

Scotland County of Social Services Board

January 16, 2025

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: Dorothy Tyson, Mollie Flowers, Amanda Holland, Andy Kurtzman

DSS Staff: Kimberly McRae, Joy Hine, Wendy Stanton, Shannon Hammonds, Shaneall Kollock, Dolly Dowdy

Absent from the meeting: Darwin Williams

The meeting was called to order at 8:30am by Dorothy Tyson. Dorothy Tyson welcomed everyone. Dorothy Tyson noted that Darwin Williams was not present at today's meeting, but noted that they still have a quorum. Molly Flowers led the prayer.

Amanda Holland made a motion to approve the January 16, 2025 agenda, which was seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The board agreed and the motion passed.

Open Forum

- None

Director Kimberly McRae introduced Dolly Dowdy, a member of the leadership development program and explained that she was required to observe a DSS board meeting. Dorothy Tyson had everyone in the room introduce themselves. Dorothy Tyson asked Dolly Dowdy if she had anything to add and she did not.

A motion to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2024 meeting was made by Molly Flowers and seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The board agreed and the motion passed.

Director McRae presented the administrative report.

Please see the attached report.

Discussion from the administrative report:

Budget and Finance:

Director McRae discussed current budgets and where they are with spending. DSS, SCATS, Reentry began December 1, still have not received new RFP for Reentry, and have been advised to continue working as they have been on current budget.

Andy Kurtzman asked about the revised budget being lower than it usually is for SCATS. Dorothy Tyson asked if the changes were due to personnel. Joy Hine explained that is what we were budgeted. Andy Kurtzman also discussed where we were with the DSS budget, and in dividing the funds it appears that there are some funds left. Director McRae explained that she spoke with the county manager and finance manager yesterday to discuss funding so that percentages are at the right spot. Andy Kurtzman explained that he thought maybe there would be some additional funds for salaries. Director McRae explained that there are not enough funds for this for this FY. Shannon Hammonds discussed that she and Wendy Stanton have been looking at all surrounding counties, including Cumberland, Hoke, Richmond, Robeson, Moore, and Scotland has the lowest salaries compared to these counties. Shannon Hammonds and Wendy Stanton pointed out that IAT social workers in Richmond County make more coming in the door than the currently posted SWS III position in Scotland.

Personnel

Director McRae stated that there are 11 vacancies in the month of December and the current turnover rate is at 8%. Director McRae explained that the turnover rate is remaining the same, as they are not including lateral moves as they have in the past, it is an actual number of individuals that have left the agency.

Child Support

Director McRae discussed that the unit still continues to do exceptionally well. Also, E courts are live and staff continue to file documents without any issue.

Child Care

Director McRae discussed that the child care unit is currently serving 580 children, attending 19 daycares within Scotland, 34 outside of Scotland. There is now a waiting list as of September, 92 clients on that list. No additional discussion or questions.

Food and Nutrition

Director McRae discussed that in December, FNS received 384 recertifications with 100% timeliness, and that the unit is expecting 568 recertifications in January. Director McRae discussed that the unit continues to work towards meeting MOU goals for timeliness.

Medicaid

Director McRae discussed that the medicaid units are meeting the mOU goals for application timeliness. Medicaid's timeliness report for December was 98%. Director McRae noted that the dashboard for Scotland County reports that the county has 3,254 participants enrolled in the Medicaid Expansion Program.

Work First Family Assistance/Work First Employment

Director McRae explained that the Work First Family Assistance unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. Work First caseload size as of December is 7.

Program Integrity

Director McRae explained that program integrity continues to perform well, with 100% of cases investigated timely.

Adult Services

Director McRae discussed that the APS unit continues to meet all MOU requirements for the FY, and MAC coding was at 59%.

Children Services

Board members asked why the SW III did not accept the position. Wendy Stanton explained it was declined due to the low salary. Wendy Stanton discussed salary, and Scotland County is on the lower end. Wendy Stanton explained once again that the neighboring county (Richmond) pays line staff what supervisor pay is here. Wendy Stanton explained that the position was re-posted and offered again, but it did not work out. Andy Kurtzman asked if there were any fringe benefits that we could offer for enticement. Dorothy Tyson discussed current fringe benefits that we offer, and cannot offer anymore. Director McRae explained that the director's association asked for salaries and she gathered the information, and Scotland County is the lowest paid county, at the bottom not just for social work, but across the agency as a whole. Dorothy Tyson asked that Director McRae get information together so that it may be turned in by February 26 so that board member Darwin Williams can present it to the commissioners and county manager.

Amanda Holland asked about meeting the goal of increasing foster homes in Scotland County, and Wendy Stanton explained yes, if all families currently taking the MAPP class complete it, the county will exceed the goal.

Reentry Program

Director McRae discussed that the program is growing in numbers, and had 17 active participants as of December. Director McRae discussed the donation drive that is scheduled for January 22, 2025 at the voter registration building from 10-4. Director McRae discussed reentry staff working to secure MOA's for housing partners.

