

Minutes
Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services

VA Department of Social Services
7 N. 8th Street
Richmond, VA 23219

February 18-19, 2009

Members Present

Trudy Brisendine, Brenda Hornsby, Shirley Culpepper, Peppy Linden, Maggi Luca, Barbara Manuel, Danny Brown, and Bela Sood

Members Absent

Michelle Larkin

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Trudy Brisendine.

Committees met from 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Children's Issues
Brenda Hornsby-Chair

Committee on Poverty Awareness
Maggi Luca and Peppy Linden-Co-chair

Adult Issues
Danny Brown-Chair

Announcements
The Commissioner's Roundtable is tonight in the Vault Level Conference rooms from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Mr. Culpepper was welcomed back and he thanked the Board for their cards and calls of concern.

Mr. Brown thanked the Board for their concern during his wife's recent illness.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner Conyers welcomed the Board to the Central Office and introduced staff in attendance. Attendees included Jane Clements, Paul McWhinney, Renee Fleming-Mills, Marianne McGhee, Robert Hobbleman, Dottie Wells, J.R. Simpson, Don Rainey, Deborah Eves, and Margaret Schultze.

As Central Regional Director, Jane Clements welcomed the Board to Richmond and extended an invitation to members to host a future meeting in the central region office.

REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

Richard Martin, Manager of the Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs reviewed the meeting agenda.

Mr. Martin provided members with a letter dated January 23, 2009 from Paul McWhinney regarding Board concerns about CPS procedures, training, and protocol for interviewing young children.

On Thursday, February 19 beginning at noon, a public hearing on the Family Day Home regulation will be held. Members are encouraged to attend.

On Thursday, the legislative committee of the VLSSE will meet. Members are encouraged to attend.

Members received a letter of assurance on the new permanency regulation.

Status of Regulations

Richard Martin advised that as of February 18, 2009, the department has 58 regulations in place. Twenty-three of the 58 are currently in process. 13 are being repealed, seven are being amended, three are undergoing periodic review, and six additional new regulations are being promulgated. That totals 64 regulations and potential regulations, 29 of which are currently active.

There are two regulations in public comment: 22 VAC 40-111, Standards for Licensed Family Day Homes and 22 VAC 40-705, Child Protective Services.

Concerns include 22 VAC 40-25, Auxiliary Grant Program; 22 VAC 40-35, The Virginia Independence Program; 22 VAC 40-72, Standards for Licensed Assisted Living Facilities, and 22 VAC 40-130, Minimum Standard for Licensed Child Placing Agencies; 22 VAC 40-201, Permanency Services-Prevention, Foster Care, Adoption, and Independent Living; 22 VAC 40-211, Resource, Foster and Adoptive Family Home Approval Standards; 22 VAC 40-411, General Relief Program; 22 VAC 40-601, Food Stamp Program; 22 VAC 40-630, Disability Advocacy Project; 22 VAC 40-670, Degree Requirement for Social Work Occupational Group; and 22 VAC 40-675, Personnel Policies for Local Departments of Social Services. The report is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and Child Welfare Transformation Updates

Paul McWhinney, Director of the Division of Family Services provided an update on the CFSR. An on-site review for the week of July 13, 2009 is scheduled. Site selection criteria include the largest metropolitan area in Virginia; a mix in population size; a mix of geographic areas; and representation from a cross-section of practice and a range of strengths and areas needing improvement. Three localities recommended for review include Fairfax County, Campbell County, and Hampton with alternates of Roanoke and Virginia Beach.

He advised that Family Services staff continue to draft the statewide self - assessment. The draft is due to the Children's Bureau in March 2009. They will review and to provide feedback. The final version is due May 2009.

Staff is working with the Children's Bureau to get an updated State Data Profile; which will include data from April 2007-March 2008 using the Adoption Foster Care Analysis Reporting System and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System to use in the statewide self-assessment.

