

**HANOVER COUNTY
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
MINUTES
November 18, 2014**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnette, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

The following members were present: Sue Dibble, David Hobbs, Larry Huber, Lynn H. Saunders (3:35 p.m.), Michael Shannon and G. E. "Ed" Via. Also in attendance: Lisa Seward, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Daricka Jackson, Benefit Programs Manager; Niani Wynn, Benefit Programs Specialist II; Kara Brooks, CSA Coordinator and Robin Riley, Administrative Assistant.

II. CITIZENS' COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

Ms. Jackson introduced Ms. Kara Brooks, CSA Coordinator, who began employment with DSS on October 16, 2014. Ms. Brooks spoke about her background with foster care group homes and congregate care. She was also a foster parent. Mr. Barnette welcomed Ms. Brooks.

Ms. Brooks left the meeting at 3:34 p.m.

IV. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Via moved to approve the September 23, 2014 Board meeting minutes. Mr. Barnette seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

V. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MR. DAVID HOBBS' SERVICE TO THE SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

Mr. Barnette read the Resolution and presented it to Mr. Hobbs. Mr. Hobbs thanked the Board members and said he appreciated the efforts and hard work of all County employees.

VI. PRESENTATION: BENEFIT PROGRAMS

(copy of PowerPoint presentation sent to Board members 11-24-14)

Ms. Niani Wynn, Benefit Programs Specialist (BPS) II, introduced herself. A fact sheet summarizing benefit programs and duties of BPS workers was distributed.

The BPS worker:

- Determines eligibility for programs
- Explains policies and procedures
- Advises of rights and responsibilities
- Provides notification of eligibility

There is a policy manual for each benefit program:

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)
- Medicaid/Medical Assistance
 - Families and children
 - Foster care
 - Adoption assistance
 - Plan first
 - Pregnant women
 - Breast and cervical cancer prevention and treatment
 - ABD (aged, blind or disabled)
 - SSI (supplemental security income)
 - LTC (long-term care)
 - Community based care
 - Nursing home

Various automated systems are used to process and manage cases: ADAPT (Application Benefit Delivery Automation Project); VAMMIS (Virginia Medicaid Management Information System); VACMS (Virginia Case Management System and SPIDER (Systems Partnering in a Demographic Repository).

Human Services Assistants (HSAs) perform screening of applications and assignment to the appropriate worker depending on the program(s). The eligibility determination process includes:

- Conducting face-to-face or phone interviews (SNAP/TANF only)
- Requesting verifications
- Explaining policies and procedures
- Advising processing times (7 days expedited SNAP, 30 days non-expedited; 45 days Medicaid, 90 days ABD Medicaid if disability determination needed; 30 days TANF)
- Advising of rights and responsibilities to apply for benefits
- Providing notification of eligibility status
- Processing appeals
- SPIDER searches including EDRS (Electronic Disqualified Recipient System) to determine if someone has committed fraud or is under any benefits suspension

Clients are responsible for reporting all changes during any benefit period. Clients can also schedule an appeal if in disagreement with any benefits decisions.

BPS workers also provide information and referrals to clients for:

- Housing
- Shelter expenses
- Prescriptions
- Clothing
- Food pantries
- Employment
- Social Security office
- APS or CPS referrals. BPS workers are mandated reporters for APS and CPS.

Policy changes effective October 1, 2013 were explained. VACMS is phasing in programs to this system with Phase I consisting of MAGI policy/MA medical assistance; SNAP policy change for ABAWDS (able-bodied adults without dependents) and eligibility modernization and migration. Phase II will include ABD and LTC and will be effective August 2015. The SNAP policy change for ABAWDS requires that these clients must be working a minimum of 20 hours per week. The BPS unit is being restructured (November, 2014) by reassigning programs to workers to provide for needs of customers.

In summary, BPS workers function as unofficial social workers, counselors, psychiatrists and educators, wearing a lot of different “hats” that go beyond the scope of processing applications. Workers strive to provide excellent customer service to enhance the lives of clients and continue to promote empowerment and self-sufficiency.

