outstanding Purge Amounts	**$202,393.81**			

Economic Services — Fiscal Year

	Sep-26	FY-YTD	Sep-25	FY-YTD
# of Medicaid/Special Assistance Appl Taken	215	662	245	713
# of Medicaid/SA Recerts completed	259	1120	293	1281
# of Medicaid Participants	10,453		10,772	
# of Special Assistance Participants	62		38	
# of TANF Participants	9		7	
# of FNS Applications (applications denied)	194 (54)	528 (149)	186 (38)	521 (123)
# of FNS Recerts completed	187	526	196	572
# of FNS Benefits Paid	$626,741.00	$1,870,698.00	$702,383.00	$2,134,683.00
# of FNS Households	2,018		2,242	
Fraud Collections	$298.00	$549.02	$193.00	$820.00
# of Day Care Recipients	110		127	
# on Day Care Waiting List	0		0	
Energy Assistance (Heating/Cooling)				
LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) Appl Taken	0	0	0	0
LIEAP Benefits Paid	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
CRISIS Applications Taken	17	38	20	40
CRISIS Benefits Paid	$3,303.51	$7,147.68	$3,569.02	$8,647.19

Personnel

Vacancies/Hires/Terminations for September 2026			Vacancies
New Hires	3		(11) as of September 30, 2026
New Hire Orientations Completed	3		**NOTE**: (2) of the vacancies are new positions approved for FY27
Interagency Transfers	0		
Separations	3		
Promotion or Work/Against	3		
Reason for Separation	(X) Retirement; ( ) Relocation; (X) Dismissal ( ) Resignation		
Length of Service	(X) Less than 2 yrs.; ( ) 2-5 years; ( ) 5-10 years; (X) over 10 years		