Sixty-five cases will be reviewed across the three on-site review locations (25 in home –CPS ongoing) and 40 in foster care. Fairfax will review 35 of the cases, and the other two localities will each review 15 cases. The Foster Care sample has four categories of cases. (The child must be 16 or 17 years old and have permanency goal; child must be under 16 and have a permanency goal of adoption; child must be under 16 and have any goal but adoption; and child must be under 16-have any goal but adoption, and have entered care before April 1, 2008.)

Mr. McWhinney advised there are two distinct phases of the Virginia Children's Services System Transformation. The first phase is working with 13 localities to develop a shared vision of children's services and best practices at state and local levels in 2008, and the second phase is to implement the reform statewide in 2009.

Three critical strategies for statewide rollout include education and information sharing; short-term training; and regional capacity building.

Nine informational regional meetings, hosted by Ray Ratke, will begin in March. All localities will receive an e-kit of resources and best practices. The regional meetings will help set the stage for regional collaboration.

The Transformation Academy will provide a series of short-term training to key state staff, beginning with an overview of training followed by skill-based training on topics such as permanency, family engagement, team decision making, community based care, data management and resource family recruitment development and support and will shift from bringing in the experts to becoming the experts. Estimated date to take place is between February and April 2009.

Members received a copy of the Virginia Children's Services System Transformation 2008 Annual Report. A copy is included with the official minutes housed in the home office.

2009 Legislation Update

Richard Martin provided an update on social services related legislation as of February 18, 2009. He advised that next Monday is the last day to act upon bills. February 23 is the final day for committees to take action on legislation (midnight). Conference report on the budget bill is due by midnight on February 24. The Conference report on the budget will be available after noon on February 26, 2009 and adjournment on February 28. Veto session reconvenes April 8.

Mr. Martin provided handouts to members that included the department's legislative package; information on House Joint Resolution 731; and the proposed regulation for licensed child-placing agencies.

The original proposed regulation plan was developed in 2007, and included a goal for the NOIRA to be presented to the State Board at the December 2008, meeting. Due to the simultaneous activities and influencing obligations, it became necessary to revise the original projected date. The new goal includes submission of the NOIRA to the State Board by June 2009. A report specifying the factors that influenced and caused delay is attached to the official minutes.

COMMENT PERIOD

Public Comment

Stephanie Gray, First Vice President of BPRO thanked the Board for approving their Resolution to designate February as Eligibility Worker Appreciation Month.

Local Boards and Directors of Social Services

None

Local Boards and Directors of Community Action Agencies

None

22 VAC 40-201-, Permanency Services-Prevention, Foster Care Adoption and Independent Living
Proposed Regulation

Discussion: Ms. Sood shared concern over the definition of "timeliness". Mr. McWhinney and Ms. Zarris advised the definition would be fleshed out in the guidance document that is used with the regulation.

Ms. Sood stated that having a mental health assessment is critical and was best to screen for problems on the front end as opposed to addressing problems once a child has been placed and becomes disruptive.

A discussion on the financial impact followed. Although Mr. Brown agreed with Ms. Sood on addressing problems up front, he was concerned about the financial impact on local government.

Ms. Hornsby advised the proposed regulation states 72 hours and mentioned the feasibility of extending this time limit. Ms. Brisendine felt the motion made was vague and could be flexible; following a specific criteria and not mandate a mental health exam for every child, only those meeting the specific criteria.

Sarah Snead advised that locals routinely do mental health evaluations even when there is no evidence of disruptive behavior. Although the financial piece may be an issue for some areas, the bigger issue may be locating qualified providers.

