

March 26, 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: Mr. Timothy Britt, DSS Board Chair; Ms. Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice - Chair; Commissioner Craig S. Turner, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candy Snyder, DSS Board Member; Dr. Darrell “Bud” Warner, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candice J. Gobble, DSS Director; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney; Ms. Virginia Hunker, Fiscal Officer; Mr. Robert Ring, HR Director; Ms. Heidi York, Alamance County Manager and Ms. Angela Cole, Child Welfare Program Manager were present.

Timothy Britt, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

**Public Comment:**

None

**Consent Agenda: Timothy Britt, DSS Board Chair**

February 2024 items on the consent agenda approved. Dr. Darrell Warner made motion to approve and seconded by Vice-Chair Tyronna Hooker.

**Staff Reports:**

**Fiscal: Virginia Hunker**

	<b>FEBRUARY 2024</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>	<b>PRIOR YTD</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>
REVENUES	\$8,305,629.00	74%	\$7,738,320.00	56%
EXPENDITURES	\$13,844,929.00	55%	\$12,895,009.00	49%

Ms. Hunker reported all revenues and expenditures are in your packet. We continue to monitor all line items.

**Fraud: See report –**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>February 2024</b>	<b>February 2023</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Prior Fiscal Year</b>
Fraud	\$19,552.21	\$1,050.00	\$158,447.27	\$28,161.34

Ms. Danae Pickard reported Program Integrity met with Alamance County District Attorney’s office to build relationships and strengthen lines of communication. With the information gathered, Alamance County DSS was able to make updates to DSS Program Integrity Plan that is due to State this month.

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

Assistant Director Wellons reported we continue to participate in Job Fairs in surrounding counties. We have participated in two so far and will participate in two in April the interest has been consistent with 5/6 individuals at each job fair so far.

### Adult and Family Services -

The Adult & Family Services Unit hosted an Adult Home Specialist Conference here at the agency for local Administrators of Adult & Family Care Homes and Assisted Living Facilities. There were 30 Administrators in attendance and received training on new/updated policies and rules as it relates to Adult Services.

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

Unit	February 2024	February 2023	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$1,001,230.70	\$834,461.53	\$7,163,582.99	\$6,874,314.62

Assistant Director Wellons reported Child Support staff partnered with The Dream Center staff to assist with their weekly diaper drive distribution to build community partnership.

Assistant Director Wellons reported child support saw significant growth in their MOU and Self-Assessment scores.

### Child Welfare –

Through use of VAYA funds, Child Welfare has created a part-time position (Visitation Specialist). Currently, foster care staff are holding case loads of 20-24 children. The state recommends case load to be around 15 children. This position will assist with providing visitation supervision so social workers can spend more time on providing quality services.

Child Welfare recently received positive dates from the State:

State Average	Alamance County Child Welfare
Moves Per Child from the beginning of Foster Care case to end of 12/31/2023: 3.15	2.96
Median Days in Foster Care: 472	374
Rate of Entry Based on county Population: 2.22	1.63
Current FY children in care – Total Exit	18
Total Reunification – State Average: 27.28	6/33.33%
FY 22/24 Alamance County	27%

Assistant Director Wellons reported the following:

- April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. On April 5, 2024, we ask that everyone wear blue to take a stand against Child Abuse.

- On April 20, 2024, Family Exchange Club of Alamance will host a “Ride Out” Child Abuse event. Alamance County DSS will have Social Workers present at the event to recruit and educate the community.
- Foster Family Alliance recognized one of Alamance County Social Workers, Hilary Weber as the #1 Social Worker in the State. Congratulations to Hilary! Angela Worth, Foster Care SW Supervisor was the runner up and was recognized for her 30 years of service with Alamance County DSS.

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

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

### **Food & Nutrition (FNS) –**

New Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program will start soon. The program, named “Sun Bucks” will help close the hunger gap when children are on summer break and not getting nutritious school meals. The program is moving forward with some input from Alamance County Social Services. The two major partners are CBI and DHHS.