Opioid Outreach Program

Director McRae discussed that the program is now accepting referrals and has received 2 referrals, although there are currently no active participants. Director McRae discussed that the OOP social worker had been in contact with the health department director and EMS director to meet with staff about the program to begin receiving referrals from them. Director McRae discussed that the OOP social worker and supervisor also did a radio spotlight on the program in December.

Family Treatment Court

Director McRae discussed that the FTC program currently has their coordinator in place, and they will begin sessions in February 2025.

SCATS

Dorothy Tyson asked if we ordered the 2 scats buses as discussed. Director McRae explained that we ordered one which will be sufficient.

Other Impacts:

Dorothy Tyson asked what the LINKS program is. Wendy Stanton explained that it is an 18-21 program for foster children that can voluntarily agree to stay in foster care after the age of 18. Dorothy Tyson acknowledged understanding.

Additional Conversation:

Dorothy Tyson asked Dollie Dowdy if she knew everyone and she stated that she did.

Dorothy Tyson asked Director McRae for the strategic plan to be on the agenda and brought to the February board meeting so that the board can see where DSS is currently with meeting goals.

Dorothy Tyson explained that the Scotland Memorial Foundation will be having a women's health meeting. Dorothy Tyson stated that the meeting will be on February 6, 2025 from 5-8pm at the Highlands. Dorothy Tyson stated that she would check in to see if they could use DSS as a vendor, specifically for opioid outreach program and foster care. Dorothy Tyson asked that Shannon Hammonds text her and remind her to follow up on this to verify a spot for the DSS table.

Kim McRae also asked if Darwin Williams was sworn in and Dorothy Tyson verified that he was.

Dorothy Tyson thanked Dolly Dowdy for being here.

Dorothy Tyson asked about any additional questions regarding the report and there were none.

Dorothy Tyson asked for a motion to approve the report, and Amanda Holland made a motion. Molly Flowers seconded motion, and the report was approved.

Dorothy Tyson asked if there was any old business and there was none. There is no new business. Dorothy Tyson thanked everyone for their time, and the meeting was adjourned at 9am.

Shannon Hammonds, Program Administrator

Dorothy B. Tyson, Board Chair

Administrative Report

December 2024

Budget and Finance:

- The FY 25 DSS revised budget amount is \$9,169,041. The FY 25 SCATS revised budget amount is \$828,377 requiring an approximate 20% match in county funding. The Reentry budget, which began on December 1st, is approximately \$155,000. Spending through December 2024 is as follows:
 - DSS 44.60%
 - Reentry 5.11%
 - SCATS 28.26%
- Increase foster care reimbursement through a joint finance/program reconciliation process. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Create a user guide for finance staff and finance processes. **(Strategic Plan)**

Personnel Services

- The Department has eleven vacancies, one IM Supervisor II, two Leadworker IMC III's, two IMC II's, one IMC I, two SWIAT's, one Social Worker III, one Vehicle Operator II, one Community Social Services Technician.
- The FY 25 turnover rate is 8% for the agency.

Child Support

- As of the end of December, the unit continues to perform exceptionally well in meeting Self-assessment goals. The unit surpasses the goal in all Self-assessment areas and performs higher than the state average in seven of the eight measures.
- The unit has 95.86% of its 3,263 cases under an order, well above the goal of 90%.
- The unit's overall rate for Show Causes issued on cases when no payment is made within the first 90 days of establishing the Order is 78% (July-December).
- As of the end of December, the unit has collected over \$2.5 million of support for the families it serves.
- Scotland County E-Courts update: Since the "go live" date of October 14th through the end of December, Scotland County has electronically filed 1,511 documents in the new system.
- Caseload sizes continue to decline statewide due to post-COVID policies. Since July 2021, Scotland County has seen a decrease of 18.2%, which is in line with the reduction statewide. Since July 2024, the statewide decline in cases has been 3.32%, compared with the county's decline of 2.8%. The state's requirement for custodial parents to seek child support when receiving Medicaid was changed after COVID.

Economic Services:

Child Care

- The Daycare unit currently serves 580 children. This number fluctuates each month based on the attendance reported by the daycare. Children are

attending 19 daycares in Scotland County and 34 daycares outside Scotland County.

- Due to ARPA Fund exhaustion, the waiting list was implemented starting September 1, 2024. There are currently 92 clients on the waiting list.
- During FY 25 the Daycare unit's combined spending coefficient is 102%.
- The Daycare unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness.

(Strategic Plan)

Food and Nutrition

- The FNS unit continues to work toward meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. **(Strategic Plan)**
- The unit strives for a same day processing goal of 25% for expedited applications and a 20 day average for non expedited applications. During the month of December, the expedited applications were at 80% and non-expedited applications were at an average of 10 days. **(Strategic Plan)**
- In December, FNS received 384 recertifications with 100% timeliness. For January, 568 recertifications are expected.