On behalf of other local directors, Ms. Snead asked the Board to consider hosting a public hearing on this regulation to ensure localities and their partners could provide comment on the regulation.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Sood) and seconded (Ms. Luca) moved that the final regulation brought before the Board would include a recommendation on incorporating a requirement that a mental health assessment be done (following specific criteria) in a timely manner following the medical assessment. Motion carried with all in favor.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Sood) and seconded (Ms. Linden) moved to include hosting one public hearing on 22 VAC 40-201, Permanency Services-Prevention, Foster Care Adoption and Independent Living on the second day of the Board's regularly scheduled meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Sood) and seconded (Ms. Luca) moved to approve the proposed regulatory packages for the following regulations for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order Number 36 (2006): 22 VAC40-201-10; 22 VAC40-210; 22 VAC40-240; 22 VAC40-250; 22 VAC40-260; 22 VAC40-280; 22 VAC40-800; 22 VAC40-810 and approve the fiscal impact analysis of this action for distribution to local boards of social service and as amended to include a mental health assessment as needed and one public hearing. Motion carried with all in favor.

Virginia League of Social Services Executives' (VLSSE)

Sarah Snead, President of the VLSSE provided greetings from the League and thanked the Board for considering their concerns on regulation 22 VAC 40-201.

Due to travel restrictions, many locals are finding it difficult to attend the State Board meetings.

She spoke to the Board on increasing caseloads, advising that resources stretched beyond reason; federal compliance impact; and staff health is negatively impacted. They are drowning in paper and are running out of space to store records. She requested the Board to join them in advocating for adequate resources, assisting with electronic caseload that is now available, and to streamline policy whenever possible. A handout was provided that depicts the caseload increases in Chesterfield-Colonial Heights and Prince Williams departments of Social Services.

Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP)

Jim Schuyler, Executive Director of VACAP, voiced his agreement to Ms. Snead's comments.

He advised that TAP-Roanoke Valley was recently voted the best operated non-profit in the area. They run the agency like a serious business, saying that you cannot always lean on the government. Members will remember that this agency hosted their meeting last year.

Mr. Schuyler shared information on the Virginia CASH Campaign. He advised that tax filing season began mid January with 28 coalitions preparing to offer free tax preparation services, financial education programs and asset building opportunities. Through the new webinar series, the State Information Technology Consortium is helping build capacity of local departments of social services, community action agencies, and local coalitions to increase the total number of low-income individuals approved for the EITC and to expand their EITC efforts. Thus far, four webinars have been presented.

February 20-21 is the first Virginia EITC Matched Savings weekend. The Department of Housing and Community Development is partnering free tax prep coalition with the local Virginia Individual Development Account intermediary and hopes to have more savers enrolled in the savings programs. Recipients will be encouraged to use part of their EITC tax refund to create assets through saving in the VIDA program.

Coalitions providing free tax preparation reported that 1,207 federal returns had been completed (totaling \$1,456,744). 611 EITC returns (\$1,121,789) had been done, and 855 state returns were completed for a total of \$182,808. Three hundred eighty-six volunteers performed these services.

Members received a copy of the Virginia Community Action Partnership Annual Report (copy attached to the official minutes).

Mr. Schuyler advised that \$1 billion in additional funding for national CSB's is included in the President's stimulus package with \$16 million coming to Virginia and there are additional opportunities to compete for discretionary funds in the stimulus package.

Ms. Linden spoke of the good job done with EITC and mentioned sending the podcast to the free clinic in Charlottesville for viewing.

Commissioner's Report

Governor Kaine announced Virginia is unlikely to have additional cuts in the short term due to the stimulus package. Much of the stimulus dollars are coming to the state and not to individual agencies. There is specific language in the areas of medicaid and food stamps; however, portioning of other funds has not been resolved.

Commissioner advised that successes in the Division of Finance have served the department well in this crisis mode. One-time dollars to help the state balance the budget and prevent additional impacts on local agencies were located.

He referred to the Hornsby Zeller Study requiring an extraordinary amount of dollars needed to fund eligibility. He feels that technology is the way to address this issue in an enterprise-wide system, by making changes to the eligibility process, as other states have successfully done. We can utilize web-based technology in CAP agencies where you can see resources and needs on one screen when accessing a client record, thus freeing eligibility workers to do other jobs.

