

November 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; 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; Mr. Robert Ring, DSS HR Director; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney; Mr. Scott Hunsaker, Adult Services Supervisor and Ms. Heidi York, Alamance County Manager were present.

Mr. Timothy Britt, DSS Chair opened the meeting.

**Public Comment:**

None

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

There was no quorum. Consent Agenda will be held off until January 2025 DSS Board Meeting. Consent Agenda for September and October will need to be approved in January 2025.

**Staff Reports:**

**Fiscal: Virginia Hunker**

	OCTOBER 2024	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$3,351,338.00	27%	\$3,873,424.00	35%
EXPENDITURES	\$6,988,856.00	30%	\$6,598,169.00	26%

Director Gobble reported on Expenditures and Revenues. Director Gobble reported to board members DSS is preparing for 2025 Budget and will keep you abreast of the process.

**Fraud: See report –**

Unit	October 2024	October 2023	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$24,787.08	\$22,004.63	\$160,872.44	\$82,591.26

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

**Adult and Family Services -**

**Persons Under Guardianship Christmas** – If you would like to adopt one of the P.U.G for Christmas, please send me email to Carmen Morrow.

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

Unit	October 2024	October 2023	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$932,220.00	\$931,623.26	\$3,670,607.96	\$3,567,490.29

**Child Welfare –**

Assistant Director Wellons invited DSS Board Members to upcoming Foster Families Christmas Party to be held on Sunday, December 15, 2024 at St. Marks Church, Burlington NC.

**Economic Support: Ms. Danae Pickard**

- Hurricane Helene total benefits issued for the State for EBT Benefits = \$85m
  - Alamance Co. DSS had 4 FNS staff and 2 supervisors who assisted with \$45m of benefits.
  - 72k household approved, 86k disposed and 180k persons approved
  - 24k total handled calls (average call 14 minutes)
  - 55 non-impacted counties assisted with call center
  - We also assisted Burke County with pre-registration in conjunction with Carteret County
- Energy – LIEAP (Low-Income Energy Assistance) will complete automatic payments for those over the age of 60 who applied last year. The energy staff will verify heating source with those who are on the list and verify addresses, etc., if possible. December 1 starts the LIEAP program for those over the age of 60 and/or disabled. All other households can apply beginning January 1, 2025.
- We are working with Behavioral Health Center – co-location partner meeting last week. We are working to set up outpost assistance for the center, as well as the public library.
- Effective January 2025. We will house an outpost position at May Memorial Library and/or Graham Public library on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday. We will switch every other month to assist community members with applying for DSS benefits and/or answer questions. The time range is from 1pm – 5pm. The first date at May Memorial will be January 29, 2025.
- Medicaid Federal Marketplace applications were down this year due to Medicaid Expansion.

**Question: Do they staff need any emotional support dealing with the cases from Hurricane Helene?**

- *We have been conducting debriefing sessions. Economic Services staff did form relationships with other county partners during this disaster.*

**Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble**

**Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring**

See Statistical Report – as of October 31, 2024

Vacancies	32
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**Question: What is the anticipated cost?**

- *It would depend on commissioner approval. The board would have to determine how many we could hire, similar to Sheriff's Department current sign-on bonus.*

**Question: With the current staff, do you anticipate any problems with morale? Will it impact those who were hired four months ago?**

- *Staff who were hired four months ago would not be considered for the bonus. We do anticipate there would be moral issues. We would try to present the bonus as a way to bring in more qualified staff that would be able to go into the field on "Day 1" of hire. This would cut down on caseloads, etc. But we are certain it would cause moral issues.*

**Question: Do you know how many staff will be impacted that were hired between 2–5-year mark? What's the timetable for qualified staff vs. non-qualified staff?**

- *For Child Welfare – 2 years of experience; level of experience and education*
- *For Adult Services – 1 year of experience, level of experience and education*
- *For Economic Services – 1 year of experience as IMC II*

**Question: Will the bonus require a contract with new staff?**

- *Yes – other county departments require contract.*

Director Gobble announced Alamance County is now in Phase III of Market Study.

**Action: The sign-on bonus is scheduled for December 16, 2024 Commissioners Meeting.**

**New Business: Adult In-Home Services (Scott Hunsaker)**

Scott Hunsaker, Adult Services Supervisor presented the following presentation:

**What are Adult Placement Services?**

- Help aging or disabled adults find appropriate living and health care arrangements. These services are available to individuals whose health, safety and well-being can no longer be maintained at home.
- Private residence to Facility placement
- Facility to Independent Living for disabled or elderly clients

**Four Basic Principles of Placement Services:**

1. Voluntary Service
2. The assessment of needs and planning with older, disabled adults should be done in context of their families or other individuals who are significant in their lives.
3. Within the range of appropriate choices, the settings which are least restrictive to meet the client's needs and those which best suit the client's preferred lifestyle should be pursued.
4. Placement in a substitute care residence or leaving a substitute care residence is a significant event in the life of an individual and their family. It can also be accompanied by changes in emotional functioning and potential growth.

## **Two Basic Principles:**

### **Assessment of Needs & Planning:**

- *(The FL-2 form guides the whole process from medical provider)*
- This principle relies on the fact that the client knows their likes, dislikes and preferences, etc. in the placement process. The client's struggles are as important during the assessment as much as their needs.
- The Social Worker ensures that all parties involved have the information, skills, resources and emotional stability to take actions.

