

**Minutes  
State Board of Social Services**

**June 16, 2005  
Berry Hill Plantation  
South Boston**

**June 17, 2005  
Halifax Dept. of Social Services**

**Members Present**

Julie Christopher, Chair  
Danny Brown, Vice Chair  
Robert Spadaccini  
Carol Ann Coryell  
Nettie Simon-Owens  
Marilyn Rigby  
Jean Cobbs

**Members Absent**

Maggi Luca, Secretary  
William (Billy) Mitchell

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the VA State Board of Social Services was called to order at 9:05 a.m., Chairman Christopher presiding.

**Welcome & Introductions**

Betty Wells, Director of Halifax Dept. of Social Services welcomed Board members to South Boston and provided history; geographical and demographics on the area.

Members were invited to attend a reception at the Prizery tonight from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

The meeting on Thursday will be held at the local DSS office where lunch will be provided following visits to an Assisted Living Facility, Day Care Center and shadowing local employees during interviews.

Local Board members and distinguished guests were introduced.

William Coleman	Executive Director Tri-County Community Action Agency
Eddie Harrison	Russell County
Susan Clark	City of Galax
Dottie Newcomb	Lunenburg County
Ben Owen	King William County
Fred Fraley	Danville
Gwen Edwards	Danville

Shawn Rozier                      Charlotte County

**Agenda Review**

Richard Martin reviewed the meeting agenda. Chairman Christopher advised that Commissioner Conyers would speak to organizational changes during the meeting on Thursday.

**Regulatory Review**

Mr. Martin advised that as of June 14, the Department of Social Services has 63 regulations in place. 33 of the 63 are currently in process.

Of those 63, 13 are in the process of being repealed  
Of those 63, 11 are in the process of being amended  
9 additional new regulations are in the process of being promulgated

That totals 72 regulations and proposed regulations.

Mr. Martin advised there is one regulatory action currently in public comment:  
22 VAC 40-910, Community Services Block Grant Program, public comment on proposed amendments ends on July 29, 2005.

The department has received permission to publish 3 additional regulations, including:  
22 VAC 40-80, General Procedures and Information for Licensure, a Notice of Intended Regulation to amend will be published on June 27, 2005, and public comment will end on July 27.

The joint action 22 VAC 40-770, Standards and Regulations for Agency Approved Providers, and 22 VAC 40-771, Adult Services Approved Providers, Notices of Intended Regulatory Action to repeal the existing regulation and promulgate a new regulation will be published on July 11 and public comment will end on August 10.

Also, permission will be granted to publish two additional actions before the next filing deadline on June 22:

22 VAC 40-41, Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit, a Notice of Intended Regulatory Action to amend the regulation.

22 VAC 40-2 Notice of Intended Regulatory Action to establish the regulation.

Two regulations have been placed on a temporary hold at the request of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources in order to coordinate their promulgation with the new Assisted Living Facility regulation. They are:

22 VAC 40-25, Auxiliary Grant Program  
22 VAC 40-745, Assessment in Adult Care Residences

Mr. Martin shared his concern that Regulation 22 VAC 40-201 that was dealt with in December was still in the hands of the Dept. of Planning and Budget (DPB) and not with the Dept. of Social Services. Members confirmed that 177 days had passed instead of the allotted 45 days.

Ms. Vicki Johnson-Scott advised her staff was to have a phone conference meeting today at 1:00 p.m. to answer any other questions DPB might have.

***ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Spadaccini) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved to direct the Board Chair to write a letter to the Department of Planning and Budget if the matter was not resolved today; requesting information on the reason for delay and also to invite DPB staff to attend the August meeting and address the delay problems to this Board and to educate the Board on their process to complete the requests they receive. Motion carried with all in favor.***

#### **Committee of the Whole**

***Rita Katzman***, Program Manager for Child Protective Services (CPS) and ***Virginia Powell***, Fatality Review Manager with the Office of the Medical Examiner provided members with a report from the Virginia State Child Fatality Review Team and review of what has been learned about prevention. Copies of these reports are attached to the official Minutes housed at the DSS Home Office.