Commissioner advised that during a presentation tomorrow, Eric Beecroft would share a satisfaction survey sent to local agencies that requested their input as related to working with the state office. Based on feedback, this survey will serve as a starting point to base future improvement.

This type of survey could also be used by local agencies to gather information from the clients they serve.

Commissioner spoke on safe and stable family resources. A group convening in Petersburg on February 26 will include representation from the Fatherhood Initiative, Department of Social Services, Health Department, Prisoner Reentry, VA Cooperative Extension Service and private donors to address ways to work with people, using a holistic approach.

Committee Reports

Committee on Adult Issues: Mr. Brown, Chair

Tom Steinhauser briefed committee members on the proposed changes to 22 VAC 40-601, Food Stamp Program regulation. The recommendation to repeal the proposed regulation was made to allow the provisions of the proposed regulation to be included in a new regulation being promulgated by the department.

Members agreed on the proposed action to repeal (August action) and replace with the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action. That recommendation went to the full Board.

Committee members were also briefed on the workload increases that local departments of social services are experiencing, especially in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Mr. Steinhauser described two waivers from the Federal agency that VDSS is seeking to assist with application processing. These include the ability to conduct all SNAP interviews via telephone and standardizing income deductions.

Committee on Children's Issues: Ms. Hornsby, Chair

Permanency Regulation:

The Chair commended the department staff and workgroup members on completion of the permanency regulation and was particularly complementary of the language used within the regulation, comprehensive nature, format, and the inclusion of mandatory initial and annual training of foster care and adoptive workers and supervisors. Department staff shared potential concerns regarding inclusion of monthly visits of children in foster care in accordance with the federal mandate and a change in the requirement for monthly review of children returning home from six to three months. Ms. Zarris shared information on concurrent permanency planning and current piloting of this casework approach in twenty local departments. Ms. Hornsby requested a future presentation to the Board on the status of the pilot program of concurrent permanency planning and department plans for future adoption within all local departments.

Foster Care Code of Ethics:

Ms. Zarris shared that the committee reconvened allowing an opportunity for consideration of feedback provided by FACES. It is the recommendation of the children's committee to adopt the Foster Care Code of Ethics.

Resource, Foster Adoption Family Standards Regulation:

This regulation should be ready by the April Board meeting. There is a change within the regulation surrounding mandatory training for foster parents. Previously there were defined "hours of training" for foster parents which has been changed to "acquiring competencies." Each local department will have discretion in determining how to achieve defined competencies. Ms. Hornsby asked department staff how will we measure attainment of minimum competencies considering the degree of discretion and variation across local departments. Ms. Parrish agreed to follow up on this question. Ms. Manuel inquired about current PRIDE curriculum used for training foster parents. Ms. Zarris shared information on the curriculum.

Department Updates:

Mr. McWhinney provided brief updates on the Child & Family Services Review, continuous quality review process of the department through the efforts of the monitoring unit staff, involvement and hiring of Susan Taylor, Family Placement Manager, and the additional hiring of Family Placement Resource Specialists who will share primary responsibility of assisting localities with how to most effectively recruit and retain parents. The emphasis will be on "child recruitment" and family and community based placements.

Legislative Update: Mr. McWhinney shared that there are several open adoption bills to follow within the legislature involving birth and adoptive parents and increased family engagement.

Committee on Poverty Awareness: Ms. Luca and Ms. Linden Co-chairs

The major topic discussed was the upcoming Summit: Rethinking Poverty: Economic Opportunity for All Virginians, which will take place on May 7 at the OMNI in Richmond. Michelle Larkin has represented the Social Service Board as a member of the work group. Task Force names will be forwarded to Secretary Tavener and Governor Kaine. The Poverty Summit will begin with remarks by the Governor, followed by someone who can address comprehensive/national issues (possibly Ron Haskins or Jody Levin Epstein) and then an individual who can talk about the Virginia poverty profile. The task force and about 100 invitees will break up into small work groups. In the summer, a statewide listening tour will take place. A draft plan will be prepared to present to the gubernatorial candidates in October and a final document will be available in the spring of 2010. Issues in need of clarification include a realistic goal for these efforts; policy vs. benchmarks and indicators for success. The Commissioner proposed that a goal be to improve Virginia's national ranking.

