

August 27, 2024

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at HSC Building (1<sup>st</sup> Floor) 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Ms. Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair; Ms. Candy Snyder, DSS Board Member; Dr. Darrell “Bud” Warner, DSS Board Member; Commissioner Craig Turner, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candice J. Gobble, DSS Director; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Virginia Hunker, Fiscal Officer; Mr. Robert Ring, DSS HR Director; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney and Ms. Heidi York, Alamance County Manager were present.

Ms. Tyronna Hooker, DSS Vice-Chair opened the meeting.

**Public Comment:**

None

**Consent Agenda: Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair**

July 2024 items on the consent agenda approved. Dr. Darrell Warner made motion to approve and seconded by Ms. Candy Snyder.

**Staff Reports:**

**Fiscal: Virginia Hunker**

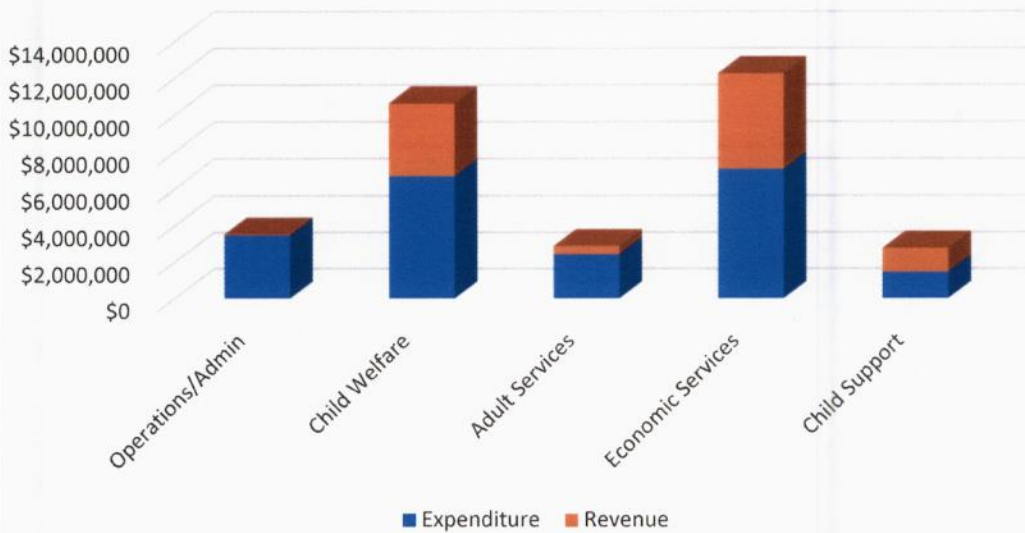
	<b>JULY 2024</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>	<b>PRIOR YTD</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>
REVENUES	\$238,183.00	2%	\$31,311.00	0%
EXPENDITURES	\$1,505,639.00	6%	\$1,409,505.00	7%

There are two different financial reports enclosed in board packet. They are as follows:

- July 2024 Revenues/Expenditures (Shows the start of the fiscal year)
- 13<sup>th</sup> Month Revenues/Expenditures (End of Year figures)

Ms. Hunker distributed chart of DSS Expenditure/Revenues by breakdown by departments.

### Alamance County DSS Department Expenditure & Revenue



Department	Expenditure	Revenue
Operations/Admin	\$3,479,595	\$44,001
Child Welfare	\$6,690,443	\$3,928,430
Adult Services	\$2,429,994	\$447,505
Economic Services	\$7,072,696	\$5,171,471
Child Support	\$1,448,830	\$1,300,386

**Fraud: See report –**

Unit	July 2024	July 2023	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$68,713.26	\$21,931.00	\$68,713.26	\$21,931.00

**Services – Ms. Lynette Wellons/Assistant Director of Services -**

**Adult and Family Services -**

See presentation.