***Lynne Williams***, Assistant Director of Licensing Programs provided members with the matrix of comments received during the March Roundtable of Assisted Living Facilities. A copy of this matrix is attached to the official Minutes housed at the DSS Home Office.

Ms. Simon-Owens questioned if and requested that panel members will receive a copy of the matrix that was provided to members.

Ms. Christopher expressed her thanks to the department for keeping the Board involved. She advised receiving numerous emails from providers and Board members on the excellent meeting results.

Mr. Spadaccini addressed item #25 regarding the Auxiliary Grant Rate. He stated it was his hope the Board will be more forceful in requesting this rate be increased. Although it was increased slightly, it is still woefully inadequate.

***Carolynne Stevens***, Director of Licensing Programs provided members with an update and preview of Assisted Living Facility (ALF) Regulations; and a preliminary briefing grid on General Procedures Regulation and Revision of ALF Regulations. Copies of these reports are attached to the official Minutes housed at the DSS Home Office.

Members were reminded that the ALF Advisory Committee will meet on June 22.

(Children Committee and Adult Committee broke out for individual sessions.)

**Public Comment**

*Susan Clark*, Director of Galax Social Services advised she drove in to personally thank Ms. Coryell, Ms. Cobbs, and Mr. Spadaccini for their dedication and service to the Board over the past years.

**VLSSE Update**

*Ben Owen*, League President thanked Ms. Coryell, Ms. Cobbs, and Mr. Spadaccini for their work with the League over the years. He advised he looks forward to working with the new members. He reported:

League has put together a process to define shortfalls in eligibility.

Foster Care fund rates are low; around \$400 per month if not in therapeutic foster care.

Defined cost of PIP elements; received around 5 out of 26 million dollars—continue talks.

Medicare D—continue talks.

There are concerns surrounding VITA and technology.

Working on Workforce Development with Legislation and the department.

Mr. Spadaccini thanked the League for their partnership and education over the years.

Ms. Coryell thanked Mr. Owen and Ms. Clark for their education of the Board.

Ms. Christopher advised that Mike Hall had passed around a foster care funding sheet compared to boarding pets. She would like members provided a copy of this very enlightening report. Mr. Owen will ensure the report is forwarded.

**Commissioner Comments**

*Commissioner Conyers* advised he had made an organizational observance during his consideration for Commissioner. Twenty-four people reporting directly to him was not a workable way to operate. He advised the former Commissioner had a position for Chief Operation Officer in the process. He reported the position has been filled temporarily with Wallace “Bo” Harris. Mr. Harris has thirty three years of government experience and a wealth of state government expertise. Commissioner confirmed that non-program staff will report to Mr. Harris. This will make for better communications within the organization.

He reported that David Mitchell is leaving DSS for a position with DMV as their Chief Administration Officer. A search for his replacement will begin immediately.

Commissioner Conyers advised that Kathy Glazer had done a great job putting events together for the Governor's Early Child Care Initiative. She was scheduled to report on this tomorrow; however, she was given another assignment on Monday afternoon by the Office of the Secretary. He apologized this information was late coming before the Board thus causing a change in the agenda. This information will be presented at the August Board meeting.

Commissioner advised the department is beginning its legislative work. Richard Martin is scheduling meetings. Commissioner Conyers stated his priority is to do something about benefits to termination. It is estimated that one-quarter million people will apply for Medicare D. Projections indicate one-half hour per customer to make a referral and one-hour if customer makes application at the local office. He reminded members that 100 percent of the work will be done at the local office.

He advised that 71 additional staff is needed at the local level and that food stamps and increases in other benefit programs need to be addressed.

He thanked local agencies for their commitment to BPR. All processes have been reviewed and need to turn "as is" into what "should be".

In listening to the Fatality Review presentation and the relationships between MHMRSAS and DSS, the League President said "it's all about money". It may be true but it's also about relationships and collaboration.

He is meeting with CAPs in Virginia Beach tonight and with Headstart throughout the state tomorrow because this is also important. Headstart and CAPs tend to provide hope and forward looking attitude to families. When there are interventions, there will be less likelihood of fatalities as those heard about this morning. It is important to also have Headstart and CPS workers in the households.

