

MINUTES  
ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
September 15, 2014

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**THE ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MET ON MONDAY:** September 15, 2014 at the Hillsborough Commons, Hillsborough, North Carolina.

**BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEMBERS PRESENT:** Pat Garavaglia, Chair; Claire Millar; Tamara Dempsey-Tanner; and Ken Chavious.

**GUEST:** None.

**BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEMBER ABSENT:** Earl McKee.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Nancy Coston, Director; Sharron Hinton, Human Services Manager; and Joyce Lee, Business Officer.

**I. Call to Order and Introductions**

DSS Chair, Pat Garavaglia, called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

**II. Board Comments**

Pat Garavaglia shared a note from County Manager Bonnie Hammersley approving and Exceptional Meritorious Service Award for Nancy Coston. She also informed the Board that Ann Wilkerson had agreed to join the Social Services Board. Ms. Garavaglia noted she felt Ms. Wilkerson will make an excellent board member and Lindsey Shewmaker is working with the Board of County Commissioners' office to put the nomination on the agenda for a meeting next month.

Claire Millar asked that the Huesner Fund be added to the agenda the next time Denise Shaffer is able to attend.

**III. Public Comments**

None.

**IV. Agenda Changes**

None.

**V. Action Items**

On a motion by Claire Millar the Board approved the Minutes of August 18, 2014. Tamara Dempsey-Tanner seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

**VI. Items for Discussion and/or Decision**

1. Child Care

Tina Clark, Child Care Supervisor, provided an overview of the changes to child care subsidy. For any annual reviews after October 1, 2014, income eligibility changes from 75% median income to 200% Federal Poverty Level for children ages 0-5 and to 133% for children ages 6-12. This will cause many working parents to lose child care. Effective October 1, 2014, regardless of cost of care (including part time and afterschool), parents will pay 10% of monthly gross income as their fee. This will represent a significant increase for some families, particularly those with large families and

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part time care. Effective January 2015, income from relatives not currently counted for eligibility and fees will have to be included. This will have a significant impact on grandparents, aunts and uncles who are providing homes for children and may also cause an increase in foster care placements. A rate increase was approved for providers which may also impact how many children can be served with the subsidy funds.

For several years, the state has not rebased subsidy allocations using the available Census data. This year begins a six year cycle to implement this rebasing and Orange County's allocation has decreased by approximately almost \$700,000. The second phase of the implementation will occur on July 2016.

There are currently 276 children on the wait list and they are being assessed to see how they are impacted by the new policies.

The Board had a discussion about ways they could assist with these issues. Staff agreed to bring recommendations back to the next meeting for the Board to review and approve. Information and recommendations will also go to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration in October or November.

2. Preliminary Holiday Plans

Sharron Hinton discussed the agency's planning efforts for the annual holiday programs. Staff will again be collecting toys at a UNC men's' basketball game. This year the game will be on December 7<sup>th</sup> against ECU.

Letters to families eligible for the holiday program will be going out in mid-November. The toy collection boxes will be placed around the county beginning in November as well. Toys for Tots received an anonymous donation of \$8,000.

Staff will be recruiting volunteers to help with the game and other Toy Chest activities. Ms. Hinton added she will be scheduling a meeting with Pat Garavaglia and Claire Millar to assess how to incorporate more volunteers.

3. School Social Worker Update

Sharron Hinton updated the Board on the status of the school social workers. All staff previously assigned to the schools through the former contract have been reassigned within the agency and are successfully assisting agency programs. Orange County Schools are preparing to initiate the hiring process for the new school social work positions and Social Services will be making plans depending on the schools' hiring decisions.

4. Social Services Institute

Nancy Coston reminded the Board about the upcoming Social Services Institute held in Hickory, October 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. She noted that early registration ends September 20<sup>th</sup> and encouraged board members to attend the three day event. Pat Garavaglia indicated she would like Ann Wilkerson to take her place at the Institute to be able to attend training.

5. Director's Report

Staff are working with OWASA to help develop solutions for families who receive cut off notices from the utility company.

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Staff will be meeting with IFC about the homelessness grant and better ways to administer it.

Nancy Coston has been asked to serve on the Partnership to End Homelessness Committee by Commissioner Pelissier.

Sharron Hinton, Robert Gilmore, and Ms. Coston will be attending a transportation meeting with County Manager, Bonnie Hammersley and Craig Benedict, Planning Director to discuss ways to improve transportation for Social Services clients to employment, job fairs and training sites.

At the request of the county, staff are exploring possibilities to acquire and utilize the space currently occupied by the Dollar Tree once their lease has expired.

There have been media inquiries regarding the situation at Carol Woods. It is still under investigation and would be inappropriate for staff to comment at this time.

## VII. Announcements

**The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 20, 2014 at the Hillsborough Commons, 113 Mayo Street, Hillsborough, North Carolina at 4:00 pm.**

Claire Millar moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 pm. Ken Chavious seconded the motion. The motion was carried without dissent.

Submitted by

Nancy Coston  
Director

Pat Garavaglia  
Chair