

Henderson County Board of Social Services

July 16th, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Director McFalls at 12:02.

Board Members Present	Josh Simpson, Member Melinda Lowrance, Member Rebecca McCall, Member Amy Holt, New 5 th Board Member
Staff Leadership Present	Jerrie McFalls, Secretary to the Board/Director Lorie Horne, Social Work Program Administrator Melissa Novack, Finance Officer Debby Freeman, Economic Services Program Administrator Candice Fowler, Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk
Guest	None

B. Welcome & Oath of Office: Amy Holt

New DSS Board Member Amy Holt was welcomed. Henderson County Chair of the Board of Commissioners Rebecca McCall proceeded with the oath of office.

C. DSS Board Elections

Director McFalls reviewed the Chair and Vice-Chair nominations that were presented during the June 18th meeting: Chair- Josh Simpson, Vice-Chair Stephen Gwaltney. The Board first voted for the chair position then the vice chair. Director McFalls asked for all members in favor of the nominees for both positions to say I, all board members present were in favor. For the July 2024-July 2025 term Josh Simpson will serve as Chair and Stephen Gwaltney will serve as Vice-Chair.

D. Public Input

None

E. Adjustments to the Agenda

None

F. Approval of Minutes

No changes were requested. Chair Simpson made a motion to accept the June 18th, 2024, open session minutes as written, Mrs. McCall seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Chair Simpson made a motion to approve the closed session minutes as written, Mrs. Lowrance seconded. The closed session minutes were approved.

F. Reports

Director's Monthly Report (Attachment I) Questions Only

Mrs. Lowrance asked about an update on Senate Bill-625. Director McFalls explained that the bill is still under review, there are no new updates, and they are having a temporary adjournment.

Chair Simpson asked Director McFalls if there was anything upcoming that the Board should be made aware of. Director McFalls stated that there is a lot of change and reform within the state and child welfare. Medicaid tailored plans rolled out July 1st, 2024. People with high mental health needs and complicated health situations moved to tailored plans. Director McFalls stated that VAYA the agency's MCO is the provider of the tailored plans. VAYA provides medical and mental health care for individuals with high medical needs, this includes traumatic brain injuries and serious mental health conditions. The tailored and standard plans are both managed care plans, but insurance companies take care of the standard plans and VAYA takes the high needs cases.

Director McFalls discussed foster children being the next group to be looked at for Medicaid, with the child and family specialty plan. In August the state will be deciding which company will provide Medicaid for foster children. VAYA, various mental health agencies, and possibly a few private providers are believed to be responding to the RFP to provide services for 100 counties.

Director McFalls and Mrs. Lorie Horne spoke briefly about a placement situation and the lack of resources in the area. The agency is dealing with a high risk child and the only safe placement option, and resources are in other states. Director McFalls explained that the agency has encouraged VAYA to break down the licensing barriers that prevent recruitment of facilities that could come to the area.

On a positive note, Director McFalls let the board know that a new mental health facility will be opening in Gerton, NC. The facility will have 20 beds and 4 emergency beds for the agency. The facility will be considered a therapeutic foster care residential placement.

The state has given the agency resources to find placements so that children do not have to stay at DSS overnight, but there are no local facilities that can house kids with high level of care needs. At one time North Carolina had more mental health facilities, many closed due to lack of funding, lack of resources, and issues during the pandemic. DSS is having to rely on resources in surrounding counties and states.

July Employees of the Month (Attachment II)

Questions only

None

July Program Administrator's Report (Attachment IV)

Questions only

Mrs. Horne let the board know that foster care numbers are going back up, she stated that months previous we were down to 108 but the number is inching back up.

Mrs. Lowrance asked if COVID starting again effects the COVID waivers unwinding period. Mrs. Freeman stated that there is no new funding, this period is all unwinding and trying to go back to normal policies and procedures.

Chair Simpson asked how child daycare is going and if the county has enough daycares. Director McFalls explained that the agency contracted with Southwestern to do daycare management with subsidy money, the money will help facilities stay in business. Director McFalls let the board know that some facilities are closing or are planning to close within the next year. The county does not have a lot of daycare slots. Daycare is a huge need within the community.

Financial Report June 2024 (Attachment V)

Mrs. Novack let the board know that 4 of the 6 new positions for food stamps and 2 vehicles were approved in the budget. Director McFalls explained that the positions will be filled as needed so if we do not need all 4, we will not fill all the new positions.

Director McFalls stated that We appreciate the Commissioners and the support that the agency has received.

June 2023- June 2024 Statistical Report (Attachment III)

Questions only

None

G. Old Business

DSS Staffing Update

Director McFalls explained in the personnel report, the turnover was 14.8% and 11.8% without retirements. As of right now we have 10 vacancies. Director McFalls stated that when associates leave we try to see if it was a preventable loss. We look at the time the employee was here.

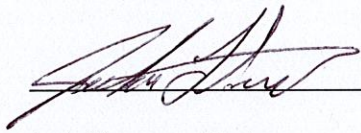
Chair Simpson asked if the agency could hire 2 people for one position, so that people could work nontraditional work schedules. Director McFalls stated that nontraditional work schedules may work for economic benefits employees but would not work for social work. At one time we had 2 part time social workers. Each of the workers were considered 52% and received benefits, but the agency could only keep half of the position filled so it did not work.

H. New Business

Chair Simpson made a motion to have a special meeting on July 31st, to swear in Lorie Horne as the new Director of HC DSS. All board members were in favor, the meeting will be at 11:30 am.

I. Adjournment

Chair Simpson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:50 pm, Mrs. McCall seconded, and the meeting adjourned.

 8/20/24

Josh Simpson, Chair

Date

 8-20-24

Lorie Horne, Secretary to the Board Date

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report –July 2024
- II. July Employees of the Month
- III. Statistical Report – June 2024
- IV. Program Administrators' Report –July 2024
- V. Financial Report – June 2024