

Minutes
VA State Board of Social Services
February 14-15, 2007

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

Members Present

Danny Brown, Chair
Nettie Simon-Owens, Vice Chair
Peppy Linden, Secretary
Trudy Brisendine
Maggi Luca
Bela Sood
Brenda Hornsby
Shirley E. Culpepper

Members Absent

Marilyn Rigby (illness in family)

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m., Chair Danny Brown presiding.

Welcome and Introductions

Jane Clements, Operations Director, Division of Quality Management and Paul McWhinney Director of Richmond City Department of Social Services welcomed the Board. Mr. McWhinney shared the Mayor's Vision for 2020. A copy of this handout is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

Special Presentation

Danny Brown, Chairman and Nettie Simon-Owens, Vice Chair presented former Board members Julie Christopher and William (Billy) Mitchell with an award for their dedication and service on the State Board of Social Services. Ms. Christopher and Mr. Mitchell remarked how much they appreciated their time on the Board and had gained a lot of valuable information from other members.

Review of Agenda and Regulation Status Report

Richard Martin advised that Renee Loeffler had planned to present the Differential Response Update, but due to ice in her area she will not be at today's meeting. This presentation will be moved to June 2007 Board meeting.

Mr. Martin provided members with a copy of the Status of Regulation Report. A copy of this report is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

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2007 Legislative Update

Mr. Martin reviewed legislation of concern to the department.

Mr. Martin was asked to craft a letter to the State Board of Education on behalf of the SBSS regarding House Bill 3105 that requests the Department of Social Services, the Child Day Care Council and the State Board of Education to recognize an individual with an approved credential as fully qualified to be a program director, program leader or child care supervisor in a private licensed child day center or private preschool. This letter will be ready for signature prior to the end of today's meeting.

Mr. Martin shared the new SPARK website with members. He advised that when the Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs website goes public, members of the Board will have access. This will assist in keeping members up-to-date and reduce the need for paper reports.

Mr. Martin reviewed the recommended operating budget amendments proposed by Governor Kaine.

Copies of these reports are attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

Child Protective Services Out-of-Family & Differential Response Update

Rita Katzman, Program Manager of Child Protective Services provided an overview of CPS and its goals of investigation. Statistics on out-of-family investigations were also provided to members. Members requested to have another briefing in February 2008.

(As agreed upon, the report on Differential Response will be moved to the June Meeting.)

Workforce Development & TANF Update

Tom Steinhauser, Director of Division of Benefit Programs provided an overview of the Virginia Independence Program, VIEW, and TANF. He advised that since implementation in 1995, Virginia has placed over 90,000 TANF recipients into employment. Other statistics are provided in the handout which is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

JLARC Study

Nathalie Molliet-Ribet, Joint Legislative Audit & Review Commission provided an overview of the evaluation of children's residential services delivered through the Comprehensive Services Act. HJR 60 (2006) directed JLARC to evaluate the administration of the Comprehensive Services Act.

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The study mandate focused on analyzing the cost of residential services to determine whether Virginia receives quality services for the funds expended, offers recommendations to improve services and contain costs, and evaluate the adequacy of interdepartmental regulations and processes in preserving the health and safety of vulnerable children in residential facilities. A copy of this report is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

Poverty Committee Report

Trudy Brisendine, Chair of the committee reported that 12 members had attended the Tuesday night meeting. Voices and Housing Opportunities Made Equal will now have representation on the committee.

Non profit representation volunteered to meet within the month to discuss issues of importance to the committee and to prevent duplication of efforts. This will be reported at the next meeting.

A “resource issue” is being discussed with the Commissioner to ensure the committee keeps on target.

Public Comment

None

Commissioner’s Comments

Commissioner Conyers welcomed Brenda Hornsby to the State Board of Social Services.

Commissioner’s Council- each of the five regions sent local directors to participate. This is another opportunity for free-flowing dialogue between state and locals. A summary of this discussion is on the department website.

General Assembly and Budget- it was reported that past federal legislation provided 12 definitions of “work”—Virginia adopted 3 of them. With a new bill, Virginia will be allowed to use all 12 definitions and have a better chance working toward self sufficiency.

JLARC-Commissioner advised the study was reasonably done and reasonably well-balanced; however, the presentation of the study didn’t accurately relate to DSS role.

He advised there had been a 10% foster care rate increase.

