

Minutes
Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services
Central Region Office
1604 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, VA 23229

April 14, 2010

Members Present

Trudy Brisendine, Danny Brown, Shirley Culpepper, Willie Greene, Margaret Luca, Brenda Hornsby, Michelle Larkin, Barbara Manuel, and Bela Sood.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Trudy Brisendine called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair thanked Jane Clements for hosting this meeting and for her hospitality.

Ms. Clements welcomed the Board to the Central Regional Office and acknowledged local directors and attendees.

REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

Richard Martin, Manager of the Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs reviewed the meeting agenda. Mr. Martin advised that the Office of Public Affairs is highlighted at today's meeting; with Information Technology overview in June followed by Human Resources in August.

Information Items

Regulatory Update

Mr. Martin provided members with a Status of Regulations Report as of April 13. He highlighted 22 VAC 40-25 Auxiliary Grant Programs and advised public comment ends on April 16, 2010.

Mr. Martin reviewed 22 VAC 40-131, Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Placing Agencies and advised issuance of a fiscal impact statement (copy attached to minutes). Highlights include specifying how many treatment foster care cases may be handled at one time by a caseworker; allowing executive directors of social services to have a doctorate or masters degree in any subject, but require them to have five years experience rather than the current required three; specifying topics that must be covered in training of foster parents; increasing the time allowed after a foster care placement for the child placing agency to complete a full written assessment from 30 days to 45 days; and change bedroom requirements so that children over the age of two may not share a bed, and children over the age of three may not share a bedroom with a child of the opposite gender.

Members were given a copy of the Regulatory Advisory Panel membership and meeting schedule developed by Judy McGreal. Mr. Martin reported that the NOIRA for this regulation should come before Board at their December meeting. Ms. Hornsby sits on RAP #4, and members are welcome to attend these meetings.

Budget Update

J. R. Simpson, Chief Financial Officer summarized the agency budget and advised that reductions reflect the impact of difficult choices that affect clients, local departments, and caseloads.

He reported that the Governor has indicated he plans to take the thirty days allowed to review the budget approved by the General Assembly, therefore it is possible that some of the items mentioned in the reports could change in the next thirty days.

He stated there is a great deal riding on the FMAP rate increase—is optimistic about chances for approval and are monitoring the proceedings closely. At this time, there is no timeframe for when this will be resolved at the federal level.

The funding reflected in the reports relates to state general funds only and where reductions are indicated, they are inclusive of reductions taken in the FY10 base budget (did not include applicable local matching funds).

Mr. Simpson reminded members this was a quick review in an effort to be responsive to a number of member questions. Members provided with several handouts (copies attached to the minutes).

Legislative Update

Mr. Martin provided copies of the 2010 Legislation Implementation Plan; 2010 Legislative Studies and Reports, and Social Services Related Legislation Reports dated 2010 and 2011 (copies attached to the minutes). Jan Sigler was introduced as the staff from his office that maintains these plans. Mr. Martin will discuss prior year reports in June.

He advised there was one new report this year, which examines options and incentives for workload efficiencies of the local human services delivery system. Eric Beecroft will take the lead on this study.

He advised paperwork was submitted to the Commissioner that would eliminate the annual study on prioritizing local requests for increased state reimbursement for renovation or construction of space, the annual report on sliding fee scale and eligibility criteria, and identify strategies to obtain the maximum amount of federal funds available for child care for TANF recipients, and families whose income are at or below 185 percent of federal poverty levels.

Levels of Child Care

Lynne Williams, director of Licensing Programs provided an overview of the different levels of child care in Virginia that include Child Day Centers, Religiously Exempt Child Day Centers, Family Day Homes, Family Day Systems, Voluntarily Registered Family Day Homes, and Certified Preschools (presentation attached to the official minutes).

Members questioned the numbers of complaints and revocations received on homes versus centers. Ms. Williams stated it is about equal and discussed fines, sanctions, and license revocation. She advised that most critical violations are abuse or lack of supervision.

For further information on facilities in specific areas of the state, please visit <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/search/licensed.cgi>

Child Welfare Transformation Update

Paul McWhinney, director of Family Services reported that the CWTCC continues to meet monthly. He reported that although they are scaling back, negotiations for the VISSTA contract are underway.

Family Engagement

Statewide rollout continues with first stage LDSS—next stage begins in June. Roundtables in each region are being conducted for first phase agencies and an excellent training video is now available and shared with Board members.

Court Improvement Project- Lelia Hopper from the Court Improvement Project of the Supreme Court sponsored facilitation service meetings for up to 20 grantees. Five localities took advantage of this training on team decision making. Grantees will begin training May 6.

CSA -policy clarifies meeting issues.