He expressed his thanks to Ms. Coryell, Ms. Cobbs, and Mr. Spadaccini for their work on the Board. He stated that hundreds of DSS staff have benefited from their work.

He advised that the department is well ahead of other agencies in terms of Strategic Planning efforts (95%). The Commonwealth has a planning process to take the model developed throughout the department (along with partners) and put it into a state reporting model without losing integrity of the program. Partners were kept in the loop as we are changing from budget driven process to service area process. Commissioner noted that not all of the partners have the funding streams as VDSS and it's been a bit challenging.

Ms. Christopher mentioned that she and the Commissioner had previously discussed whether the Board would or would not be included in the Strategic Plan and asked if this was discussed during the Strategic Planning Meeting. Commissioner confirmed it had not, but stated we clearly need and will ensure the Board as well as front line staff representation will be included in the Strategic Plan. He confirmed with both Ms. Stevens and Ms. Johnson-Scott that they will serve as reminders at the next meeting that the Board will be included in the Strategic Plan.

Commissioner provided an update on the Disaster Food Stamp Program. He advised 37 staff are no longer employed by DSS due to intentional program violation (willful act). Some were done through early retirement and position resignation; 22 were actual terminations. In every case there were appeal and due process rights. In conclusion, he feels that the people made the best decisions at the time and does not plan to overturn previous discussions.

Ms. Christopher thanked the Commissioner for his remarks and advised she, Vice Chair Brown and Commissioner had met this morning to discuss the agenda change that had been made without Board knowledge. She advised the Commissioner had confirmed that the Board owns the agenda and apologized for the late notice removal of Ms. Glazer and her presentation. He advised this was a staffing issue and unfortunately there was no backup staff to provide this information to the Board as scheduled. Because the Board's time is valuable in coming here, he advised that Licensing Programs will provide a presentation tomorrow to replace Ms. Glazer's presentation tomorrow.

Ms. Simon-Owens asked if the training on the HR manual approved at he last meeting had occurred as scheduled. Commissioner Conyers confirmed that Acting HR Director Phyllis Sisk had advised that training had taken place and was being well received. Mr. Owen confirmed hearing good comments on the training.

Ms. Rigby advised she had learned a lot about Strategic Planning through the committees and staff and remarked it seemed to be a good process.

Commissioner Conyers encouraged the Board members to call staff directly any time they needed a better understanding of an issue. He felt the Board may want to hear directly from a CAP and some of the other partners on what seem to be working and what isn't.

Ms. Christopher advised that procedures are needed for more in-depth lines of communications open between the Board, department, partners, etc. It is important to hear from other departments on issues and gain a better understanding. This will be addressed during the Board Retreat scheduled for September.

Board staff will be reporting to the Chief of Staff and nothing is going to change for the Board.

Commissioner Conyers is committed to attending Board meetings and members should contact him when they feel it necessary as he has the ultimate responsibility and takes this seriously.

Commissioner stated that Richard Martin is doing a job coordinating regulatory issues as well as other (HR) materials.

Ms. Cobb commented that improved communications will ensure people are treated equally.

**Action Items**

Investigation of Child Abuse and Neglect in Out of Family Complaints  
22 VAC 40-730  
Exempt Final Regulation

Discussion: None

***ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Rigby) and seconded (Ms. Coryell) moved to accept the Children Committee's recommendation to pass the regulation as presented. Motion carried with all in favor.***

Fraud Reduction/Elimination Effort  
22 VAC 40-325  
Final Regulation

Discussion:

On behalf of the committee, ***Ms. Michelle Lauter***, Fraud Program Manager advised that the requested changes help state control spending allocations to local agencies. Controls will be through accounting and set in place performance expectations (17 investigations per month for locality with 1 local worker).

There were no funds allocated to establish collections. Recommend to centralize collections for locals not getting the job done (closed and denied cases). Locals would handle active cases.

