

Henderson County Board of Social Services

May 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Chair Josh Simpson at 12:02 pm.

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| Board Members Present | Josh Simpson, Member Melinda Lowrance, Member Rebecca McCall, Member Stephen Gwaltney, Member |
| Staff Leadership Present | Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board/Director Lorie Horne, Social Work Program Administrator Joseph Maxey Jr., Administrative Officer Debby Freeman, Economic Services Program Administrator Deborah Johnson, Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk |
| Guest | Kristen Bradley, VP Henderson County Foster Parents Association |

B. Public Input

None

C. Adjustments to the Agenda

None

D. Approval of Minutes

Chair Simpson asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the April 18th regular meeting, there were none. Mr. Gwaltney moved to approve the minutes as written, Mrs. Lowrance seconded the motion. All members were polled, and the motion passed.

Closed minutes were passed out to board members by clerk Deborah Johnson. Chair Simpson asked if there were any changes to the Closed Board Minutes from the April 18th, 2023, and there were none. Mr. Gwaltney made a motion to approve as written. Mrs. Lowrance seconded the motion. All present were polled and the motion passed. Closed Minutes were collected by the clerk.

E. Board Education

Kristen Bradley, Vice-President of the Henderson County Foster Parents Association presented to the board on how their non-profit serves the children and foster families of Henderson County.

Services Provided:

- ❖ Family Meals for Foster/kinship families
- ❖ Furniture/Equipment, beds, car seats, strollers
- ❖ Birthday boxes to provide party supplies for foster children
- ❖ Sports/Extra Curriculum activities financial support

Services provided by the Foster Parents Association include delivering meals to families who have a new child placed in their home, a death in the family, or a child being removed from the home. This helps alleviate the stress for family during these times.

The Foster Parents Association provides assistance with furniture, car seats and beds. DSS has vouchers for foster families, but DSS cannot assist with everything that is needed. The Foster Parents Association can assist with additional needs such as school supplies, clothing, and diapers.

The Foster Parents Association provides families with birthday boxes for foster children. The box includes birthday decorations, cake mixes, gift cards and everything needed to provide the foster child with a birthday party.

The Foster Parents Association also assists with sports scholarships. The association can help pay for those expenses for fees and equipment.

The Foster Parents Association assists with training opportunities for foster parents. Licensed foster parents are required to have at least twenty hours of training to maintain their licenses. The Foster Parents Association can help with expenses associated with training.

The Foster Parents Association has many activities throughout the year for foster families. Some of the events last year were:

- ❖ Egg My Yard – FCPA hid eggs outside the home for Foster Children to hunt
- ❖ Lion's Club distributed 30 new bikes and helmets
- ❖ Back to School Free Shop at Biltmore Church
- ❖ Free Tickets to Paw Patrol for Foster Families
- ❖ Crossfire Basketball camp for Foster Children
- ❖ Parking lot fundraiser at the Apple Festival
- ❖ Photo Booth at the Henderson County Toy Run

An upcoming event is the HCFPA Poker Run 2023. It will be held on Saturday, August 5th at Bold Rock in Mills River. This event will help support the 2023-24 school year supplies event.

Lorie Horne asked how many of our foster parents are members of the foster parent association? Mrs. Bradley stated that all foster parents are members of the association. All DSS licensed foster parents are automatically members. Nothing additional is required of the families.

The association is working to incorporate kinship placements also. The children in kinship placements can access the opportunities available through the Foster Parents Association.

Mrs. Lowrance asked if someone wanted to make a donation, could they do that? Mrs. Bradley stated that for a monetary donation, it can be a blanket donation or for a specific need. Donors can specify how they want their donation used.

Lorie Horne suggested going forward that the Foster Parents Association be included during the MAPP training so potential foster parents know what support and services are available to them.

Reports

**Director's Monthly Report (Attachment I)
Questions Only**

Mr. Simpson asked if we were headed toward Medicaid expansion? Director McFalls stated that it is likely we will have a budget by July 1. We have projected positions in the budget that will be used for the expansion. There are currently over 100 bills in the house and senate that will impact DSS.

In the Director's Report under Gateway news, it discusses Crossnore and their Bridging Families Initiative. Crossnore has a Foster home in our county. They are also building a home in Polk County. Crossnore is a professional foster parenting model. Neither parent works outside of the home so their time can be dedicated to care for foster children. Our county home should be up and ready by the end of spring to house a family and foster children. The professional parenting model hopes to have sibling groups.

**May Employees of the Month (Attachment II)
Questions only**

None

**April 2022 – April 2023 Statistical Report (Attachment III)
Questions only**

None

May Program Administrator's Report (Attachment IV)

Mr. Simpson asked Lorie Horne if the 112 screened in reports is the summer uptick. Mrs. Horne stated that it is not the summer uptick as of yet, just steady influx of reports.

**Financial Report May 2023 (Attachment V)
Questions only**

The County budget meeting will be held May 17th at the County Commissioners meeting. The vote on the budget is planned for the June 5th County Commissioners meeting.

F. **Old Business**

DSS Staffing Update

Director McFalls stated that DSS currently has sixteen vacancies. Eight of the vacancies are in Social Work. We are not getting as many applications for social worker positions. We will be working with Human Resources to increase our applications through recruitment. We have increased the number of applications on the income maintenance side through Indeed and targeted recruitment. Eight of the vacancies are in Economic Services. We have six outside candidates in the hiring process for Economic Services.

G. New Business

Social Services Institute

The Social Services Institute is scheduled for August 2-4 in Hickory. We have reserved rooms for Board members and DSS workers for SSI.

In the past, board training occurred for Board members on Wednesday and Thursday. Board members training was completed by Thursday afternoon. We have not received a schedule for Board members yet but hope to receive it soon. There is a bill that has not passed yet that would require new Board members to have the training within their first year.

H. Adjournment

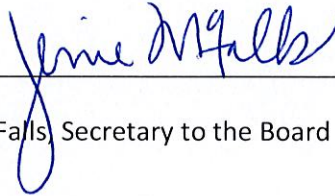
Chair Simpson asked if there were any additional items for discussion. There were none presented. Chair Simpson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mrs. Lowrance seconded the motion. All present were polled and the motion passed. Mr. Simpson adjourned the meeting at 1:02 p.m.



Josh Simpson, Chair

6/20/23

Date



Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board Date

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report – May 2023
- II. May Employees of the Month
- III. April– April 2023 Statistical Report
- IV. Program Administrators' Report – May 2023
- V. Financial Report – May 2023