He advised there had been a \$66 Auxiliary Rate increase.

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He advised \$7.4 million dollars is needed to fill IV-E void. J. R. Simpson and his staff are doing a great job to get us there.

It was reported that funding was not provided for locals in the areas of eligibility administration and space needs. This will continue to be a priority.

Commissioner announced that First Lady Anne Holton announced her itinerary of a listening tour on foster care issues. A copy of this schedule was provided to members. Members were encouraged to attend a session in their respective areas.

VLSSE COMMENTS

Sarah Snead, President of the League thanked the Board for an opportunity to address them. She also mentioned the listening tour of the First Lady.

She advised that the VLSSE meets every Thursday to review each bill in the General Assembly, working closely with Mr. Martin and his staff.

SB 1332 is of interest to local departments. CSA is up to 55% local match. They don't have an endless capacity of funds to take care of the numbers of children that need assistance. As a League, they are not for passing of this bill; it needs to be funded through mental health.

She advised that the Commissioner's Council and the League have come together and is working nicely.

Tomorrow is designated League Appreciation Day at the General Assembly.

ACTION ITEMS

City of Chesapeake request to include employees under the local jurisdiction-wide personnel plan

Harold Hobson, Employee Relations Manager in Human Resources reviewed this request as the director could not attend due to illness.

Discussion: Ms. Simon-Owens shared her concern that information was provided to the Board in three separate packages once the original package had been approved by the Commissioner on January 26. A package is not complete if it is received in several different mailings after it has been signed off by the Commissioner.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Brisendine) and seconded (Ms. Sood) moved to approve the request to include employees under the local jurisdiction-wide personnel plan for the City of Chesapeake. Motion carried with all in favor.

City of Newport News request to include employees under the jurisdiction-wide personnel plan

Mr. Hobson, along with the director and staff of Newport News, reviewed this request.

Discussion: Ms. Simon-Owens referred to page two of the letter dated January 25 and questioned if the background check section was in place. It was advised the department is working with the city attorney on this and will keep the Board advised.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Culpepper) and seconded (Ms. Luca) moved to approve the request to include employees under the local jurisdiction-wide personnel plan for the City of Newport News.

On behalf of Randy Hildebrant, members were thanked for approving the request.

**22 VAC 40-690 Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program
Notice of Intended Regulatory Action**

This regulatory action will begin the process to amend 22 VAC 40-690. The purpose of this planned regulatory action is to employ more efficient business practices, and to prioritize the selection and processing of scholarship applicants.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Simon-Owens) and seconded (Ms. Linden) moved to approve the Notice of Intended Regulation Action package to amend 22 VAC 40-690, Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship 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.

**22 VAC 40-25 Auxiliary Grant Program
Final Adoption**

This regulatory action updates terminology and establishes guidelines and expectation relative to the requirements to participate in the Auxiliary Grant program, minimum services to be provided, and establishment of reimbursable rates and reporting requirements. One technical change was made and is detailed on page 3 of the TH-03 form.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Brisendine) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved to approve the final regulatory package to amend 22 VAC 40-25, Auxiliary Grant Program for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order Number 36 (2006). This regulatory action may become effective 30 days after publication.

22 VAC 40-41 Neighborhood Assistance Program
Final Adoption

Mr. Martin asked members to withdraw this regulation. Members agreed; Mr. Brown confirmed this will be revisited at the April Meeting.

POSSESS Resolution

Ms. Linden read the POSSESS Resolution asking the Board to approve the month of April 2007 as Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Simon-Owens) and seconded (Mr. Culpepper) moved to approve the request of April 2007 being designated Office Services Support Employee Appreciation Month, calling upon Virginians to join in acknowledging their public service and contributions. Motion carried with all in favor.

Social Work Month Resolution

Ms. Linden read the Social Work and Employment Service Worker Resolution asking the Board to approve the month of March 2007 as Social Work Month.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Culpepper) and seconded (Ms. Simon-Owens) moved to approve the request of March 2007 being designated Social Work Month, calling upon Virginians to join in acknowledging their public service and contributions. Motion carried with all in favor.

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ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Simon-Owens) and seconded (Mr. Culpepper) moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as provided. Motion carried with all in favor.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Changes in Regional Operations

Jane Clements thanked Commissioner Conyers for putting the regional office structure back in place. She advised Regional Operations are maximizing available resources; promoting partnerships; sharing best practices; providing leadership; and effectively serving the citizens of the Commonwealth. A copy of this presentation is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

Isle of Wight County Performance Pilot Update

Tharon Green and Director John Catron provided an update on work redesign and the FASTFORWARD Pilot.

