

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
July 29, 2015

THE ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MET ON WEDNESDAY: July 29, 2015 at the Hillsborough Commons, Hillsborough, North Carolina.

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEMBERS PRESENT: Claire Millar, Chair; Tamara Dempsey-Tanner, Vice-Chair; Pat Garavaglia; and Ann Wilkerson.

GUEST: None.

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEMBERS ABSENT: Earl McKee.

STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Coston, Director; Sharron Hinton, Human Services Manager; Lindsey Shewmaker, Human Services Manager; and Katherine Thompson, Management Analyst.

I. Call to Order and Introductions

DSS Chair, Claire Millar, called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

II. Board Comments

DSS Vice-Chair, Tamara Dempsey-Tanner, asked that the phrase “pay for” in the first paragraph on page 3 of the draft minutes be changed to “administer.”

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Agenda Changes

None.

V. Action Items

On a motion by Pat Garavaglia, the Board approved the minutes of June 15, 2015. Ann Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

VI. Items for Discussion and/or Decision

1. Election of Board Officers

Claire Millar nominated Tamara Dempsey-Tanner for Social Services Board Chair. Tamara Dempsey-Tanner accepted the nomination. Pat Garavaglia and Ann Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent. Pat Garavaglia nominated Ann Wilkerson for Vice-Chair. Ann Wilkerson accepted the nomination. Tamara Dempsey-Tanner seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

2. CIP/LIEAP Outreach Plan

LIEAP (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program) is a time-limited program that targets the most vulnerable populations first. Individuals age 60 and above can apply for LIEAP in December, and individuals under age 60 can apply in January. The program runs from December to March. Orange

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County DSS usually receives enough LIEAP funds (approximately \$500,000 per year) to serve everyone who applies. There is a limit to the amount of LIEAP funding that each client can receive. This amount is determined by a client's heating source; propane and heating oil tend to be more expensive. To be eligible for CIP (Crisis Intervention Program) funds, an individual must be in medical crisis. CIP funds are typically used for heating in the winter and cooling in the summer. Individuals must present a cut-off notice to be eligible for CIP funds. DSS makes CIP and LIEAP payments directly to vendors. The General Assembly approves these programs every year.

Each year, Orange County DSS must develop a plan for CIP/LIEAP outreach. Human Services Manager Lindsey Shewmaker presented this plan to the Board. She explained that the plan has not changed significantly over the past few years. DSS sends a letter to all clients who are potentially eligible for CIP/LIEAP. This mailing includes an application and self-addressed envelope to make returning the application easier. Adult Services and Child Welfare social workers distribute applications to their eligible clients. DSS also issues press releases. Tamara Dempsey-Tanner asked about the response rate for these outreach efforts. Lindsey Shewmaker stated that Management Analyst Katherine Thompson would look into that this year. Ann Wilkerson recommended that DSS reach out to churches and faith communities, perhaps by placing an advertisement in their church bulletins. Lindsey Shewmaker agreed with this recommendation and proposed that DSS send a mailing to all Orange County churches. She stated that she would change the CIP/LIEAP Outreach Plan to include this mailing. Claire Millar motioned to approve the plan with the proposed change. Ann Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

3. Community Protection Report

Each year, Orange County produces a comprehensive report on child abuse and neglect and child fatalities. The report examines these issues at a system-wide level. It lists top reasons why fatalities occurred and discusses how the system could have intervened with families before they went into crisis. The report also provides recommendations for improvement. DSS is most involved in the child abuse and neglect portion. Assistant Director Denise Shaffer chairs the abuse and neglect committee, and the Health Department chairs the fatality committee. Pat Garavaglia motioned to approve the Community Protection Report. Claire Millar seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

Director Nancy Coston explained that a member of the Social Services Board historically has served on the committee, which meets quarterly. Claire Millar expressed interest in receiving more information about this. Nancy Coston stated that Denise Shaffer would be happy to meet with her to discuss this further.

4. Director's Report

Nancy Coston has a Work Support meeting in Washington, DC in September. She also has meetings in Raleigh for the TANF Academy. The TANF Academy is working to incorporate a focus on child development and well-being by bringing in research on the effects of poverty on children. Nancy Coston explained that North Carolina is one of eight states asked to participate in the TANF Academy. The Academy is targeting youth ages 14 and above in Work First.

Nancy Coston informed the Board that two child care centers, Amity and Binkley, recently closed. DSS helped clients at these centers to move their children to other child care centers. These programs were not run by the churches at which they were located; the churches just provided space for the programs.

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5. Closed Session (Director's Evaluation)

Claire Millar moved to executive session pursuant to General Statute § 143-318.11(a)(6). Ann Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

VII. Announcements

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 17, 2015 at the Hillsborough Commons, 113 Mayo Street, Hillsborough, North Carolina at 4:00pm.

Pat Garavaglia moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:38pm. Tamara Dempsey-Tanner seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

Submitted by:

Nancy Coston
Director

Claire Millar
Chair