ACTION ITEMS

22 VAC 40-601, Food Stamp Program

Notice of Intended Regulatory Action

Tom Steinhauser, Director of the Division of Benefit Programs advised the proposed amendments alter the length of time an applicant for food stamp benefits may be held pending before processing, expand transitional benefits, and renaming the program to SNAP.

Discussion:

None

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Brown) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to withdraw the regulatory action and NOIRA to amend 22 VAC 40-601, Food Stamp Program that was approved on August 20, 2008; and request approval of the NOIRA to amend 22 VAC 40-601, Food Stamp Program for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order number 36 (2006). Motion carried with all in favor.

Approval of October 15-16, 2008 Minutes

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Brown) and seconded (Ms. Linden) moved to approve the Minutes of the December 2008 meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.

Foster Care Code of Ethics

Betty Jo Zarris, Assistant Director of Family Services advised that the work group that had been assisting in developing a Code of Ethics for the foster care program, met on December 16 and January 8 to address concerns expressed during the December Board meeting. A handout reflecting input from numerous stakeholders was given to Board members.

Discussion:

Ms. Linden noted that the foster care agreement did not contain notification numbers if going out-of-state or country. Ms. Zarris verified this information is in the placement agreement that families receive.

Ms. Brisendine noted the effective date is January 1, 2009. Ms. Zarris advised the law stated January 1, and her information would reflect a date change.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Hornsby) and seconded (Ms. Manuel) moved to approve the policy for a written agreement to place foster children in a foster home or children's residential facility that includes requirements for a Code of Ethics and mutual responsibilities for all parties to the agreement. Motion carried with all in favor.

22 VAC40-35, Virginia Independence Program

Final Regulation

Mr. Martin advised the revised regulation will remove obsolete references to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, the Virginia Targeted Jobs Grant Program, and Code of Virginia citations that were renumbered during recodification; align exemptions from the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) with those listed in the Code; expand opportunities for individuals to apply for VIEW hardship exceptions and allow greater participation in educational activities when participating in community work experience; and delineate the process for establishing paternity when an applicant for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families has provided information on multiple possible fathers of the child.

Discussion:

Ms. Brisendine questioned how much a paternity test cost, and was advised it is \$50.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Brown) and seconded (Mr. Culpepper) moved to approve the final regulatory package to amend 22VAC40-35, Virginia Independence Program for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order Number 36 (2006). Motion carried with all in favor.

**22VAC 40-100, Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Caring Institutions
Periodic Review and Retain**

This action will complete the periodic review of the regulation as required by 2.2-4017 and Executive Order 36 (2006). The department recommends the regulation is retained without change.

Discussion:

None

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Sood) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to approve the periodic review report for submission to the Department of Planning and Budget and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources as required by the provisions of Executive Order Number 36 (2006) for regulation 22VAC 40-100, Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Caring Institutions. Motion carried with all in favor.

**22VAC 40-141, Licensing Standards for Independent Foster Homes
Periodic Review and Retain**

This action will complete the periodic review of the regulation as required by 2.2-4017 and Executive Order 36 (2006). The department recommends the regulation is retained without change.

Discussion:

Ms. Luca asked how the two homes differed and was advised they are self-pay self-placement homes.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Luca) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to approve the periodic review report for submission to the Department of Planning and Budget and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources as required by the provisions of Executive Order number 36 (2006). Motion carried with all in favor.

22 VAC 40-160, Fee Requirements for Processing Applications

Periodic Review and Retain

This action will complete the periodic review of the regulation as required by 2.2-4017 and Executive Order 36 (2006). The department recommends that the regulation is retained without change.

