

Minutes
Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services
Holiday Inn Koger Conference Center
Richmond, VA 23235

June 16-17, 2010

Members Present

Trudy Brisendine, Danny Brown, Shirley Culpepper, Willie Greene, Margaret Luca, Brenda Hornsby, Barbara Manuel, and Bela Sood.

Absent

Michelle Larkin

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Trudy Brisendine called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed Commissioner Martin D. Brown to the meeting and offered congratulations to him on his appointment.

REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

Richard Martin, Manager of Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs reviewed the agenda. He advised the Division of Information Technology will be highlighted on Thursday, followed by Human Resources in August.

Information Items

Regulatory Update

Mr. Martin advised there are 55 regulation in place; 2 in the process of a periodic review; 4 being amended 14 being repealed; and 7 new regulations in the process of being promulgated for a total of 62 regulatory actions.

If approval is granted to establish the Permanency Regulation, the Board has taken action to reduce the total number of regulations to 47.

Looking back over the past eight years, the department had a total of 100 regulations and proposed regulations. In August 1999 when Mr. Martin began reporting to the Board on a regular basis, there were 102 regulations and proposed regulations in place.

Members received a copy of the Status of Regulation Report.

Follow-up to the Child Fatality Report

Rita Katzman, Manager of the Child Protective Services Unit briefed members on child fatalities in Virginia due to abuse or neglect during SFY 2009. Members also reviewed a copy of the Child Fatality Information Report (items attached to the official Minutes housed in the home office).

The Chair congratulated Ms. Katzman on receiving the *Dr. Anthony Shaw Award* for exceptional Child Protective Services professionalism.

Child Welfare Update

The Chair shared a copy of the Child Protection Review Final Report from the Prince William Police Department dated July 2009.

Comment Period

Comment from the Public

Eddie Harrison spoke on Child Protective Services from the local perspective, advising that workers are taught to put a child's safety first. He reported that children below the age of five years are the most vulnerable. As director, he feels it necessary that he attend court cases involving a child fatality.

Mr. Harrison advised there is a huge drug problem in southwest Virginia, and that both planning districts one and two have drug programs for citizens.

Foster Care caseloads have tripled in the last few years.

Comment from Local Boards and Directors of Social Services

Eddie Harrison, Director of Russell County DSS reported numerous changes due to budget issues and that local agencies will continue to do their jobs with the resources available. Family Engagement, Structured Decision Making, and Transformation will bring changes to the agency. He believes that local agencies cannot stay stagnant and do business as usual even when doing well, they must have a vision to do things better. He said he understands Structured Decision Making, and if implemented properly and funding available, it will be a very important tool to help children. He reminded that training on this tool would standardize the way we do business.

He feels you cannot do CPS without Family Engagement.

He shared his concern over the lack of dollars for adult services, advising that elder abuse has tripled. There is also a problem with lack of adult services in his area.

Commissioner Brown asked him to share his recommendations for best practice and implementation. Mr. Harrison feels we need to ensure local agencies have staff to take on the extra work due to the learning curve associated with new programs.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Harrison for his attendance at Board meetings and remarked he had been an asset to members by sharing his expertise.

Comment from Boards and Directors of Community Action Agencies

None

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives

Sarah Snead, President of the VLSSE welcomed the Board to Chesterfield County and congratulated Commissioner Brown on his appointment. The League looks forward to working with him and the Board.

Ms. Snead shared the League Roster with the Board. Susan Clark, Director of Galax Department Social Services will serve as President; Carl Ayers, Director of Floyd County Department of Social Services will serve as First Vice President; Cathy Pemberton, Director of Powhatan Department of Social Services as Second Vice-President; Kimberly Irvine, Director of York/Poquoson Department of Social Services as Third Vice-President; Shel Bolyard-Douglas, Director of Dinwiddie Department of Social Services as Fourth Vice-President; Richard Verilla, Director of Campbell Department of Social Services as Secretary; and Roma Morris, Director of Prince Edward Department of Social Services as Treasurer.

Ms. Snead thanked the Board and department for their continued support during her tenure as President. Members applauded the work of Ms. Snead and look forward to returning to Chesterfield when the opportunity arises.

Chairman Brisendine shared the Board's sadness over the passing Sam Bush, Director of Greensville Emporia DSS.

Comment from the Virginia Community Action Partnership

Jim Schuyler, Executive Director of VACAP updated members on the activities and trends of the community action network. He just returned from their annual Workshop Conference where the focus was on sustainability, metrics, and transparency, seeking additional revenue sources, community economic development, and strategic communications planning.

Expectation is that the federal Office of Community Services will approve the continuation grant for training and technical assistance for an additional year.

In early June, VACAP applied for an additional federal Office of Community Services grant to promote exemplary practices in the area of community economic development .

He advised that both Commissioner Brown and Deputy Secretary Hare spoke at the annual conference and look forward to a continuing mutually productive relationship between community action and this administration.

In closing, Mr. Schuyler spoke of the passing of Edith Jones, a pillar of the Virginia Community Action Network that worked with the STOP Organization serving Hampton Roads.