There are two pandemic waivers that are ending soon for FNS benefits. The two are the interview waiver (will expire 5/31/2024) and the telephone signature waiver (expire 6/30/2024). With these two waivers expiring, we are looking at around 2,000+ interviews monthly (every FNS application and ½ of FNS recertifications) require interview. We are currently looking at ways to provide support to our Income Maintenance caseworkers as the customer’s eligibility determination depends on this interview.

### **Medicaid Expansion –**

Medicaid applications have leveled off and the Medicaid Team has continued to implement measures to handle the influx and pending applications. Alamance County (age 19-64) population of citizens (105,426) – we currently have 5,836 adults enrolled in Medicaid Expansion, which is right at 5.5% of that population. We continue to spread the word about this program. We recently participated with DHSS at Valores of Alamance to share information about expansion with Spanish speaking population.

### **Child Care –**

DSS recently signed an amended MOU with Alamance County Partnership for Children for an additional allocation, which was approved to increase the subsidy payment to our providers for the remaining fiscal year. The provider pool is a shrinking asset and every bit helps to encourage participation.

DSS recently participated in the Kindergarten Fair at Holly Hill Mall. DSS Child Care Unit will also participate in the following upcoming events:

1. Day of the Child – April 13, 2024

2. Alamance Community College Resource Fair – April 16, 2024
3. Alamance Community College Job Fair – April 17, 2024

## **Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble**

### **Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring**

See Statistical Report – as of February 29, 2024

<b>Vacancies</b>	25
<b>New Hires</b>	7
<b>Interagency Transfers</b>	2
<b>Resignations</b>	5

As of March 27, 2024 – Alamance County DSS has 34 job openings. With 10 of those openings are the new Medicaid Expansion positions.

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

Director Gobble reported DSS will soon launch the new Internet Campaign for recruitment of social workers. As you all seen presented last month in the proposal, recruitment was a part of the plan. Director Gobble reported she has been working with local vendor to develop a “splash page” that will share great information of “What’s in it for me?” for potential candidates. The local company has been working with County IT on access as we want to ensure the county remains protected when working on DSS webpage. The goal is for the following:

- potential applicants to see ad
- click on the ad
- the ad will take them to the splash page
- provide a link to access the job posting and application to complete

Director Gobble reported met with County Management regarding DSS budget. The meeting went well, we took a dive into some of the lines and discussion around the needs of the service areas. We appreciate the partnership with our county partners.

AC DSS is coming out of Social Work Appreciation month and heading into Local County Government month, as well as April is Income Maintenance Appreciation month. Please be on the lookout for an invitation to Local Government celebration. Each year our Leadership Team pulls together to provide a breakfast and/or lunch for DSS staff. This year we will host “Pasta Lunch” with a tentative date of April 30, 2024.

## New Business:

### Child Welfare Intake & Assessments Overview: Angela Cole

#### Intake -

All citizens in NC are mandated reporters – NCGS Section 7B – (301) (302). The statute requires that a reporter is to leave their name when they make a report; although, if they refuse and wish to remain anonymous, we do not stop taking the report. We continue due to safety of the child is the most important issue overall.

The information gathered at the time of report is critical. The intake worker must be friendly, patient and understanding. They must be able to answer questions in time of need to gather pertinent information to assist in determining if how and when we respond.

Primary reporters are Law Enforcement and School Personnel.

<b>Reports Received in 2023</b>	<b>2,318</b>
<b>Reports Accepted in 2023</b>	<b>1,456 (63% acceptance rate)</b>

#### CPS Intake Steps -

<b>Structured Intake Form</b>	Uses a strength-based approach. Gathers all pertinent information about the family.
<b>Determination of Jurisdiction &amp; Caretaker Role</b>	Does the family live in Alamance County? Is this person defined by statute as a caretaker?
<b>Screening Consultation</b>	Does the report meet statutory guidelines? Does it need to be reported elsewhere?
<b>Determination of Timeframe &amp; Assessment Track</b>	Assign response timeframe and assessment track based on safety and risk to the child?