**Child Support – (Statistical Report Information) – see report.**

Unit	July 2024	July 2023	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$918,218.07	\$859,814.92	\$918,218.07	\$859,814.92

## **Child Welfare –**

Assistant Director Wellons reported on Child Welfare goal on Performance Management Report:

**Specific Goal: Child Welfare**—95% of all foster youth have a face-to-face visit with the social work each month.

	July 2024
# OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE	127
# VISITED	115
% VISITED	90.55%

These are numbers that have been presented so far. We did have 2 youth who ran away during the month which impacted the numbers. We have to meet 4 out of 6 visits per month (4 of the visits must be in the home). The State rules are we complete 2 visits in the home, but we require all visits to be in the home.

### **From October 2023 – present:**

- 98.6% visits entered
- 88.38% of visits occurred in the home

## **Economic Support: Ms. Danae Pickard**

Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director reported on the following:

### **Energy:**

We have received the second allocation of Crisis Intervention (CIP) monies on July 30, 2024 to the amount of \$177,197.

### **Timeliness Standards:**

- July – received 800 applications with a timeliness average of 53%
- August – received 900 applications with only 2 over-due (*1 of the applications was TEST mode, not a customer*)

### **Child Care Waiting List:**

Ms. Pickard presented the Child Care Waiting list policy. Due to the State has not approved budget, we have been advised to implement Child Care Waiting list due to possibility of spending coefficient at 100%. Alamance County DSS has not implemented waiting list since 2021 due to ARPA funds were added to child care allocations across the State and the State was underspending. The ARPA funds will no longer be available effective 9/30/2024. The wait list will help balance

out the spending levels for Alamance County DSS. Once the State budget has been approved and certified, DCDEE will complete revisions/allocations during this fiscal year to assist with balancing out the expenditures.

**The policy is necessary due to funding limitations, the following procedures must be followed:**

1. Eligibility criteria are explained to determine if the customer would be eligible for day care services
2. If the customer requests to be placed on the waiting list, all pertinent information regarding income limits, the number of children, etc., are entered on the list and forwarded to Child Care Unit. The family is registered into NC FAST, if not already registered and add the child(ren) to the waiting list. DCDEE policy states that the waiting list surveys will be generated in a batch from NC FAST and mailed to families twice per year during the months of March and September. Parents will have fourteen (14) calendar days to complete the survey and return to DSS. If not returned, the family will be removed from waiting list.
3. Children with special needs, homelessness or is in a temporary living situation will be served immediately, unless the department has exceeded their 4% set-aside funds. (Alamance County will set-aside no more than 4% of Non-Smart Start Child Care subsidy allocation in order to serve the vulnerable populations. Once funds are exceeded, these children will be placed on the waiting list and will be served according to ongoing wait list policy.
4. If child care cases are in jeopardy of termination due to the potential lack of funding, Alamance County will contact DCDEE for guidance.

**When the budget allows DSS to start serving children on the waiting list, PRIORITY is given to:**

1. Siblings of children already receiving on an active child care assistance case
2. Children with special needs
3. Families experiencing homelessness
4. Families who need child care to support Child Protective Services
5. Children in DSS custody who need child care in all need categories
6. Teen parents who need child care to remain in high school will have priority over working families and other families needing care to support education
7. Children enrolled in Head Start whose parents need child care for wrap-around services in order to support and maintain employment
8. Families needing child care to support Work First Employment Services or Training will be given priority over other families needing child care to support employment or training who are not in a higher priority group
9. Families who need child care to support employment and/or education training will be given priority over families needing child care due to developmental needs
10. Children needing child care assistance due to their developmental needs will be served after the above-mentioned groups have been served

**Action:**

- This policy does not need Board Approval due to no changes and/or amendments.