Members received a copy of *Impact 2010*.

Comment from the Commissioner of Social Services

Commissioner Brown thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend and share his philosophy.

He commended the smooth transition that occurred over the past three weeks and said it was due in large part to Ms. Schultze, Mr. Steinhauser, Ms. Flanagan, Ms. McGhee, and other directors; remarking there is a very capable staff within the department. (Applause from the Board.)

He thanked local agency directors and their staff for effectively carrying out the laws and policies of social services. Without successful leadership from the directors at the local level, benefits and services would not be administered effectively. (Members gave a round of applause for the good work local agencies provide.)

Mr. Brown spoke about his previous position as Public Relations Director at the department during Welfare Reform and the difficult times that were faced, saying that the Empowerment Commissioner took an idea and developed into law. Once the law was passed and regulations promulgated, local agencies had the task to implement. This implementation changed people's lives for the better.

Commissioner had an opportunity to meet with division directors and hold staff "campfire" meetings, remarking there is a clear difference of professionalism and level of excellence within the department. He is excited about being the biggest cheerleader for the agency and hopefully its biggest servant.

That being said, we are facing new and continuing issues. We see child welfare transformation as a success and need to expand up it. There are also challenges with federal health care reform. There are currently 800,000 people receiving Medicaid benefits in Virginia. We expect 275,000- 425,000 additional people to be added to the caseload. The local departments will shoulder that entire burden. Central Office needs to develop strategies to help them; keeping in mind additional funds are not available.

He stated there are people who do not have a "safety net" of relationships with family, friends, church, etc. For these people, we need to be aggressive with their needs. He wants to pursue reducing the 30-45 day timeframe for application approval without increasing the food stamp error rate.

He advised that 1 in 10 people receive Medicaid; 1 in 7 receive SNAP benefits; 1 in 4 children receive Child Support, and 1 in 3 children are born out of wedlock in Virginia. Since these problems are at the local level, solutions are generally at the local level; so we will be looking to the Board, directors, providers, etc. for their expertise.

The Governor has prioritized Prisoner Re-entry Initiative to help prisoners as they transition out of the criminal justice system; realizing there is only 30-60 day window of opportunity to reconnect with family, obtain a job, and find a place to stay.

Another initiative that will be focused on internally is to continue growing as an agency of excellence and produce outcome measures for what we do, realizing that although some of the things we do cannot be measured, most can. We need to be able to measure our success in a clear objective way and tie our success to those key performance measures. Commissioner is working with HR and division directors to develop a strategy to continue to take the agency into a level where we track everything that we do from a performance-based model.

He remarked that how you do things is as important as the things you do. There is dignity, value and worth in everyone and you should treat everyone with the dignity and honor they deserve; you can disagree with someone without being disagreeable; if it's not broken, don't fix it and if it isn't broken, don't try to break it.

The Chairman thanked Commissioner Brown for sharing his philosophy and aspirations. The Board looks forward to the excellent opportunity to work together.

Update on National Governor Association Meeting

Marianne McGhee, Director of Public Affairs provided an update on the National Governor Association (NGA).

In 2008, Virginia was one of ten states awarded a \$12,000 grant from the NGA to engage and educate new stakeholders and convene a summit resulting in strategies to reduce poverty in the Commonwealth.

On May 7, 2009, Governor Timothy Kaine announced the creation of taskforce "Rethinking Poverty: Exploring Economic Opportunity for All Virginias," the state's summit on poverty. The taskforce, co-chaired by Secretary of Health and Human Resources Marilyn Tavenner and Richmond attorney Robert Grey, is a collection of public and private sector partners, who will make policy recommendations and present a final report to the Governor's Office in spring 2010.

On July 18, 2009, Virginia hosted the largest statewide conversation at 25 local community college sites and one public facility in Richmond, on the issue of poverty. Citizens had the chance to answer the question, "If you had two minutes to talk with Governor Kaine – or your elected official -- what would you recommend be to reduce poverty in Virginia and why?"

Committee recommendations included asset development, resiliency, and workforce training and education. (A copy of this report is attached to the Minutes.)

Margaret Luca confirmed with Commissioner that the Poverty Committee would remain a viable committee of the Board.

Family and Children's Trust Fund (FACT) Conference Update

Deputy Commissioner Margaret Schultze provided an update on the FACT Conference and shared a copy of the June 2010 Fact Report with members.

This report brings together data that highlights conditions for Virginians of all ages who have experienced violence within their families. The report presents a unified portrait of the extent and impact of family violence across the life cycles of individuals, ranging from the very young to the elderly.

The FACT hopes that communities and the Commonwealth will use the report to increase awareness of the scope and impact of family violence; set and track goals for improving local and state conditions; and engage residents, policymakers, and leaders from all sectors of the community in taking action. (A copy of this report is attached to the minutes.)

Ms. Brisendine asked if the State Crime Commission was involved in this conference. Ms. Schultze will check and advise. Ms. Schultze will also transmit an electronic copy of the report to Virginia legislators.