Ms. Green advised this is a portable document and is available to other agencies at their request. A copy of this presentation is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

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Conflict of Interest Training

Allen Wilson, Assistant Attorney General provided Conflict of Interest Training to Board members. This training is required every two years after the initial DVD training.

Copies of the COIA prohibited transactions; prohibited conduct; and a listing of important definitions were provided to members. It is a Class I misdemeanor to violate this Act. Members were advised to contact Mr. Wilson if they have any questions regarding this Act.

Ms. Luca discussed correctly filling out a Disclosure Form. Ms. Simon-Owens thought it best to review this process in October or December when the next filing is due. Members were in agreement.

A copy of this presentation is attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

VA Scholarship Fund & Child Subsidy Program Overview

Mary Jo Thomas, Director of Division of Child Care and Development provided an overview of this program, advising the purpose of CCDV is to increase the availability, affordability, and quality of child care.

She advised that Virginia, like most states, have a waiting list of families needing fee child care assistance. As of February 8, 2007, 6,869 families and 10, 665 children were waiting for assistance.

As requested by the Board, statistics on training and professional development for regulated and unregulated child care providers were provided. She also advised that funds had been located to pay for additional classes. It was confirmed that anyone can attend these classes—a \$10 fee is required.

Copies of these handouts are attached to the official minutes housed in the home office.

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Unfinished Business

Board Role Discussion—(as requested by Ms. Rigby).

Ms. Linden and Mr. Brown felt it best to discuss this issue in April when Ms. Rigby will be present.

Chairman Brown reminded members to send future agenda item request to Mr. Martin.

Ms. Simon-Owens requested that a copy of Executive Order #36; Booklet on Board Principal Powers and Duties; and a copy of Board Bylaws be available for handout at the April Board meeting.

Ms. Simon-Owens shared her concern over the amount and timeliness of Board materials being received. It was decided that presentations handed out at the time of discussion are not received in a timely manner. These presentations should be included in the Board mailing or sent electronically as the member prefers. Duplication of copies in the packet and then handed out at the meeting are not necessary.

Members discussed how they want their packets received. Hard copies were requested by Shirley Culpepper, Maggi Luca, Bela Sood, and Danny Brown. Electronic copies will be provided to Trudy Brisendine, Brenda Hornsby, Peppy Linden, and Nettie Simon-Owens. Members receiving a hard copy will use a link to personnel sites to avoid the massive amounts of paper now being copied.

Mr. Martin advised electronic copies are already available. He will provide a link to members.

Ms. Simon-Owens, Ms. Linden, Ms. Sood and Ms. Hornsby advised they don't need a weekly mailing of media/articles. Other members will continue to receive the weekly mailing.

Future Business

Ms. Brisendine asked that Jim Schuler be asked to draft a resolution for the Community Action Agencies for presentation at the April meeting. Members agreed.

Members asked that a letter be written to the First Lady acknowledging her work with foster care. Ms. Clark will write this letter on their behalf.

Commissioner Conyers provided members with First Lady Anne Holton's meeting schedule of to discuss issues that affect older children in Virginia's foster care system. Members were encouraged to attend a meeting in their respective areas.

Committee Reports

Mr. Brown highlighted the Board committee structure. Mr. Culpepper will serve on the Adult Committee and Ms. Hornsby will serve on the Children Committee. Mr. Brown will serve as ex officio on both committees.

(The Poverty Committee was reported on Wednesday.)

Board Member Comments

Ms. Hornsby was welcomed to the Board. Members thanked Richmond for hosting their meeting and for their engaging conversations and open communications. Ms. Rengnerth, Mr. Martin, and Mr. Wilson were thanked for their continued service to the Board.

Commissioner Conyers stated he knew Richmond meetings are a challenge this time of year especially with parking, weather, and General Assembly. Since Richmond does not provide a reception to the Board, the department will provide box lunches to members at future meetings held in Richmond.

Ms. Luca confirmed that time could be carved out during a future meeting to attend a session of General Assembly.

Adjournment

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Simon-Owens) and seconded (Ms. Brisendine) moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m. Motion carried with all in favor.