Performance expectations developed two years ago based on last two previous years. There is concern that local agencies may not drum up fraud in local agencies. A group with representation from PAVE, BPRO, League and DSS may need to convene to determine what amount should be paid to local agencies; could use the previous one-two years.

***ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Spadaccini) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved on behalf of the Adult Committee's recommendation to pass this regulation. Motion carried with all in favor.***



**Award Presentation**

Chairman Christopher awarded the outgoing members with Silver Revere Bowls.

Carol Coryell  
Chair 2000-01

Member 1998-2005

Ms. Coryell served as medical professional on the Board.

*Ms. Coryell* thanked local directors for sharing information that made her job on the Board much easier. She gave special thanks to Ms. Rengnerth for her assistance and to Mr. Spadaccini for taking her under his wing during her time as Chair. She thanked Richard Martin for his assistance with regulations and special thanks to Carolynne Stevens, Rita Katzman and Nick Young for all their assistance to her over the years.

Ms. Coryell advised that she had been instrumental in ensuring foster care regulations were in place as only policy existed.

She was one of the first members to visit with local agencies to hear their concerns and ensure they were sent personal letters to attend upcoming Board meetings.

She saw the development of EBT and was glad this was in place to reduce fraud.

She advised she had seen Differential Response take shape and working in local agencies.

She advised she had served on the CPS Out of Family Advisory Group, the Day Care and Adult Committees as liaison for the Board.

She thanked Ms. Christopher for her job as Chair and for improving communications between the Board and department.

Jean Cobbs  
2001-2005 Member

*Professor Jean Cobbs* stated it had been a pleasure serving with everyone and was grateful for their expertise. While facing personal challenges, the Board gave her more than she could ever return to them.

She advised bookmarks had been made for members and staff. The inscription was as follows:

For years, it has been my good fortune to serve on this Board; I have learned that though our individual paradigms change from time to time, one truth remains: the hungry, the poor, widowed, orphans, handicapped and the otherwise needy will always be among us.



May it always be our commitment to ensure that the quality of these lives is improved by our best judgments, ability, creativity, and resources. May you continue to serve without self-importance, self-righteousness or selfishness, but with compassion and concern. As you serve, may you continue to do so with the same sincere heart and genuine sense of the common good that I have found in you. And, in all you do may you be greatly blessed.

Robert C. Spadaccini, Sr.  
1997-2005 Member  
1999-2000 Chair  
2002-03 Vice Chair  
1997-98 Secretary

***Robert Spadaccini*** provided the following farewell remarks:

I would like to recognize my sister Barbara and brother-in-law Dave Green and thank them for their attendance. I would like to thank the local agencies of Southside Virginia for their hospitality and Nettie Simon-Owens for arranging this location.

Today will be my final meeting with this body and marks the departure of the last appointee of former Governor George Allen and his administration.

I have been honored to serve the previous three Administrations of the Commonwealth, the citizens and employees of Virginia and privileged to serve with such dedicated and passionate colleagues over the last decade.

When my appointment began Virginia was on the forefront of changing the face of welfare and how we as a government serve those who need our assistance most. Not assistance to provide a “hand-out”, but to provide a hand in helping our most impoverished citizens to become self-sufficient. The actions of Virginia led welfare reform and shined as a model for other states as well as the federal Department of Health and Human Services and Administration for Children and Families.

Since 1995 Virginia’s welfare cases receiving assistance declined by 51% and we now work with the hardest to serve clients. With the requirements for work and time limits for TANF payments the focus of our services has truly changed. As of March 31, 2005 there were a total of 110,259 individuals enrolled in Virginia’s Initiative for Employment not Welfare although the average monthly wage statewide was only \$859.00; of the 34,393 TANF cases 14,618 are enrolled in the VIEW Program.

Over the past decade this body has reduced regulations from 123 to 73 in effort to streamline government, strengthened families throughout Virginia and provided a model for welfare reform, although the work is far from being done.

I believe the focus must now center on increasing the availability and affordability of child care, transportation and a sustainable living wage for our clients. We must continue to work with local agencies to provide adequate funding for the local delivery of services and increase payment for assisted living facilities.