#### Case Scenarios – Screen Out –

<b>Allegations</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
15-year-old and 13-year-old male siblings home alone Stepfather at work	Alleged perpetrator is not a caretaker by definition Parents were not previously aware of similar concerns between the siblings
15-year-old assaulted his younger sibling Mother saw this via home cameras & called Law Enforcement to respond	Parents responding to concerns appropriately Children's ages & development are appropriate to be home alone while the parents are out
13-year-old has minor injuries Siblings have not fought like this before Parents responded appropriately	
Parents verbalized concern for younger siblings & will no longer allow him to babysit	

**Case Scenarios – Screen In –**

<b>Allegations</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
15-year-old and 13-year-old male siblings home alone & 15-year-old has assaulted his brother	Parents were aware and did not protect
Mother was at Urgent Care and Stepfather at work	Parents did not provide appropriate supervision
Mother saw this via home cameras and called Law Enforcement to respond	Parents do not plan to protect in the future
13-year-old has injuries and was strangled	Screen In for Improper Supervision & Physical Injury
Siblings have fought like this before & the 13-year-old has been injured previously	Response Time is 24 hours
Parents were aware of previous incidents that have escalated and allowed siblings to be alone together	
Parents state they were supervising via cameras	
Parents expressed no concerns because siblings fight	
Parents are remaining home for the day & night	

**CPS Assessment -**

<b>Initiate Report</b>	<p>There are two types of reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Assessment</li> <li>• Investigative Assessment</li> </ul> <p>In both types, a home visit must be conducted the same day and a safety plan must be developed along with the family to assure any safety or future risk of harm concerns are addressed. Collateral contacts will be gathered from the family and arrangements must be made to see any other adult household members within 7 days</p>
<b>Complete Structured Documentation Tools</b>	<p>Risk Assessment &amp; Strength Needs Assessment. These are evidence-based tools that assist in determining areas of potential future risk of harm related to a variety of aspects like CPS history, lack of an appropriate response to the assessment, age, coping skills, mental health, substance abuse, parenting skills, etc. All of which will either be strength or an area of need/concern to address going forward.</p>
<b>Complete Additional Case Activities</b>	<p>Comprehensive Assessment of Allegations which lead us toward making a case decision</p>
<b>Make Case Decision</b>	

**Assessment Tools & Case Activities:**

- Safety Planning/Plan of Safe Care
- Risk Assessment and Strengths & Needs
- Forensic Interviews, Child Medical Evaluations & Clinical Assessment of Protective Parenting
- Child & Family Team Meetings
- Reporter & Collateral Calls
- Ongoing Family Case Contacts

- Request & Review Records – CPS, Child Welfare Assist Criminal, Mental Health, Medical, 911 Logs
- Weekly Supervision

**Case Decision Making –**

- No Safety/Risk Concerns; Case is Closed
- Safety/Risk concerns were present, but resolved; Case Is Closed
- Safety/Risk concerns are present, but a plan can be developed; Family receives In-Home Services
- Safety/Risk concerns are present, but a plan cannot be developed; Child/ren enter Foster Care

**Question/Answers -**

**If DSS receives a report regarding a school teacher, would that information be shared with the school system?**  
*No, Child Welfare records are strictly confidential. There are no additional priviledtes that would allow us to share that information with school administration.*

**Do you ever include the District Attorney’s Office on reports?**  
*Some reports may not meet the definition of caretaker and we are obligated to notify Law Enforcement and the District Attorney’s Office.*

**If a parent(s) hired a baby sitter who then abuses their child, you would screen out that report because they aren’t considered a caretaker?**  
*Yes, possibly the caretaker definition is specific to parent, guardian or legal custodian of a child – one who legal authority to make decisions such as medical decisions for the child. We would consider the amount of time spent with the child, for instance 2 hours, 2 days a week vs. 8 hours multiple times a week. We would also consider if this has happened previously and the parents continue to allow the babysitter to allow the babysitter access to the child.*

**Announcements:**


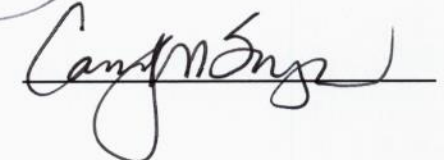
None

**Adjournment -**

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, April 23, 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 1:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow  
  


Danell Wayne

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Date Approved: 4-23-2024