**Follow-Up:** (The importance of follow-up and addressing the emotional aspects of a move to or from a substitute care placement):

- Clients who go into placement can grieve over the loss of their home or the loss of their belongings. The client could need emotional support and/or counseling to successfully deal with grief about the loss of independence and their identity.
- The adult will also need help in coping with fear and anxiety over the change. The family should be supported to resolve the feelings of guilt and conflicts about relinquishing or resuming caregiving responsibilities.
- There may also be an intensification of earlier unresolved relationship patterns, sibling rivalries and symbiotic ties. Everyone involved with client and the client themselves may need support after the move. Referrals for grief counseling could very well be needed as part of the service.

### **Target Population:**

The adult must have one of the following needs:

- Adults who are unable to maintain themselves in their own homes independently or with available community or family supports.
- Adults who are living in substitute homes, residential health care facilities or institutions and who need assistance in relocating due to changes in level of care.
- Adults who are living in substitute homes, residential health care facilities or institutions and who need assistance in returning to more independent living arrangements in the community.
- Adults who are living in substitute homes or residential health care facilities, and who need assistance in adjusting to or maintaining their placements due to individual or family problems or lack of resources.



### **Target Population/Priority:**

This population includes Persons Under Guardianship (PUG) for whom the Director of the County Department of Social Services serves as guardian. Once an individual is determined to be in the target population, Adult Placement Services are provided in the following order of priority:

- Adults receiving protective services for whom adult placement services is in their protective plans
- Adults who are at-risk of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation because:
  - They need assistance with activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living or health care and they have no caregiver; or the caregiver is not able willing or responsible to provide the amount or type of assistance needed, or;
  - They were previously abused, neglected or exploited and the conditions leading to that situation continue to exist.
- Adults who have problems which place them at-risk of losing their current living situations
- Adults who do not meet any of the first three priority groups, but whose quality of life would be improved with Adult Placement Services.

### **Referrals:**

- Referrals for services comes in two different types:
  - Referral to a facility
  - Referral to the community front a facility
- Please see sample referral forms (see in packet)
- All referrals will be screened by SW and SWS to ensure the potential client meets populations
- Referrals by a responsible party for an individual that refuses the services, the refusal must be honored.
- If the referral is made by a legal surrogate decision maker or by a court order, the services will be provided as requested.
- The legal decision maker can be one of the following:
  - Legally appointed guardian of the person or the general guardian
  - An attorney in-fact appointed in a durable Power of Attorney, which grants relevant duties and is in effect.
  - A health care agent appointed in a Health Care Power of Attorney, which grants relevant duties and is in effect.

### **Questions from Facilities?**

1. Do you have an FL-2 form and Medical Records?
2. How will we be paid?
3. Does the Adult have behaviors?

### **Functional Assessment:**

Placement Services uses the same functional assessment that all of adult services uses throughout each program. The (DAAS-6220) Adult Services Annual Functional Assessment form will be used to address the six domains of the adult's life:

1. Environment
2. Economic – one of the most important for placement services
3. Physical Health
4. Mental Health
5. ADL's and IADL's
6. Socialization

### **Facilities:**

- The SW is not allowed to make referrals to or participate in plans for placing individuals in domiciliary homes, nursing facilities or any other facility placement arrangements which do not comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, or to provide Adult Placement Services to individuals residing in those homes or facilities.
- We will only participate with Licensed Facilities listed on the Division of Health & Human Services (DHHS) website.

### **Admissions Process:**

1. The SW will ensure that the client has someone to help with the actual move and with signing the necessary admissions documents, if they are unable to do so.
2. Social Workers CAN NOT co-sign admission agreements without legal authorization to do so.
3. Protective Orders and Guardianship allows the Department of Social Services to sign admission agreements.

### **Post Placement:**

- After every placement either from home to facility or facility to independent living, there is going to be an adjustment period.
- The adjustment period can be long or short depending upon the amount of participation from the adult or adult's family.
- Counseling, advocacy, dispute resolution, arranging resources or supportive services could all be a part of the post placement process.

### **Question/Answer Session:**

#### **Question: Do we have adequate space in the facilities?**

- *We currently use 44 facilities. There are a few of these facilities that have closed due to owners retiring. There are 7 Skilled Facilities that we utilize here in Alamance County. We also utilize Assisted Living Facilities as well as Family Care Homes. For a complete list of facilities in Alamance County – please select the following link: [Division of Health Service Regulation](#)*



**Question: What's the average time frame for this service?**

- *The time frame could vary due to forms required for placement services. We have to have current FL-2 form on file and the other necessary forms have to be completed for client who is requesting placement services. (The time frame could average between 7 days – month).*

**Question: How do you handle situation if a family disputes?**

- *We will refer back to Power of Attorney. If there is no POA on file, we potentially look at Guardianship or determine if APS referral is needed.*

**Question: Does DSS make any referrals to PACE?**

- *Yes – we do refer to PACE. PACE provides a ton of services that are important to the adult population. We also refer to Friendship Center and Twin Lakes for Adult Day Care services.*

Mr. Hunsaker reported there are some facilities who will not accept Medicaid clients. Also, some facilities have now come up with guidelines to not accept Medicaid clients who are in the approval process, we have run into in order for placement to occur, DSS will have to pay the initial payment to get client placed and will get reimbursed once Medicaid is approved.

**Announcements:**

None

**Adjournment -**

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, January 28, 2025** 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 1:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Timothy Butt

Samuel Ad

Danell Wan

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Date Approved: 1-28-2025