I have learned much from our partners in local agencies, our workers and state staff and sincerely thank them for their dedication and passion in serving our most vulnerable clients and most of all their friendship and counsel.

Although my departure completes combines service as an appointed official of this body and as a former state employee for the last 5 administrations I have opportunity to continue to service as the Director of Financial Operations for the State of California's Children's and Health Insurance Program.

In closing I would like to give special thanks to my wife Barbara, who is in attendance today and children Charlene, Roby, Lonnie and Alicia for their support during my time away from home to attend meetings throughout the Commonwealth over the last decade. I would also like to thank the local directors of the Eastern Region for their guidance and support, the Virginia League of Social Service Executives and give a special thanks to Pat Rengnerth our Board Liaison for her support during my tenure as Chairman and Board member.

### **Presentation**

***Kathy Gillikin***, Manager of Quality Unit provided members with an overview of Child Care Provider Professional Development. Ms. Gillikin reported that Virginia is currently working on a definition of "quality child care"; she will keep the Board updated on findings.

A training catalog and TIPS magnet was provided to members. Her division is currently working on the next training catalog. A copy of the catalog will be housed at the Home Office with the official Minutes.

Ms. Cobbs and Mr. Spadaccini thanked Ms. Gillikin for her presentation and shared their approval of the training catalog.

Ms. Christopher asked Ms. Gillikin if she would provide an update on the Early Childhood Conference since Ms. Glazer would not be present. Ms. Gillikin advised Ms. Glazer had done an excellent job in coordinating the conference and networking with business representatives, child care directors and owners, and Headstart representatives.

Ms. Christopher shared her hope that the next Governor will continue this initiative.

Vicki Johnson-Scott, Family Services Director provided members with an overview of areas within Family Services. Members were provided information on each of the areas. This information will be housed at the Home Office with the official Minutes.

Meeting recessed at 3:50 p.m.

**Thursday, June 16, 2005**

The meeting was reconvened at the Halifax Department of Social Services at 9:05 a.m., Chairman Christopher presiding.

Ms. Wells welcomed the Board and advised that members would have the option to visit a local ALF facility; day care facility; or shadow an employee following the recess of today's meeting. Lunch will be provided at 12:30 p.m.

**Presentation**

*Suzanne Clark Johnson*, President of Voices for Virginia's Children provided members with an overview of the work done by Voices. A copy of the Economic Impact of the Child Care Industry Report; copy of their 2004 Annual Report; and Indicators of School Readiness data book was provided to members. These booklets will be housed at the Home Office with the official Minutes.

*Lynne Williams*, Assistant Director of Licensing Programs and *Allen Wilson*, Assistant Attorney General provided members an overview of child care exemption (Come and Go) programs.

*ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Spadaccini) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved to go into Closed Meeting for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel and/or briefings by staff members and attorneys pertaining to actual or probable litigation concerning Exemption #2 Code Section 633.1 Come and Go Exemption as permitted by subsection (a), paragraph (7) of Section 2.2-3711 of the CODE of Virginia. Motion passed with all in favor.*

*ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Spadaccini) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved to return to open session. Certificate of Closed Meeting was read stating that only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the State Board of Social Services. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Simon-Owens-aye; Mr. Brown-aye; Mr. Spadaccini-aye; Ms. Rigby-aye; Ms. Cobbs-aye; and Ms. Christopher-aye. Motion carried with all in favor.*

**Minutes**

*ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Spadaccini) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Motion carried with all in favor.*

**Future Meetings**

Board meets in Portsmouth	August 17-18
Board meets in Warrenton	October 19-20
Board meets in Chesterfield/Col. Heights	December 14-15

Ms. Christopher mentioned the need for a Retreat. It was the general consensus of the Board to have it September 29-30, 2005. Location details; facilitator; staff presentations; and agenda will be worked out in the near future.

Mr. Martin is updating the Board Member Handbook.

**Unfinished Business**

Ms. Simon-Owens requested an update on HR Manual training in terms of numbers and outcomes at the next meeting.

Ms. Christopher advised that the Chair of the CPS OOF Advisory Group had asked for Board guidance on future topics to review. It was decided the group would cease meetings until an issue comes forth.