Discussion:

Ms. Linden thought it would be helpful if the people providing comment listed their affiliation. Mr. Martin advised that providing this information is not mandatory on the Town hall.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Hornsby) and seconded (Mr. Culpepper) moved to approve the Periodic Review report for submission to the Department of Planning and Budget and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources as required by the provisions of Executive Order number 36 (2006). Motion carried with all in favor.

Repeal and Replace Chapter K Records management Section Volume I Administrative Manual

Donald Rainey, Director of the Office of General Services advised that section 63.2-335 of the Code specifies that the State Board shall prescribe the manner and form that local departments of social services use to maintain the records of cases handled and business transacted. The last update to Chapter K, Records Management was August 1988. The information contained in that chapter is outdated and serves no useful purpose for the local departments. The State Library Board and the State Librarian for all public agencies established the guidance based on procedures.

Discussion:

None

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Brown) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to approve the Records Retention guidance for local departments of Social Services. This guidance will be published in the new Finance Guidelines Manual for Local Departments of Social Services. Motion carried with all in favor.

Social Work and Employment Service Worker Resolution

On behalf of the Social Work and Employment Service Workers in local departments of Social Services, Board Secretary Peppy Linden read a resolution recognizing the month of March, 2009 as Social Work Month; calling upon all Virginians to join in acknowledging their public services and contributions this 18th day of February, 2009.

Discussion:

Members recognized the hard work of social and employment service workers throughout the Commonwealth.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Culpepper) and seconded (Ms. Sood) moved to approve a resolution recognizing the month of March, 2009 as Social Work Month; calling upon all Virginians to join in acknowledging their public services and contributions this 18th day of February, 2009. Motion carried with all in favor.

Partnership of Office Services Support Employees in Social Services Resolution

On behalf of the Office Services Support Employees in local departments of Social Services, Board Secretary Peppy Linden read a resolution recognizing the month of April, 2009 as Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month; calling upon all Virginians to join in acknowledging their public services and contributions this 18th day of February, 2009.

Discussion:

Members recognized the hard work of office services support employees throughout the Commonwealth.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Culpepper) and seconded (Ms. Hornsby) moved to approve a resolution recognizing the month of March, 2009 as Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month; calling upon all Virginians to join in acknowledging their public services and contributions this 18th day of February, 2009. Motion carried with all in favor.

Recess 4:10 p.m.

Thursday, February 19, 2009

Reconvene at 9:05 a.m., Chairperson Trudy Brisendine presiding.

Informational Items

Early Childhood Development and Training Report

The Chair advised that Kathy Glazer was ill and would not present the Early Childhood Development and Training Report update. Assistant Commissioner Schultze provided handouts to members that included the Office's 2008 accomplishments and data on the professional development training for child-care professionals, and statistics on medication administration training. This item will appear on the April agenda for further discussion.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Linden mentioned the issue of poverty and its new face. The Poverty meeting was very informative and she is delighted and respectful of the vision and dedication of staff at VDSS.

Mr. Brown agreed with Ms. Linden's comments.

Ms. Hornsby stated this was a very enjoyable meeting and appreciated the opportunity to have department staff share their perspective in the committee meeting.

Ms. Hornsby provided clarification to the motion on the permanency regulation to ensure the mental health piece be incorporated into the motion. Commissioner Conyers stated it was better to refer the client to a CSB rather than mental health facility if the CSB was closer to the client.

Ms. Brisendine stated it was her hope that the CSB would be at the table to ensure they are in agreement with the suggestion made by Commissioner.

Ms. Luca asked about the possibility of having the June Board meeting in Henrico or Hanover. Mr. Martin advised he had done some preliminary work and both Hanover and Henrico were options. Since the VDSS is moving this fall, he is trying to schedule the October and December meetings to outside agencies. The home office will host the April meeting, the regional office could be an option in June and adjoining localities for the August, October and December meetings.

Ms. Luca thanked Commissioner for a wonderful and valuable roundtable event.