Mr. McWhinney reported the department is still in negotiations with federal partners to finalize the PIP; CWAC is involved in providing input. Four key strategies identified are engaging families, improving assessment and service delivery, reengineer training, and managing by data and quality assurance.

Re-engagement with Casey Foundation –oriented new consultants on May 24. Casey team met with the Department of Family Services April 7 and will be here until December 2010.

Office of Public Affairs Overview

Marianne McGhee, director of Public Affairs provided an overview of the work handled by the Public Affairs office. Members met her staff via video and heard about their accomplishments and upcoming projects. The office handles internal public relations for home office, regional and field offices, 120 local departments of social services, as well as external clients (reporters, etc.)

She talked about outreach projects such as developing ads that ran in malls, on sides of buses, etc. Her group also takes the lead on managing the Combined Virginia Campaign as well as supports the agency with customer service related calls and constituent correspondence.

Ms. McGhee advised she is attending the National Governor Association meeting next week in DC.

Comment Period

Comment from the Public

None

Comment from Local Boards and Directors of Social Services

Eddie Harrison, director of Russell County thanked the Board and department for all they do to support his agency. With budget reductions, they are revamping the way they operate, but will continue to do the best they can to protect citizens.

He reported that drug abuse continues to be a big problem and advised that three meth labs were uncovered and destroyed last week.

Comment from Boards and Directors of Community Action Agencies

Russell Rice, Southwest RCAP Services advised they are a private non-profit corporation promoting the development of affordable water and wastewater facilities, activities, and the resources to improve the quality of life for low income rural residents. Southeast RCAP serves Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. RCAP, created in 1969 brings safe water and wastewater systems to over 400,000 residents.

Chuck Emmons, Quin Rivers CAA advised they are a non-profit corporation serving the counties of Caroline, Charles City, Hanover, King and Queen, King George, King William, New Kent, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and the City of Fredericksburg. Founded in 1970, the organization sees its mission of strengthening individual, family, and community development as the best approach to serve its low to moderate-income clients and the counties within which they reside.

George Morris, Bay Aging spoke to the Board about Bay Aging, a community action partnership linking people of all ages to community resources. Active in Essex, Gloucester, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, and Westmorland Counties, Bay Aging traditional programs and services through Bay Family Housing, Community Living Programs, and Bay Transit blend seamlessly into the services and options provided through community action. Bay Aging is a non-profit 501 C3 charitable organization that has been providing programs and services to families throughout the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck since 1978.

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives

Susan Clark, First Vice President of the VLSSE reported on behalf of Sarah Snead, who could not be present.

She reported on the League meeting held in Fredericksburg last week, saying there was lots of energy, excitement, and collaboration. The League has historically been one voice for 120 local agencies although they understand there are many ideas around the Commonwealth. She advised they are looking forward to their May spring conference in Roanoke. The new slate of officers will include President Susan Clark-First Vice President Carl Ayers, Second Vice President Cathy Pemberton, Third Vice President Kimberly Irvine, Fourth Vice President Shel Douglas, Treasurer Roma Morris, and Secretary Rick Verilla.

She reported they are positioning themselves to respond to the two studies on Government Reform and Efficiency. Each local agency across the Commonwealth is preparing to deal with the budget and is awaiting the final budget letter. She reported that the League had sent a letter to the Commissioner regarding Family Engagement and were pleased with the response.

She spoke of their meeting with Commissioner, Mr. Simpson, Mr. McWhinney, and Mr. Steinhauser regarding how to carry out the business of local agencies uniformly without having duplication by multiple committees.

In closing, she thanked the Board and said the League is appreciation of the collaboration among everyone.

Comment from the Virginia Community Action Partnership

Jim Schuyler, Executive Director of VACAP said he was pleased to see so many CAP agencies attended this meeting and appreciated them highlighting their work achievements for the Board.

He advised their June conference is focusing on a significant community economic development workshop.

He reported that VACAP plans to come before the 2012 General Assembly to request funds.

He reported on EITC, saying that federal returns were down by 7K—this is due to AARP not counted this year. He reported that the average EITC refund was up two percent. Due to inclement weather, many of the tax help sites shut down and did not reopen.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Culpepper) and seconded (Ms. Luca) moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting as presented. Motion approved with all in favor.

Discussion

None

POSSESS Resolution

On behalf of Bonnie Perry, POSSESS President, Michelle Larkin read a Resolution to the Board in support of recognizing the month of April as Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month.

Discussion

None

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Culpepper) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to approve the Resolution as presented recognizing the month of April as Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month, urging all Virginians to acknowledge their public service and contributions. Motion approved with all in favor.

