

**Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services**

April 19, 2023

Attending: Buckey Boone (Chair), John Kines (Vice Chair), Megan Miloser (Secretary), Leslie Ford, Maria Benjamin, Don Carey, Jennifer Slack, DeRonda Short, Zulma Santos, Sheryl Garland, and Rachna Heizer.

Also in Attendance: Dr. Danny Avula (Commissioner) and Ellen Malenke (Assistant Attorney General).

Meeting called to order at 10:00am – Mr. Boone

Comments from the Commissioner – Dr. Avula provided local, state, and federal updates.

COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Dearborn provided comments on the Child Support Family Engagement Program and expressed his gratitude for his caseworker Lisa Smith.

There were no comments from boards and directors of community action agencies.

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives – Rebecca Morgan, President
Ms. Morgan shared unwinding is at the top of the agenda for all local departments. She spoke about the trauma reaction to the media and its impact on day-to-day moral and functionality. The League is having a media relations training at the upcoming conference in May. The League is in collaboration with VDSS in making the replacement VACMS system their top legislative priority. She shared that her continued focus on improving communication internally with the local departments and with the state doing a tremendous amount of advocacy going forward.

Kimberly Ayers, Chair, Child and Family Services Committee, shared April is child abuse prevention and awareness month. In January 2023, the Child and Family committee identified seven main areas with four that at the top. They include alternative living arrangements and court room size; relative and fictive kin subsidy payments; increased payment rates for high priority placements; and resource parents. She shared DSS has been very responsive the League on these priorities. She thanked Commissioner Avula for his leadership and team collaboration.

Erik Johnston, Executive Director, VA Community Action Partnership, provided updates on the work of Virginia's 31 community action agencies. Many community action agencies are partnering with VA DHCD on the Commonwealth's broadband opportunity planning efforts. These regional plans will be submitted in the summer and help inform the state's overall plan on ways to increase access and adoption efforts. VACAP has joined the Virginia Funder's Network to increase partnerships between community action agencies and philanthropy. VACAP appreciates the bipartisan support of proposed increases during the General Assembly for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance network. VACAP is partnering with VDSS on leadership training and peer groups for CAA leaders and frontline workers. May is Community Action Month and VACAP will be hosting regional meetings throughout the month. VACAP will hold its second annual Summit on October 10-11 in Richmond.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approved February 2023 Meeting Minutes
On Motion Duly Made, (John Kines), second (Maria Benjamin), motion approved with all in favor.
2. Resolution to Recognize Resilience Week Virginia
On Motion Duly Made, (Leslie Ford), second (Zulma Santos), motion approved with all in favor.
3. Resolution to Recognize April 2023 as Office Services Support Appreciation Month
On Motion Duly Made, (Zulma Santos), second (Megan Miloser), motion approved with all in favor.
4. 22VAC40-201, Permanency Services-Prevention, Foster Care, Adoption & Independent Living - Periodic Review Report
On Motion Duly Made, (Jennifer Slack), second (John Kines), motion approved with all in favor.
5. 22VAC40-411, General Relief Program - Periodic Review Report
On Motion Duly Made, (Sheryl Garland), second (Megan Miloser), motion approved with all in favor.
6. 22VAC40-910, General Provisions for Maintaining & Disclosing Information of Public Assistance, Child Support Enforcement & Social Services Records - Periodic Review Report
On Motion Duly Made, (Leslie Ford), second (John Kines), motion approved with all in favor.
7. 22VAC40-880, Child Support Enforcement Program - Fast Track Regulation
On Motion Duly Made, (Don Carey), second (John Kines), motion approved with all in favor.
8. 22VAC40-705, Child Protective Services – Proposed
On Motion Duly Made, (John Kines), second (Leslie Ford), motion approved with one opposed (DeRonda Short).
9. 22VAC40-325, Fraud Reduction/Elimination Effort – Withdraw Current Action
On Motion Duly Made, (Jennifer Slack), second (Don Carey), motion approved with all in favor.
10. Establish Board Legislative Committee – Buckey Boone
Mr. Boone appointed Don Carey and Sheryl Garland as the Board Legislative Committee.
On Motion Duly Made, (Jennifer Slack), second (Leslie Ford) motion approved with one oppose (DeRonda Short).

Placing Children in Foster Care with Kinship Foster Parents – Garrett Jones provided an overview of placing children in Foster Care with kinship foster parents.

Appoint Nominating Committee for New Officers – Mr. Boone appointed Maria Benjamin and Leslie Ford as the nominating committee for new officers.

June 21, 2023 Meeting Location & Reception – Mr. Boone announced the June 21 meeting will be hosted by the Warren County DSS in Front Royal. A reception will be held the evening of June 20 and that all members are encouraged to participate.

Meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm