

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

**Department of Social Services
Henrico County Training Center
7701 East Parham Road
Richmond, VA 23273**

December 10, 2014

Attending: Mr. Willie Greene, Sr. (Chair), Mr. William Henderson (Vice Chair), Mrs. Josie Webster (Secretary), Ms. Lou Ali, Ms. Sheila Coppage, Mr. Darrell Jordan, Jr., Ms. Mona Malik, Dr. Jack Knapp, Mr. Kent Willis

Absent: Dr. Danny Avula, Mr. Clyde Santana

Also in Attendance: Ms. Margaret Ross Schultze (Commissioner), Mr. Allen Wilson (Sr. Assistant Attorney General).

Meeting called to order at 9:03 – Mr. Willie Greene, Sr.

Welcome and Introductions – Mr. Greene welcomed everyone and asked the Board members to introduce themselves.

Welcome from Henrico DSS Director – Cynthia Steinhauser

Ms. Steinhauser introduced herself and staff, welcomed the Board and gave history on Henrico County, which was established in 1611. Henrico County is one of the top rated counties in the nation and one of the first counties to adopt the county manager form of government. The motto for the local department is “caring professionals offering help for today and hope for tomorrow.” In September 2014, the benefit division helped over 15,800 households with SNAP program benefits and served nearly 21,000 families with Medicaid. The service division provided foster care services for 147 children, child protective services conducted 225 investigations and child care services were offered for over 711 children in the community. With a census of over 321,000 the Henrico Department of Social Services served 17.4% of the population with services and benefits. Ms. Steinhauser thanked the Board for their continued support.

Review of the Agenda – Ms. Karin Clark, Regulatory Coordinator

Comments from the Commissioner – Margaret Ross Schultze

The Department started off the season with a holiday event at the Home Office, and Commissioner wished everyone happy holidays.

Executive Agreement

In follow up to the October meeting, the Commissioner reviewed a copy of the agency's executive agreement, which is an agreement and partnership among the Governor, Cabinet Secretary and the agency head in aligning they key agency goals with the 2014 Governor's Enterprise Strategic Priorities.

The Governor has five enterprise strategic priorities for 2014:

- 1) Children and Families – Promote strategies that encourage a culture of health through stable housing, access to high-quality health care and proper nutrition.
- 2) Supply and Demand – Align Virginia's workforce to meet current and anticipated employer demands with career pathways and training solutions for workers.
- 3) Poverty – Develop a clear and consistent anti-poverty policy.
- 4) Nutritional Divide – Promote strategies to improve nutritious options for Virginians in at-risk circumstances.
- 5) Achievement Gap – Improve educational success in struggling schools in high poverty communities and expand access to quality early education for all children.

Commissioner Schultze noted the recent child deaths in unregulated child care settings. She anticipates that legislation will be introduced during the 2015 session to address this matter. She also referenced anticipated legislation related to child support, public assistance applications, barrier crimes, termination of parental rights and extending foster care supports to age 21.

VDSS Benefit Programs Overview – Tom Steinhauser, Director

Mr. Steinhauser introduced himself and gave a short bio. The mission for the Division of Benefit Programs is to design and implement financial assistance programs that provide quality services to assist needy low-income Virginias. There are 120 local social services agencies in Virginia to help citizens with assistance. He described the assistance programs offered in the state of Virginia, which are: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Medicaid; Family Access to Medical Insurance Security Plan (FAMIS); Energy Assistance; and General Relief.

Recess & Travel to Henrico DSS for a tour

COMMENT PERIOD

Comment from the Public

Marie Parker –

Ms. Parker commented about Chestnut Grove assisted living facility in which her Mother resided and the failure of staff monitoring the alert button. As a result of this, Ms. Parker's mother was found on the floor and rushed to the hospital. Ms. Parker asked the Department of Social Services to implement a protocol to ensure that alert buttons in assisted living facilities are truly monitored.

Comment from the Local Boards and Directors of Social Services

John Holtkamp – Director of Greenville / Emporia DSS

Mr. Holtkamp discussed childcare and the area of religiously exempt and regulated providers. He noted several concerns with religiously exempt providers relative to violations in the Greenville-Emporia area and believes that closer monitoring by the state is needed. Mr. Wilson added that, while not common practice, the Commissioner may revoke the exemption from any center.

****Comments** – Commissioner Schultze said she will get Ms. Webster the names of these child care centers Mr. Holtkamp referenced.

Comment from the VA League of Social Services Executives – Cathy Pemberton, President

Ms. Pemberton introduced herself and thanked the Board. There are still challenges with the VaCMS system but she acknowledged these issues are being worked on. Localities are busy conducting screenings for the Christmas Mother and collecting gifts for the Angel Tree; participating in the learning collaborative; and working on the unaccompanied minors issue. The agency is also participating with the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative services in the “No Wrong Door Initiative.”

Comment from the Virginia Community Action Partnership – Jim Schuyler, Director

House Republicans and Democrats agreed on a spending bill for the remainder of the federal fiscal year (September 30, 2015). This will avoid government shutdown before the end of the week. The understanding is the federal community service block grant and other programs of importance to community action will be funded at their 2014 levels. On December 2, Mr. Schuyler was invited to the central region for a presentation on community action programs and services. The upcoming VACAP annual report will be shared with the Board and will consist of stories regarding veteran’s programs, homeless prevention and preserving veteran’s independence. Community action is lively engaged in working to end homelessness, particularly for Virginia’s veterans. Mr. Schulyer is very pleased to be participating in the work of the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success as part of the Governance and Data Workgroup. This has been an excellent opportunity for community action’s Head Start programs to discuss concerns and opportunities for early childhood education.