She shared her excitement over the Poverty Summit. She suggested that Michelle Larking serve on the planning committee. Other members and Ms. Schultze agreed.

Mr. Culpepper echoed remarks made by Ms. Linden and Mr. Brown. He thanked members for their cards of concern.

Ms. Manuel said she was encouraged to be present and appreciated the reports and creative thinkers on problems being faced, realizing that future technology is valuable to getting the job done effectively.

Ms. Brisendine noted the reports from staff were excellent. She shared a letter sent to her from the Department of MHMRSAS and their offer for members to attend their meeting and provide public comment. Members were encouraged to attend meetings in their respective areas.

Members were encouraged to attend the public hearing on the Family Day Home regulation today at noon.

There was also an invitation to attend the VLSSE Legislative meeting beginning at 12:30 today.

Ms. Brisendine shared information on a meeting she and Ms. Sood had with Rita Katzman and BJ Zarris. Any generic recommendations on procedural changes will come before the Board.

Overview of the Division of Finance

J. R. Simpson, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) provided an overview of the division to include the four-year program/plan, division guiding principles, finance organization, state and local support, challenges and statewide economic impact.

Accounting, Budget Office, Financial Systems, General Services, Risk Management and State Disbursement Units all fall under the CFO office.

Mr. Simpson shared comments from the Northhighland Study. This study revealed that central office finance support for local offices is perceived as very good. Random Moment Sampling compliance has been well implemented and is used to determine statewide funding and must be tightly managed and reviewed for quality. VDSS is ensuring a high level of compliance with Random Moment Sampling standards.

Results from the local department survey concluded that respondents are relatively satisfied with VDSS finance support. Seventy-two percent were satisfied with the overall support that VDSS finance staff provided to local departments and only 5% were dissatisfied.

Challenges include limited financial resources, rationalizing local funding allocations; leveraging technology; leadership; retaining the edge; cost allocation plan amendments; DOA quarterly report; APA audit; and federal reviews and audits.

Update on Research and Development

Eric Beecroft, Director of the Office of Research provided information on EITC eligibility and 2007 participation for medicaid, food stamps and TANF clients in Virginia. He advised that postcards to clients claiming EITC had been mailed, but without a good response. Utilizing robo calls to clients may be a good resource and cost effective since schools use them.

He shared the results of a survey that arose from Strategic Plan Goal 4. The survey intention is to answer how well VDSS meets their responsibilities for supporting local departments.

The overall response to the online survey rate was 72% with more than 6,000 local staff responding. Of this percentage, 1.5% were directors, the remainder were line workers.

The best opportunities to improve its support to local departments include providing timely notice of policy changes, more local input on policy changes and increase the frequency of policy training, revise the funding allocation process to more closely reflect changing workloads; communicate the key priorities for VDSS more clearly; increase recognition of high-performing local departments and provide more effective assistance to local departments with identified performance issues. Thanks to Beth Jones for her work on this survey.

He further advised that several thousand open-ended comments received mentioned State staff by name in a positive way. Comments were shared with state and regional offices to let them know how much they are appreciated. Ms. Brisendine asked Mr. Beecroft to share this information with CAP agencies.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Linden asked for an update on the stimulus package and how it will impact our clients.

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

April 15-16, 2009 Home Office, Richmond

June 17-18, 2009 TBD

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Ms. Brisendine reviewed a listing of April agenda items to include the following:

- Presentation from Community and Volunteer Services, to include Americorp.
- Update from Governor's Advisory Board.
- Poverty Summit –add as an agenda item so all aspects and commitment to attend listening sessions.
- Concurrent Permanency Planning, CFSR and Transformation Update.
- Appoint Nominating Committee
- Review work plan set for SBSS depicting their accomplishments.
- Address the recession.

- Report on the Stimulus and how it impacts our clients.
- Update on Early Childhood Development & Training Report

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss and by consensus, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Submitted by:
Pat Rengnerth
February 18, 2009