

Scotland County of Social Services Board

September 15, 2022

Regular Meeting

The vision of the Scotland County Social Services Board is to foster individual responsibility and to create a strong cooperative community that is responsive to the needs of its citizens.

DSS Board Members Present: Board Chair, Leon Butler, Board Vice Chair, Dorothy Tyson, Andy Kurtzman, Carol McCall, Mollie Flowers, John Ferguson

DSS Staff Present: April Snead, Director, Jessica Buehler, Administrative Assistant/Clerk to the Board, Shannon Hammonds, Social Work Supervisor, Carolyn Lewellen, Income Maintenance Program Administrator, Joy Hine, Income Maintenance Program Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Board Chair, Leon Butler. Mr. Butler also led the opening prayer.

A motion was made to approve the agenda for the September 15, 2022 meeting was made by John Ferson and seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The board unanimously approved and the agenda accepted.

The Board recognized John Ferguson for his service to the DSS Board. Mr. Ferguson was recognized for his diligent service for the past six years. Director Snead stated that Mr. Ferguson has been an advocate for the agency during his time as a board member. Mr. Ferguson's term has ended and this will be his last Board meeting as a member.

Mollie Flowers was sworn in as the newest DSS Board member. Mrs. Flowers previously worked at the Department.

A motion to approve the August 18, 2022 meeting minutes was made by Mr. Ferguson and seconded by Mrs. McCall. The board unanimously agreed and the minutes were approved.

Director Snead gave the Administrative Report

Please see the attached report

Discussion from the report:

Budget and Finance:

The budget has been revised to include additional allocations. Currently, SCATS CARES funds are 100% reimbursable. However, there are only \$20,000 left to spend. After this allocation is spent, the county will begin to match 20% of funding.

There will be discussion soon regarding the Reentry fiscal year. As of now, Reentry follows a different fiscal year. Reentry does not follow a state or federal fiscal year. Also, the Reentry Program has \$36,000 that has to be spent within the next three months. Director Snead discussed that this can be used to cover program costs such as personnel, travel, client expenses.. The funds may also be used to pre-purchase items for program recipients. Monnie English will continue to run the Reentry Program tentatively until November 1st. Shannon Hammonds, who will be promoted to Social Work Program Administrator on September 16th, will begin to manage the program after the tentative date.

Personnel:

One of the two IMC I positions has been offered as of this week.

Childcare:

Mr. Ferguson inquired about how Work First and Childcare can relate to each other. Director Snead stated that if certain requirements are met, work first recipients can qualify for Childcare. As of now, there have not been any discussions to relax guidelines to allow for more money to be spent within the childcare program. If guidelines were to change, the federal government would have to approve the changes.

Food and Nutrition:

Currently, clients are still receiving supplemental benefits. Since supplemental benefits are still being issued, more people are applying for Food and Nutrition benefits.

Adult and Family Medicaid:

The Department is currently working with Laserfiche to allow for Medicaid Transportation files to be stored electronically. This will allow for Medicaid Transportation to go paperless.

Program Integrity:

There is currently a position available in this unit. The successful candidate may need to be trained on Food and Nutrition policy and may work in the FNS unit for 6 months to do so. This will depend on if the candidate has previous Program Integrity or Food and Nutrition experience.

Adult Services:

The Department has received a new ward every month for the past few months.

Children Services:

The current supervisor position will be posted for one month instead of the normal two weeks, as all supervisor positions are posted for one month. There are only two available workers for investigations at this time. When fully staffed there are five available workers. There is a time limited position for an investigative social worker as one worker is out on medical leave. Foster Care is fully staffed and close to fully trained. Director Snead has reached out to Vanguard, a temporary staffing agency for workers, but has not received any communication back.

It was discussed that there has been an influx of sex abuse cases. Of the eleven reports from this week, five have been sex abuse cases. May, August, and September are the months that usually see a higher number of reports. During August and September, school has begun and teachers are able to better identify issues. Mrs. Stanton stated that many families received COVID funding to help with finances in the home and may be unable to sustain their homes without those funds. Mr. Kurtzman agreed and stated this creates more stressors within the home.

SCATS:

Director Snead stated that she received an email from the school system stating they are having issues with parents being unable to transport their children for pre-kindergarten testing.

DSS New Initiatives:

Active shooter training on the next closed day. This training was suggested by the Department's Safety Team. This is the Department's first time having Active Shooter training.

The Department currently does not have a full time deputy. The Sheriff's Office has been facing some hiring issues. It was discussed that there are security agencies that the Department can turn to if needed.

A motion to approve the Administrative Report was made by Andy Kurtzman and seconded by Carol McCall. The Board unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

Unfinished Business

DSS Board Rules of Procedure

This may need to be revised. The information in red is a new addition or a change. Director Snead asked the Board to come to the next meeting with questions and discussion about the possible revisions. The Board's Rules of Procedures read largely like the Commissioner's.