Ms. Saunders asked which departments are located in Ashland and which ones are at Bell Creek. Ms. Wynn said programs are equally divided between both locations. Mr. Hobbs asked if VACMS is a statewide system and what is the end goal. Ms. Wynn said the goal is to have one system for all programs. Mr. Barnette asked if clients can apply for more than one program. Ms. Wynn said that clients cannot be denied the right to apply for any program and all applications must go through the screening process.

Mr. Barnette thanked Ms. Wynn and Ms. Jackson for the information presented.

VII. BUDGET UPDATE

Ms. Jackson said that Ms. Althizer and Dr. Crossen-Powell are attending the budget meeting today. Dr. Temoney, Ms. Ferguson and some of the social workers are in Charlottesville for the Learning Collaborative training. There have been no changes to the budget since September. Ms. Saunders asked Mr. Via about the budget and Mr. Via said it is still being worked on.

VIII. HANOVER DSS SCORECARD

Ms. Jackson reviewed the scorecard measurements and major events. She said the intake numbers will increase due to ABAWDS’ applications. However, many of those cases will also be closed after three months if the clients are not working. Ms. Saunders asked if the SNAP benefits have been reduced and Ms. Jackson said there was a decrease in allotment from the federal level. VIEW statistics are positive and State standards are being met in all benefits categories. Services numbers are increasing in most categories. Ms. Dibble asked about the quality negative action percentage. Ms. Jackson said that number is for when the State Quality Assurance (QA) Department pulls cases to review and there has been a negative action taken on a case. Ms. Dibble asked about the VIEW percentage of job retention and why people are not working. Ms. Jackson said there are various reasons such as clients quitting the job or being terminated.

IX. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Ms. Jackson reported the following information from the Director:

- DMAS contracted with Xerox to handle the Medicaid Call Center. Two BPS staff members resigned and accepted positions with Xerox.
- Mr. Getts and Ms. Althizer switched offices.
- Dr. Crossen-Powell attended the VLSSE's Child and Family Services Committee meeting.
- Ms. Jackson, Benefit Programs Manager, attended the Central Region's Directors' meeting.
- Ms. Ferguson, QA Coordinator, completed the fourth day of the Family Partnership Meeting training.
- Dr. Temoney, Assistant Director, attended "Child Care Aware" training and the VLSSE Fall Conference in Fredericksburg.
- Staff is working on the HDSS and CSA FY 16 budgets.
- The Business Operations Team members received HIPAA training.
- A new youth came into foster care while another youth chose to leave care on his 18th birthday.
- Ms. Kara Brooks accepted the position of CSA Coordinator, effective October 16th.
- Benefit Programs staff attended the BPRO/POSSESS conference in Bristol, VA.
- Hanover has been chosen as one of 15 agencies statewide to develop a child welfare team. Ms. Saunders asked about what the team will do. Ms. Jackson said the team will work on improving permanency and well-being for the children in foster care. This team is in Charlottesville at a training this week.
- Dr. Crossen-Powell participated on an interview panel for the Finance Department's Accounting Division Director.
- DSS placed a 17-year old female from New York into foster care for one night as her mother was unable to obtain transportation to Virginia to pick her up. This youth was traveling with three adult companions who had been arrested for a number of offenses. DSS was able to secure a flight for her to return home the next day.
- A retreat was held for the Quality Team members with presentations on all programs offered by DSS in order to provide a more global view of the agency.
- Dr. Crossen-Powell attended the Hanover Early Childhood Council meeting.
- The QA Coordinator attended a Hanover Christmas Mother event.
- A discussion was held about smart phones for on-call service staff. These phones would be beneficial for CPS and Foster Care staff to record interviews and take required photos with the phones.
- The BPS staff is being reassigned cases to reflect a more specialized approach with programs that will be specific to workers.
- An eight-year old female came into care due to medical neglect and failure of the parents to comply with court orders. A sibling group of three came into care due to conditions in the home and substance abuse of the parents. Four children have come into care since the last Board meeting. There are currently a total of 29 children in foster care.

- Dr. Crossen-Powell attended a Homeward Board meeting, and she is also participating in Leadership Metro Richmond (LMR) on a transportation work group.

Mr. Barnette thanked Ms. Jackson for the information.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Huber moved that the Board meeting be adjourned. Reverend Shannon seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The Board meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m. by Mr. Barnette.

Victoria Hutto, Chair

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 27, 2015; 3:30 p.m.