Federal Human Trafficking Legislation – Carl Ayers, Director of the Division of Family Services

Mr. Ayers presented an overview on the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, H.R. 4980, signed by President Obama on September 29, 2014. There are three Titles:

- Title I - Protecting children and youth at risk of sex trafficking and improving opportunities for children in foster care and supporting permanency.
- Title II - Improving adoption incentive payments and extending the family connection grant program.
- Title III - Improving international child support recovery.

Mr. Ayers noted that Virginia must develop policies and procedures to identify, document and determine services for children who are at risk of becoming trafficking victims.

Regulatory Update – Karin Clark

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approve October 2014 Minutes

On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Henderson), second (Ms. Webster), motion approved with all in favor.

2. Administrative/Human Resources Manual for LDSS – Revisions pursuant to Executive Order 30 (2014), Marriage Equality in the Commonwealth of Virginia

Dr. Knapp indicated he would like to make a motion and provided an explanation of that motion. When Board members were appointed, they took an oath of office to uphold the law and Constitution of the United States and Virginia. On the issue of marriage being between one man and one woman, neither the law nor the Constitution has changed. The law and Constitution may change in the future, but until such time, any action on this item would be premature.

On Motion Duly Made, (Dr. Knapp), second (Mr. Henderson), moved to table the action item. Motion carried, with six in favor (Dr. Knapp, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Jordan, Ms. Webster, Ms. Malak, Mr. Greene), three opposed (Ms. Coppage, Ms. Ali, Mr. Willis).

There was some discussion on whether legal advice from the Office of Attorney General would be appropriate in order to address this issue at the next meeting. Mr. Wilson responded that legal advice would not be provided during an open meeting. Mr. Willis observed that, from the sense of the conversation, there is support from the Board to seek advice from the attorney general's office.

On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Willis), second (Mr. Jordan), moved that the Board seek advice from the Office of Attorney General on the matter tabled by Dr. Knapp. Motion carried, with seven in favor (Mr. Willis, Mr. Jordan, Ms. Webster, Ms. Coppage, Ms. Malak, Ms. Ali, Mr. Greene), two opposed (Dr. Knapp, Mr. Henderson).

3. 22VAC40-295, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – Proposed

On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Ali), second (Mr. Henderson), motion approved with all in favor.

4. 22VAC40-201, Permanency Services – Prevention, Foster Care, Adoption and Independent Living – Proposed (replace Emergency regulation)

On Motion Duly Made, (Dr. Knapp), second (Mr. Willis), motion approved with all in favor.

5. 22VAC40-661, Child Care Program – Final

Ms. Clark stated the Board adopted this final regulation in October and a change should have been made but was inadvertently left out of the final definition. The additional change is in

section 10, definition of “Parent,” reference to “emancipated minors” has been added. ***On Motion Duly Made***, (Mr. Jordan), second (Ms. Coppage), motion approved with all in favor.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Willis thanked Mr. Henderson for the comment/reminder at the last meeting in reference to the bio’s on the State Board website and has turned his in. He also thanked the Steinhauser double team for the presentation and the tour of Henrico DSS which were very helpful. He was proud to cast the vote in favor of replacing LGBT rights in the Human Resources Manual. While it did not materialize, he is hopeful upon the advice of the attorney general.

Mr. Jordan said this was a great day/great meeting and thanked Commissioner Schultze for talking about the parent education piece relative to child care providers. He suggested a briefing on the religious exempt issue for the new members of the Board. The Commissioner would like to review this issue at the April 2015 meeting.

Dr. Knapp thanked the Commissioner for the information on possible legislation and hopes something can be done to simplify the barrier crimes statute. He also thanked the Steinhausers for their presentation and tour.

Mr. Henderson wished Marie Parker (public comment speaker) could hear what he had to say and is happy that the Board has a stage for grievances, where impacted citizens can state what is troubling them and see if the Board can correct or help the situation. He has faith that the Commissioner gathers facts and that staff researches the issues.

Ms. Ali has faith that something can be done regarding the situation Marie Parker spoke about, but was not comfortable that no one on the Board responded to her comments. She asked whether a statement could be made that, while Board members may not be able to immediately resolve a situation or respond, the Board listens and the Department follows up. She would like someone to send Ms. Parker confirmation that her comment was heard and there will be follow-up by the Department. She wished everyone happy holidays.

Ms. Malik thanked Ms. Steinhauser for hosting. She was not clear of the expectations on the Board, relative to public comments such as Ms. Parker. There was continued discussion among Board members about the need to convey to members of the public who speak that their concerns will be reviewed. Commissioner Schultze assured members that the Department will follow on Ms. Parker’s matter. Ms. Malik was glad to receive the sex trafficking information and wished everyone happy holidays.

Ms. Coppage enjoyed the meeting and the tour of Henrico DSS. She thanked everyone and wished happy holidays.

Ms. Webster appreciated the opportunity to listen and learn from other members. She noted that everyone brings something different to the table.

Chairs Comments

Mr. Greene appreciated the feedback from members about responding to comments made by public speakers and the continued exchange of ideas generally. He suggested that the Board have lunch at a future meeting. The February meeting will be one day, held at the Home Office. Members expressed appreciation for the single day meetings. Mr. Greene wished everyone a happy holiday.

In closing, Ms. Steinhauser thanked the Board for coming to Henrico.

Adjournment 3:38pm