**EBT Card Fraud:**

Ms. Pickard reported the Division of Child and Family Well-Being FNS Section has informed all Social Services that within the last three days, at least 6,493 Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards have been compromised statewide. Out of an abundance of caution, the 6,493 potentially compromised cards have been cancelled and reissued by NCDHHS. Counties as well as the State EBT call center may receive an influx of calls concerning this action. While cards have been reissued, the client may notice the reissued card has a lower balance than expected if benefits were indeed stolen from their account. It can take up to 3-7 business days to receive new EBT cards.

**Social Services Institute Award:**

Alamance County Social Services submitted application for Community Engagement Award at this year's Social Services Institute in Hickory NC. Alamance County DSS did win the prestigious award with the work around Medicaid Expansion with Spanish and Refugee populations.

DSS Award win was based on Medicaid Expansion aimed to address health disparities by improving access to health coverage for immigrant, refugee and migrant populations in Alamance County. Recognizing the gap in service, DSS launched a targeted outreach program to build relationships with community organizations working directly with these populations. DSS objectives included: educating communities on how to access services, training partners to assist clients in navigating the application process and improving coordination between DSS and local agencies.

DSS outreach efforts led to successful collaborations, including a Spanish Language informational event and a series of partner education meetings with refugee case management staff. These initiatives enhanced community trust and engagement, resulting in increased inquiries and completed Medicaid applications. DSS also created a health coordination document in collaboration with other agencies and established monthly calls with refugee agencies to streamline services. Building on this success, we plan to continue expanding these partnerships to further support marginalized communities.

**Action:**

- *Dr. Warner expressed Congratulations to Katrina Jackson and the team for this prestigious win at SSI.*

**Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble**

**Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring**

See Statistical Report – as of July 31, 2024

Vacancies	26
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New Hires	8
Interagency Transfers	1
Resignations	5

As of August 27, 2024 – Alamance County DSS has 31 job openings. There are (16) in Economic Services and (11) in Child Welfare. We did receive 3 resignations this week, but we also have some in the hiring process to replace 2 of these positions.

**Question: Where did the new SW positions come from?**

- *They are mainly new Social Workers right out of school, we do have one that is coming to DSS from the school system and one new to social work.*

We have noticed an uptick in applications and we continue to hire for talent along with experience.

**Director’s Report – Candice J. Gobble, Director–**

Director Gobble reported the DSS Strategic Plan Committee has met and we are brainstorming on goals and identifying pillars. We are currently discussing how to engage with community partners in this process – is it surveys, etc. Dr. Warner expressed using Focus Groups with key partners – you may get better results.

**CFSP (Children & Families Specialty Plan)**

NC DHHS announced Blue Cross Blue Shield NC was selected to operate the Children & Families Specialty Plan. This is a first of its kind initiative, the CFSP is a single, statewide NC Medicaid Managed Care Plan that will wrap Medicaid-enrolled children, youth and their families in the child welfare system with seamless, integrated and coordinated health care.

Alamance County will no longer work with VAYA for Foster Care but will continue the partnership for Adults and Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (IDD). We are hopeful VAYA will expand services to the adult population.

**New Business: Adult In-Home Services Presentation**

Assistant Director Wellons introduced Scott Hunsaker; Adult Services Supervisor presented the Representative Payee program.

More than 8 million people who get monthly social security benefits or supplemental security income payments, need help managing their money.

In these cases, SSA can appoint a relative, friend or other interested party to serve as the “Representative Payee”.

Alamance County DSS Representative Payee Program is designed to ensure that citizens who are unable to manage their finances have a representative to function on their behalf. The Representative Payee Program protects those in the community who are unable to protect

themselves from financial exploitation, overspending on wants vs. needs and other issues that have an effect on their daily functioning.

### **Representative Payee Program:**

- **Representation** – The action of speaking or acting on behalf of someone or the state of being represented.
- **Payee** – Is a person or organization that receives Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for someone who is unable to manage their own funds.
- **Social Security Administration** – may appoint a payee if they believe the beneficiary is not capable of managing their benefits or cannot be trusted.