New Business

IE Johnson Discussion

After the last board meeting, there was discussion about Adult and Children Protective Services moving the IE Johnson upon completion. The Board may be in a position to express support or

opposition about the relocation of social work services. Mrs. McCall states that Mr. Patterson, County Manager, has been expecting this. It is not too late for the Board to oppose the relocation. There is a concern surrounding moving those two units away from the rest of the Department.

Mrs. Tyson expressed concern that this discussion was held after the last meeting was adjourned. The last DSS Board meeting was held a month ago and she expressed concern about not being included in the discussion or being notified that the discussion took place. She states she feels this discussion should not have taken place. Mrs. Tyson does not oppose a letter being sent to the County Manager, but suggests it is sent by the end of this month. Early voting begins next month.

Mr. Patterson makes the decision on where staff are housed. Mrs. McCall stated that it is a tremendous benefit for the citizens that Social Services and the Health Department are housed under the safe roof. It was discussed that input from staff on the relocation would be benefiting. Moving services would impact citizens who receive multiple services within DSS. It is also important to note that services intertwine often, especially between economic and protective services.

Mrs. McCall shows support of a letter asking for a review of the decision. A staff letter was discussed as well and it was mentioned that this letter should be sent separately. The Department does not suspect to see any significant growth in the upcoming years. There is a liaison between the Department and the state. This would be the person to talk to about construction and how to get reimbursed on that construction. There are options out there and they are not all county dollar options.

SCATS Potential Redesign of Deviated Fixed Line

SCATS buses may be seen parked for periods of time. The drivers may be on their lunch or waiting for a rider to finish their appointments.

Director Snead and Mrs. Hine are exploring the option of changing the current fixed deviated lines to demand response service. This will allow for clients to make an appointment and not wait at a bus stop. A SCATS bus would go to their home, take them to the proposed stop, and take the client directly back home. This service would close the gap for people that are not disabled or elderly and need transportation services. An official proposal will be brought to the next meeting. A member expressed concern about people abusing this system. Director Snead stated that there are ways to design the service to keep abuse from happening. For instance, two appointments can be made a week. Also, all appointments will be made with at least a two days

notice. Director Snead is awaiting guidance from the county attorney about being open to not requiring a CDL to drive SCATS vehicles.

Public Forum

- None

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ferguson. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tyson. The motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Jessica Buehler, Clerk to the Board

Leon Butler, Board Chair

Administrative Report

September 2022

Budget and Finance

- The FY 23 DSS budget amount is \$8,544,084. The FY 23 SCATS budget amount is \$619,512 requiring an approximate 20% match in county funding. The Reentry budget is in mid-year, as the budget runs from September 10th to September 11th each year.
- DHHS new interpretation of DHB approved administrative funding may decrease Medicaid administrative reimbursement. New definitions of staff who complete Enrollment and Eligibility functions must be reviewed, job descriptions updated, and additional steps to the 1571 process begin in October 2022.

- Increase the percent of MOE spending to maximize federal funding. Daysheet coding for Children Services, Daycare, Work First has been changed to begin the fiscal year. In FY 22, the agency collected \$374, 603 (41%) of available MOE funds. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Cross train in the DSS reimbursement process. Part I training is ongoing and Part II of the 1571 report training has begun with the Finance Technician. **(Strategic Plan)**

Personnel Services

- The Department has 6 vacancies, one IM Investigator I, Three IMc 1's, one SWIAT (time limited), one SW III. FY 23 is 5% through the month of August compared to FY 22 agency wide turnover rate of 20%.
- Improve the agency interview process. The Department will begin using a video pre-interview process through Sparkhire within the next month and has created a committee to review the hiring/interview process. **(Strategic Plan)**

Child Support

- Collect \$100,000 on Show Cause Court Dates. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Show Cause 90% of all new orders when no payment is made in the first 90 days of court order origination. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Ensure 50% of all cases with arrears have an arrears frequency. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Scotland County received three awards at the Child Support conference in August. The awards included highest in the state for improved interstate goals, highest in the state for improved incentive goals, and a North Carolina Child Support Council award for Excellence in Perseverance
- August's amnesty month resulted in an additional \$8,339 in payments. \$2,900 to resolve Orders for Arrest and \$5,439 to resolve an active Show Cause.

Economic Services:

Child Care

- The Daycare unit currently serves 561 children. The waiting list has been depleted at this time.
- The Daycare unit is meeting MOU goals consistently.

Food and Nutrition

- The FNS unit is meeting MOU goals consistently.
- Same Day processing goal of 40% for expedited applications and a twelve day average for non expedited applications. During the month of August expedited applications were at 25% and non-expedite were at an average of 19 days. **(Strategic Plan)**

Family and Adult Medicaid

- The Medicaid file review of the Single County Audit occurred on August 9th and 10th. Internal errors were found requiring no paybacks. We are waiting on the 2nd round of audit files to be audited.

- Both Medicaid units are working two months ahead of recertification due dates.
- Both Medicaid units continue to exceed timeliness requirements of the MOU.
- Medicaid Transportation to implement a paperless filing system. A quote has been received and approved from Laserfiche. Awaiting next steps from the Laserfiche team. **(Strategic Plan)**

Work First

- The Work First unit is meeting MOU goals consistently

Program Integrity

- The Program Integrity position has been posted and interviews occurred.