Ms. Christopher advised she is serving on the Governor's Early Childhood Learning Group. She is also meeting with MHMRSAS and VDSS on issues.

Ms. Christopher reported on the VLSSE Conference attended in May.

She also advised she had been asked to speak to universities on behalf of the Board on CPS issues. She is currently working with Ms. Johnson-Scott on information.

**New Business**

None

**Committee Reports**

Nominating Committee (Maggi Luca, Jean Cobbs, and Marilyn Rigby) provided the following slate of officers for 2005-06:

Chair	Julie Christopher
Vice Chair	Danny Brown
Secretary	Nettie Simon-Owens

***ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Spadaccini) and seconded (Ms. Cobb) moved to accept the slate as presented. Motion carried with all in favor.***

**Legislation**

Mr. Martin shared a memorandum from William H. Leighty on the Agency Legislation for the 2006 General Assembly Session. A copy of this memo is attached to the Official Minutes housed at the Home Office.

Mr. Spadaccini asked if a request to increase the AG Rate will be sent forth. Mr. Martin advised he couldn't speak from the budget area; however, everyone was aware this is a primary concern.

**Board Comments**

*Ms. Rigby* expressed her appreciation to the leadership and staff assisting members. She thanked Ms. Wells and staff for hosting the reception and luncheon and to Ms. Simon-Owens for her assistance in securing lodging and meeting space at Berry Hill and for her efforts to ensure the Board had a successful meeting. She thanked Ms. Coryell, Ms. Cobbs and Mr. Spadaccini for their expertise provided to her over the years.

*Mr. Spadaccini* echoed remarks made by Ms. Rigby. He thanked Ms. Wells for making members feel a part of the community. He wished Ms. Christopher an early "Happy Birthday", and thanked her for her leadership this past year.

Mr. Spadaccini congratulated the newly elected officers; Pat Rengnerth, Richard Martin and Allen Wilson for their support.

In closing, he wished members good health and success in all endeavors.

*Ms. Simon-Owens* thanked Ms. Wells and staff for an outstanding job in making this meeting a success. She thanked Mr. Carder and staff at Berry Hill for meeting the state fiscal requests for lodging and meeting space.

To the outgoing Board members, she thanked them for sharing their knowledge; wisdom; and time. She stated members will continue to carry the banner for additional funds. On behalf of local staff, she invited Commissioner Conyers to come back and meet Halifax DSS staff. She shared her disappointment that he had to leave prior to a visit.

She thanked Ms. Rengnerth; Mr. Martin; and Mr. Wilson for their assistance and thanked Ms. Christopher for a good meeting.

*Mr. Brown* said that although he was 250 miles from his home; he had been made to feel quite at home here. He said that Ms. Simon-Owens had set a high bar for other to follow.

Thanks were given to Ms. Rengnerth; Mr. Martin; Mr. Wilson and fellow Board members for their assistance.

He stated he would miss the outgoing members and their families he had come to know.

*Ms. Cobbs* echoed remarks made by others. She thanked Ms. Wells for her hospitality; to Ms. Simon-Owens for all her hard work in making this meeting a success.

It was her hope that the Board would continue to make decisions to improve quality to our citizens of the Commonwealth.

*Ms. Christopher* expressed her best wishes to Ms. Coryell; Ms. Cobbs; and Mr. Spadaccini, saying it was a pleasure to work with each of them.

She congratulated Mr. Spadaccini on his new position with Healthy Families in California; saying they have gained an excellent administrator, organizer, and child care advocate.

On behalf of *Ms. Luca*, Chairman Christopher passed along her best wishes to the outgoing members.

She said it will be an honor serving with Ms. Simon-Owens and Mr. Brown during the upcoming year.

She thanked staff for all their time and effort put in serving the department and members.

In closing, she thanked everyone for taking time from their busy schedules to attend this meeting.

Meeting was recessed until after visits to the ALF facility, Child Care Facility, and working with Halifax employees.

***ON MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:30 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted by Pat Rengnerth  
Approved August 2005