### **Social Security Administration Beneficiary:**

- A beneficiary is a person who receives Social Security and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. Social Security and SSI are two different programs that Social Security administers for the beneficiary.
- Social Security appoints both individual and organizational payees.
- If the beneficiary has someone in which they are related, friends or another interested party who can and wants to serve as a representative payee, then SSA will investigate these possibilities for the benefits of the client.
- If the beneficiary does not have anyone who is able to represent them as their payee, then social security administration will appoint an organization.

### **Organizational Payee:**

- Alamance County DSS is an organizational payee. Social Security Administration provides assistance to the most vulnerable members of society: the-young, the elderly and the disabled, who are unable to manage their benefits. Alamance County DSS receives benefits for these individuals.

### **Referrals: Who typically makes referrals?**

- Adult Protective Services: If a SW suspects financial exploitation or other issues
- SSA: They will appoint DSS as the Rep Payee for citizens if needed
- Community Partners: Physician Offices are the most common partner to recommend DSS as Rep Payee

### **Goal of the Program:**

DSS goal is to ensure that all of our clients' funds are protected and spent on meeting the needs of the beneficiary. We always put the best interests of our beneficiaries first and foremost. We are actively involved in the beneficiary's life by providing case management duties to ensure they are safe in our community both physically and financially.

### **DSS Duties:**

- Determine the beneficiary's needs and use his or her payments to meet those needs;
- Save any money left after meeting the beneficiary's current needs in an interest bearing account or savings bonds for the beneficiary's future needs;
- Report any changes or events which could affect the beneficiary's eligibility for payments;
- Keep records of all payments received and how you spent and saved them;

- Provide all records of how payments are spent or saved to SSA upon request;
- Report to SSA any changes that would affect your performance or your continuing as payee;
- Complete reports accounting for your use of payments, as required;
- Return to SSA any payments to which the beneficiary is not entitled; and
- Return to SSA any payments saved when you are no longer the representative payee for the beneficiary.

**Alamance County DSS accomplish all goals for Rep Payee through two different units:**

1. Adult Services Unit – SW is provided to manage the case in an effort to ensure the adult remains safe in the community. They provide guidance to the individual in how they should spend their monies.
2. Fiscal Unit – they provide the financial piece of the case where they ensure that bills are paid and that calculations from their accounts remain current.

Each unit relies on the other and together they provide the best service possible to the client.

**Checks and Balances:**

Social Security Administration promotes the need for individual and organizational payees to keep separate accounting to ensure monies are spent solely on the client.

**Duties of the Two Units:**

Adult Services Unit	Fiscal Unit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides case management services to the client to ensure they have all their needs met including housing, utilities, food and medications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the accounting piece of the program</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaches clients about money management and how to make a budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeps up with the actual monthly payments for rent, utilities, groceries, medications and transportation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guides clients towards financial independence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will alert SW in Adult Services if funds are getting low or if payments need to be divided up for the benefit of the client</li> </ul>

**Statistics:**

- We currently have 22 clients who we serve as Representative Payee – out of the 22 clients, 12 live independently and the other 10 live in some type of facility.
- We provide over 50 spending checks or gift cards for groceries, clothing, household items throughout any given month.
- All rent, utilities, cell phone & groceries are normally paid by our fiscal unit for all 12 of the clients who live independently in the community.
- For the 10 clients who live in facilities, all of their funds go towards the placement costs.

**Questions/Answers:**

**Question: Is the money held in Trust Accounts?**

- *Yes*

**Question: Is Rep Payee long term?**

- *Yes – but there are some situations where facilities may become rep payee. There are situations where private companies are appointed rep payee but they charge a fee of up to \$45 and/or \$90.*

**Announcements:**

None

**Adjournment -**

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, September 24, 2024** at DSS – Professional Board Room located on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Timothy Butt

Angela Morrow

Darrell Wan

Janet Baker

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

9-24-2024