Louisa County Jurisdiction-wide Deviation

Mr. Dale Mullen, Louisa County Administrator sought Board approval to include Louisa County Social Services employees under the Louisa County local jurisdiction-wide personnel plan, effective June 1, 2010.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Brown) and seconded (Ms. Sood) moved to approve Louisa County Social Services request to include employees under the Louisa County local jurisdiction-wide Personnel Plan effective June 1, 2010. Motion approved with all in favor.

Discussion

None

22 VAC 40-661, Child Care Services, Notice of Intended Regulatory Action

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Larkin) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to rescind Board action approved June 17, 2009 approving a notice of intended regulatory action for 22 VAC 40-661, entitled Child Care Services. Motion approved with all in favor.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Luca) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to approve the Notice of Intended regulatory action for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order 36 (2006) and the Administrative Process Act.

Discussion

None

Committee on Children's Issues

Brenda Hornsby, committee chair called the meeting of the whole together. Rita Katzman, director of CPS discussed how Structured Decision Making (SDM) works and provided members with copies of the assessment tool used. This is a "paper" look since it is in the pilot stage and not utilized on line by all localities.

She also provided a copy of the Hornsby-Zeller Workload Study done in October 2008. The study determined that SDM cases took more time than the non-SDM cases. This study done by CRC, was from a sample of cases from California, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Georgia, and Michigan. Ms. Sood suggested that a seasoned worker, medium worker, and new worker use SDM and compare the time taken to process a case. This comparison could be a useful tool in determining whether SDM is used. She would also like to see statewide collaborations for funding and assistance among sister agencies.

It was reported that foster care uses a reunification tool.

Sarah Snead will have additional information for the committee at their June meeting.

Members are encouraged to bring additional SDM questions they may have to the next meeting. The Fatality Form will be discussed in June. Members received a copy and asked to bring it to the next meeting.

Ms. Hornsby mentioned that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and shared the Governor's Proclamation with members.

Ms. Katzman advised the Prevent Child Abuse Conference is April 22 and limited to 200 attendees statewide.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Manuel said this was a very informative meeting and remarked how much she enjoyed the Family Engagement video.

Ms. Brisendine mentioned that Director Jack Ledden had resigned from Prince William Department of Social Services.

She advised she will attend the Prevent Child Abuse Conference April 29 in Richmond and a Prevent Child Abuse Partnership meeting in Price William April 27.

She also attended a SCAN luncheon in April that recognized grass root workers.

Other members, in turn, thanked Mr. McWhinney for sharing the Family Engagement video and Jane Clements and staff for their hospitality in hosting this meeting.

Comment from the Commissioner of Social Services

Margaret Ross Schultze advised that the Governor had recently designated People Incorporated in Abingdon to serve Clark County, and reported that Fauquier Community Action Agency now serves Loudon County.

ARRA Funding—she advised that federal partners would be in VDSS beginning Thursday to review ARRA.

Commissioner reported that Nikki Nicholau, director of Volunteer and Community Services recently established a new community partnership in Warsaw.

Leadership Academy-- Graduation for Leadership Academy members took place on Tuesday. Former Commission Conyers was present as he was a mentor to one of the participants. Members confirmed this leadership academy is open to worker level staff.

Commissioner Schultze advised they met the TANF participation rate and would not receive penalties.

Child Care System design continues. Much of the project funded with ARRA dollars.

The department is working with the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to set up listening tours with field agencies that will begin in southwest Virginia April 26. The Secretary will hear first-hand what is working for local agencies and what is not, and what can be improved upon. These listing tours will continue throughout the summer and will involve local directors and line staff. Commissioner will provide updates as they occur.

The department continues to work through a hiring freeze as part of budget reductions. They are currently looking to administration to identify inefficiencies in the department.

Commissioner advised that the Board has two members that will rotate off effective June 30 and two more that can be reappointed should they choose to serve. She reminded staff to use the online link provided by Ms. Rengnerth advising the Governor of your desire to continue service to the Commonwealth. Seats are available on many other Boards and members should apply if they have an interest.

There is also a link to a form where someone can nominate a person to serve. The online form is available April 15, 2010.

Nominating Committee Appointment

Ms. Luca will serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee. Ms. Manuel and Mr. Greene will serve as members. They will provide a proposed slate of officers at the June meeting.

Future Meeting Schedule

June 16-17, 2010

VDSS Office 2nd floor conference room

801 E. Main Street

Richmond, VA 23219

Agenda items for June meeting

Overview of Information Technology Division

APS/Auxiliary Grant Update-Paul McWhinney

Adult Protective Services Overview-Paul McWhinney

Review of prior year Legislative Implementation Plans

Adjournment

With no further business of this Board, the meeting adjourned at 5 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Rengnerth