

**New Hanover County  
Board of Social Services  
Meeting Minutes  
Multi Purpose Room A  
9:00a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**

The New Hanover County Board of Social Services met in open session on Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 9:00 in Multi Purpose Room A of the New Hanover County Department of Social Services.

ATTENDING: John Craig, Chairman; Minerva Glidden, Vice-Chairman; Evelyn Bryant and Patrick Riley

ALSO ATTENDING: LaVaughn Nesmith, Secretary to the Board; Stephanie Monteath, Administrative Support Specialist

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Glidden moved for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Riley and passed unanimously.

Ms. Bryant led the invocation. Mr. Riley led the pledge of allegiance.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Glidden moved for approval of the consent agenda. The motion was passed unanimously.

#### **INFORMATION AGENDA**

##### **Personnel**

Stephanie Monteath recognized Betty Robinson, returning to administer the LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program); new employee, Elizabeth Harris, Social Worker and Susie Stanislaw, Family and Children's Medicaid Worker who moved from a temporary to a regular position.

##### **Service Awards**

Staff was recognized for their years of service to New Hanover County. Devonia Harrison and Kathi Heslin celebrate 5 years of service this month; Mary Brown and Mark Murphy celebrate 15 years of service and Linda Huffman celebrated 20 years of service.

##### **SSDI**

Ms. Glidden asked why more children were able to be served with subsidized child care now as opposed to last year. Ms. Heslin explained that the agency began monthly reporting last year which decreased the number of eligible families. Mr. Nesmith noted the agency received stimulus money as well which now allow more families to receive aid.

## **County Budget Expenditures**

Mr. Nesmith noted that DSS is doing really well pulling down revenues as noted in the new report included in the Board packet.

## **Compliance Office Report**

John Ranalli reviewed his Compliance Office Report. Mr. Ranalli gave a summary of the Child Care Subsidy audit, which scored a 97.4% out of the required minimum score of 95%. Mr. Ranalli gave a summary of upcoming audits and projects. Ms. McNamee noted that staff views Mr. Ranalli as a resource not a watchdog as the task of maintaining program compliance and collecting information for audits is really daunting.

Mr. Riley asked about the delay in monitoring Medicaid Transportation. Mr. Ranalli and Ms. Marino stated that the decrease in State staff has slowed the monitoring process. Mr. Nesmith noted there is now three staff in the Medicaid Transportation program to deal with the growth in that program.

## **Director's Executive Report**

There were no questions or comments by the Board.

## **STRATEGIC ACTION AGENDA**

### **Child Care Subsidy Update**

Ms. Heslin narrated a power point presentation about the Child Care Subsidy Program. Ms. Heslin noted this year NHCDCSS was given a slight increase in funding allocations. Ms. Heslin noted that costs for child care are higher in the summer as the need for care is all day as opposed to just after school. Ms. Heslin also noted that the majority of families receiving subsidy are employed. The significant accomplishment for the year is the 97.4% accuracy rate from the audit. The agency has partnered with Smart Start to target Share the Care funding for one-time registration fees of less than \$50. Ms. Heslin talked about the upcoming project of tracking child care attendance sheets to EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) cards. This will save a lot of paperwork and will more accurately track services by providers. Mr. Nesmith shared his concern that there was no money available for people going back to school or training programs to get back into the work force. Mr. Riley suggested talking to Cape Fear Community College about providing child care for their students, above and beyond the for profit child care program run out of the school. Christine McNamee remarked when Welfare Reform took place in the early 1990s, eleven million dollars was allocated for child care to assist people going back to school. Ms. McNamee noted the funds have been substantially cut each year since then. Mr. Craig commented on the really large client to worker ratio. Mr. Riley asked if staff was meeting time frames for application review. Mr. Lane noted DSS staff is still coming in under deadline with application processing.

### **Community Child Protection Team Update**

Wanda Marino shared information from the Community Child Protection Team annual report. Ms. Marino gave a brief history of how the CCPT was formed. The Community

Child Protection Team is composed of agency representatives, child advocates and citizens at-large who take action to identify and address gaps or deficiencies in services and resources. They provide an annual report to the County Commissioners to detail their findings. Ms. Marino noted the CCPT is comprised of two teams. One team meets monthly to review selected cases in which abuse, neglect or dependency has been found and gaps in services have been identified. The other team is comprised of department heads and they meet quarterly to review deficiencies identified by the monthly meetings. Ms. Marino discussed how important the CCPT fatality reviews are in preventing further deaths of children by looking for any gaps in services and working as a team to make recommendations.

Ms. Glidden asked how cases are selected for review. Ms. Marino noted that any member of the group can ask to staff a case with the CCPT. Ms. Marino shared that this group works to add resources to the community and find patterns in service gaps through reviews.

### **Lobby Renovation Update**

There is no current update however, DSS staff and board representative, Evelyn Bryant, will be meeting with the architect and project manager on Thursday November 5, 2009 to discuss the renovation. Mr. Nesmith will keep the board updated.

### **Next Meeting Objectives**

Budget Process  
Confirm Board Retreat Date

### **Board Self Evaluation**

The Board completed self evaluations.

### **Additional Items**

As there were no other additional items to discuss as provided in G.S. 154A-98 to consider information that is confidential pursuant to G.S. 108A-80 and or G.S. 154A-98, the board by consensus adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

LaVaughn Nesmith,  
Secretary to the Board

John E. Craig,  
Chairman

Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_

LN: scm  
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