Quality Assurance/Training

- QA is conducting group training with each Economic Services Unit for post-pandemic policy and guidance.

Social Work Services:

Adult Services

- Increase MAC reimbursement by 5%. More review of MAC policy is being reviewed and compared to individual cases to determine the potential for increased MAC daysheet coding. **(Strategic Plan)**

Children Services

- Foster care social workers continue to be over the caseload standard. Foster care staff continue to have approximately 20 cases each, caseload standard being 10. There is a concern for providing required services to all children in care.
- Court delays and the high average of continuances continues to keep children in foster care and other cases from closure. The Scotland Permanency Collaborative has met four times to work on barriers to permanence and meets again within 3 months.
- Initiate 95% of all screens in CPS reports within required time frames. For the month of August 2022, 93% of reports were initiated within time frames. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**
- For all children who were victims of maltreatment during a 12 month period, no more than 9.1% receive a subsequent finding of maltreatment. As of August, 2022 repeat maltreatment is 17%. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**
- Of children entering foster care in a 12 month period, 40.5% are discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering care. As of August, 2022 the rate of permanency within 12 months is 48%. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**
- Of children entering foster care in a 12 month period and discharged to permanency within 12 months through reunification, kinship care, or guardianship, no more than 8.3% re-enter foster care within 12 months of

discharge. As of August 2022, 0% of children re-entered foster care within 12 month. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**

- Of children entering foster care in a 12 month period, the rate of placement moves per 1,000 days of foster care does not exceed 4.1%. As of August, 2022 the rate of foster care moves was 1%. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**
- Social Work QA process fully implemented. **(Strategic Plan)**
- All social work documentation will be current within seven days. The unit has extended the deadline to September for documentation to be current. **(Strategic Plan)**

Work First Employment

- The agency has one Work First Employment social worker with a caseload of Work First participants required to have a Mutual Responsibility Agreement.

DPS Reentry Program

- The Reentry Program had a new social worker to begin on 8/16/22.

Scotland Area Transit System (SCATS)

- Increase the deviated fixed line trips by 25%. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Analyze and determine the cost per each SCATS trip. At this time the cost per trip has been analyzed as such:
 - Cost per passenger trip - \$17.40
 - Cost per hour - \$32.55
 - Cost per mile - \$2.54

More work will continue to monitor this and use a second tool to verify cost per trip. **(Strategic Plan)**

- SCATS continues to recruit for one part time driver.

Other Impacts on DSS:

- During the month of August, law enforcement was required three times. The Department was scheduled to have a full time deputy onsite August 16, 2022. This was delayed until September 16, 2022. The Department is still without a deputy.

New DSS Initiatives

- The Department won a NCACDSS Best Practice Award for Innovations in Services to Customers during the Pandemic. The best practice recognized was the SWAP program. This was awarded at the statewide Social Services Institute on August 4, 2022.

- The Department offered the first quarterly Self Care Lunch and Learn sessions facilitated by the county Employee Assistance Program on 9/14/22. These sessions focus on self care, stress management, etc.
- Interview/Hiring Committee has been developed and has begun meeting to review the hiring process and interview questions.
- A new Leadership Development recruitment began during the month of August and applications have been reviewed to begin the new class.
- The agency created a Values Committee to define the values for DSS. The values have been defined as Respect, Teamwork, Dependability, Accountability, Innovation and Excellence. Values are now in job postings, job descriptions. Values are displayed throughout the agencies, including in job recruitment postings, included in job descriptions. Administrators are working to engrain values into job evaluations. Various projects are working to engrain values in more areas of the agency. **(Strategic Plan)**
- The Department is working with CEOCO to upgrade the current copying/scanning to a cloud version with new, more efficient features. The contract is signed and awaiting equipment delivery.
- The county and DSS has been working with Spectrum for several months to upgrade the Wifi in the building and the security cameras. Cameras will also be installed to monitor the SCATS bus parking. This project is ongoing with no movement from Spectrum.

Common Acronyms

ADA - American with Disabilities Act

APS - Adult Protective Services

CPS - Child Protective Services

COVID - 19 - Coronavirus

DCDEE - Department of Child Development and Early Education (Daycare)

DHB - Department of Health Benefits (Medicaid)

DHHS - Department of Health and Human Services

FNS - Food and Nutrition Services

IT - Information Technology

LIHEAP - Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program

LIHWAP - Low Income Housing Water Assistance Program

LBL - Local Business Liaison

MAC - Medicaid Administrative Claiming (funding source)

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

OHSR - Office of Human State Resources

OST - Operational Support Team

REDA - Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit
SCATS - Scotland County Area Transit System
SSBG - Social Services Block Grant (funding source)
SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SWAP - Scotland Wellness Assistance Program
PPE - Personal Protective Equipment
PSNAP - Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
WFFA - Work First Family Assistance