

The Northampton County Board of Social Services met in the Board Room of the Social Services Building on April 18, 2023. The meeting was called to order under code §2.2-3708.2 at 11:00 am. Present were Edith Johnson, Chairwoman, Spencer Murray, Board Member, Janice Langley, Board member, and Mozella Francis, Director.

On a motion by Ms. Langley, and seconded by Mr. Murray the minutes of the March 21, 2023, Board of Directors meeting were approved. There was no public comment or correspondence.

The Board was provided with a copy of the FY 2023 budget. Ms. Francis advised the Board that we are coming to the close of the fiscal year, on May 31, 2023.

Ms. Francis brought attention to the administrative budget, specifically line 855, Staff and Operations, indicating that the increased expenditures were due to March being a three-month pay period as well as, the \$0.50 per hour increase that was approved for March. Ms. Francis reviewed all admin and program budget lines providing an update. Ms. Francis advised that of the local monies available we have an adequate amount to carry the agency to the end of June. Mr. Murray asked if there would be any local funds returned to the county? Ms. Francis reported that she was not for certain but would know more as the close of the fiscal year nears. Ms. Langley motioned to accept the budget as presented and Mr. Murray seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Francis noted that the CSA funds for the CSA coordinator are 40% funded by the Northampton County. Ms. Francis explained that the CSA Coordinator's salary does not come out of the agency's budget but that she sometimes offset any additional cost that may exceed the budgeted amount from her budget. Ms. Francis will reach out to the county to discuss shared accountability and what that will look like going forward for salary adjustments that were not budgeted.

Ms. Francis combined the family services overview in conjunction with the VDSS interview with Karl Ayers, DSS Deputy Commissioner, about programs, and the challenge of workforce amongst the counties in Virginia. Ms. Francis pointed out to the board that since COVID it has become difficult to recruit qualified staff, especially Family Services Specialist. Ms. Francis provided a copy of the article to the board.

Ms. Francis reported that many agencies across the state are having to stay overnight in the agency due to lack of foster homes that can manage the challenging behaviors that sometimes accompany our foster children who have experienced significant trauma. The Governor developed a Safe and Stable Task Force to address the issue of children staying in agencies. Ms. Francis is working on a plan if it becomes necessary to keep a child overnight in the agency. Discussion ensued. Ms. Francis will keep the Board apprised as she continues to lay out the details.

There are no significant challenges within the other Agency Family Services and Benefits Programs.

Ms. Francis noted that she continues to be in close coordination with the County Finance Director as the county looks at ways to defray the impending 10% increase slated for health insurance. She will address the subject again at next month's Board of Directors meeting and provide an update.

Ms. Francis advised the board that the State's Allocation formula for 120 Agencies is in question as to how it was originally established. The former commissioner tasked the State with reviewing the allocation formula as it has not been changed in almost forty years and how should it look as we move forward. The State must determine what a new formula needs to consider making it more equitable across the agencies. Ms. Francis noted that she has suggested that the new allocation formula consider case complexity opposed to case load when allocating funding to agencies. Ms. Francis will follow up as additional work is done in this area.

Ms. Francis has expressed interest in the Sheriff's Department conducting active shooter training at the Agency for NCDSS employees. Further information will be provided at the next Board meeting.

On a motion by Ms. Langley and seconded by Mr. Murray, the Board went into Closed Session in accordance with Section 2.1-344 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, for the purpose of discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining appointees, or employees of any public body.

All members voted that during close session only matters that were allowed under the code were discussed. All voted yes. There were no motions.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16, at 11:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Attested by	
_____ Edith Johnson, Chairman April 18, 2023,	_____ Mozella F. Francis Director