Medicaid

- The Medicaid units are meeting the MOU goals for application timeliness. **(Strategic Plan)**
- For December, there were 4 -SAA Applications with 100 % timeliness and 2 -SAD Applications with 100 %.**(Strategic Plan)**
- Medicaid's Timeliness Report Card for December was 98%.
- Medicaid Expansion started December 1, 2023. The NC Medicaid Expansion Dashboard for Scotland County was last updated December 3, 2024. The dashboard reports Scotland County having 3,254 enrolled in the Medicaid Expansion Program.

Work First Family Assistance/ Work First Employment

- The Work First Family Assistance unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. As of December, we have a caseload of 75. **(Strategic Plan)**
- The Work First Employment caseload size as of December is 7 participants.

Program Integrity

- 100% of cases continued to be investigated timely.

Social Work Services:

Adult Services

- The unit continued to meet all MOU requirements during the fiscal year, The MAC coding for December, 2024 was 59%.

Children Services

- The children services unit works to increase retention across the unit which has been a statewide issue **(Strategic Plan)**. For the month of December, the unit had 3 vacant positions, 2 SWIAT and FC SW III. The position for SW III was offered and not accepted and the position had to be reposted. The IAT

position was reposted as well.

- For all children who were victims of maltreatment, no more than 9.1% receive a subsequent finding of maltreatment. As of December, 2024 repeat maltreatment was 16%. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**
- All social work documentation will be current within seven days. **(Strategic Plan)** Program Managers and Supervisors in the Children's Services Unit continue to meet monthly to assess and track documentation to ensure it remains current. Workers have been afforded protected time to work from home on documentation since they have had chromebooks returned to them, and this seems to be working well. The unit continues to work diligently to increase timeliness with documentation.
- Increase the number of licensed foster homes by 25%. As of December, 2024 there are 9 licensed foster homes in Scotland County. The fall MAPP class began on November 5, 2024. **(Strategic Plan)**

DPS Reentry Program

- For the month of December, the Reentry Program had 17 active participants, and 7 new referrals.
- The Reentry Program has a Donation Drive scheduled for January 22, 2025 in the community. This is an effort to obtain needed essentials for participants.
- The Program plans to reinstate Reentry Focused Days in the community beginning in January now that the program is fully staffed.
- The Reentry Program staff are currently in the process of obtaining an MOA with B.E.S.T. Motivational and Coaching Services.
- The Reentry Program staff are currently in the process of obtaining an MOA with Golden Life Solutions as a housing partner.

Scotland County Opioid Outreach Program

- For the month of December, the OOP had 2 new referrals, and no active participants.
- The OOP social worker and supervisor has been in contact with the EMS director and is scheduled to have meetings with EMS staff in January to discuss the referral process and to ensure referrals are being received from this entity.
- The OOP social worker will be setting a table up in the DSS lobby in January 2025 to advertise and educate the community on the program. The supervisor has also reached out to the Health Department director to discuss setting a table up in the health department monthly, and to meet with health department staff to discuss the referral process and hopefully begin receiving referrals.
- The OOP social worker and supervisor did a radio spotlight on WLNC in December highlighting the opioid epidemic in Scotland County and how the OOP aims to assist.

Scotland County Family Treatment Court

- The Scotland County FTC program now has a coordinator in place, as of October 2024. The Program anticipates beginning sessions in February 2025.
- The Department has been working with the court officials to get a

schedule together, and to identify families that will benefit from this program.

Scotland Area Transit System (SCATS)

- The agency continues to analyze and determine the cost per each SCATS trip. **(Strategic Plan)**
- SCATS trips are down for November and December due to holidays, driver shortages and being down one bus part of the month.
- Employment trips have exhausted the funding given by NC DOT's ROAP. Funds can be moved from funding for all Rural General Public (RGP) trips.

Other Impacts on DSS:

- The agency took part in the BSW exhibition at UNCP on December 6th, in which a table was set up to draw in prospective applicants for vacant positions.
- The agency is currently hosting a social work intern in the CPS unit. The agency is looking to continue partnering with academic facilities to utilize interns and provide them educational opportunities.
- The agency's quarterly closed day was held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 with a full day of team building and planned activities. A Christmas Dinner was provided by the ATeam for staff to show appreciation for the employees services throughout the year.
- Children Services held its Christmas Party for the Agencies Foster Children on December 19, 2024. The event was not only well attended, but a great success for the families and children.
- Through the Caring Christmas Sponsorship Opportunity, the agency received many donations from staff, county employees, local companies and the Scotland County community as a whole. Through this generosity, 58 children, 10 Links Participants and 24 Disabled Adults were blessed with these acts of kindness.

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

FTC- Family Treatment Court

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

OOP- Outreach Opioid Program

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

PHE - Public Health Emergency

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

PSNAP - Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition

Assistance Program WFFA - Work First Family

Assistance