Ms. Schultze offered to have FACT Director Fran Inge attend a future Board meeting to provide an in-depth review of the Report.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Brown) and seconded (Ms. Luca) moved to approve Minutes from the April meeting as presented. Motion approved with all in favor.

Discussion

None

Fauquier County Jurisdiction-wide Deviation

Jan Selbo, Director of Fauquier County Department of Social Services asked for Board approval to deviate jurisdiction-wide.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Hornsby) and seconded (Mr. Culpepper) moved to approve Fauquier County Social Services request to deviate from the State Board approved human resource policies and follow the Human Resource System for Fauquier County to be approved effective July 1, 2010. Motion approved with all in favor.

Discussion

Mr. Brown confirmed that 26 of the 120 local agencies deviate from State Human Resource System policies.

22 VAC 40-601, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Final Adoption

This amendment to the regulation will change the title of the program from Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The amendments will also streamline the processing of SNAP applications and allow for transitional SNAP benefits.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Luca) on behalf of the committee, moved to approve the final regulatory package for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order 107 (2009) and the Administrative Process Act. This regulatory action may become effective 30 days after publication. Motion approved with all in favor.

Discussion

The Board discussed hearing a report on the history of Food Stamps in Virginia at a future meeting.

22 VAC 40-201, Permanency Services-Prevention, Foster Care Adoption, and Independent Living-Final adoption

This action appeals eight existing regulations and establishes one set of rules encompassing the full range of permanency services provided to Virginia's children and families.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Hornsby) on behalf of the committee, moved to approve the final repeal of regulations 22 VAC 40-200, Foster Care—Guiding Principles; 22 VAC 40-210, Foster Care—Assessing the Client's Service Needs; 22 VAC 40-240, Non-Agency Placement for Adoption—Consent; 22 VAC 40-250, Agency Placement Adoptions—AREVA; 22 VAC 40-260, Agency Placement Adoptions—Subsidy; 22 VAC 40-280, Non-Agency Placements for Adoption—Adoptive Home Study; 22 VAC 40-800, Family Based Social Services; 22 VAC 40-810, Fees for Court Services Provided by Local Departments of Social Services and approve the final adoption of 22 VAC 40-210, Permanency Services –Prevention, Foster Care Adoption and Independent Living for publication in the Virginia Register subject to approval under the provisions of Executive Order Number 107 (2009). Motion approved with all in favor.

Discussion

None

Election of Officers

ON MOTION DULY MADE (by Committee Chair Margaret Luca), moved to nominate Brenda Hornsby as Chair, Bela Sood as Vice Chair and Michelle Larkin as Secretary.

Following member discussion , and **ON MOTION DULY MADE** (by Margaret Luca), withdrew the motion to elect Brenda Hornsby as Chair, Bela Sood as Vice Chair and Michelle Larkin as Secretary. Motion approved with all in favor. (Ms. Hornsby has not received notification of reappointment, and prefers to delay the vote until August.)

ON MOTION DULY MADE by Committee Chair Margaret Luca, the Board was asked to elect Bela Sood as Vice Chair and Michelle Larkin as Secretary. Motion approved with all in favor.

The Chair will be elected at the August Meeting and appear as the first action item on the agenda.

Information Items

Adult Services Report

Paul McWhinney provided an overview of Adult Services/Adult Protective Services. There are four program areas:

Adult Services help adults remain in the least restrictive setting, preferably their own home, and function as independently as possible. Services may include case management, home-based care, transportation, adult day services, and assessments/screenings for long-term care.

Adult Protective Services receives and investigates reports of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation and offers services to protect and prevent further mistreatment. In SFY 2009, there were 15,625 APS reports. Fifty-nine percent (8,076) of those reports were substantiated. There was a nine percent increase in reports from SFY 2008 to 2009.

ASAPS System is a web-based case management and reporting system that launched in October 2005. Workers enter case information and narratives, and are monitored by local supervisors and state staff. Information is used for state and local data collections, analysis and reporting.

Auxiliary Grants Program provides a supplement to eligible aged, blind, or disabled individuals to support them in an assisted living facility or adult foster care home. In SFY 2009, 6 426 individuals received an AG payment.

He advised that Adult Foster Care is a local-option program and the local department approves providers. Up to three adults may reside with a provider. Currently 20 LDSS offer adult foster care. Fifty-eight providers, and 67 individuals are currently residing in AFC homes.

VA Caregivers Grant Program allows up to \$500 a year to eligible caregivers who care for a needy family member with a mental or physical impairment. There were 1,530 applicants in 2008 and has been unfunded since. Legislation authorizing this program expires on December 31, 2010.

He reported that current federal funding for victims of abuse and neglect is \$239.91 for domestic violence; \$5,920.00 for child abuse; and \$0.89 for elder abuse. A copy of this complete report is attached to the official Minutes

Child Welfare Update

Paul McWhinney provided an update on Children's Services Transformation. Key areas of progress are training, managing by data, continuous quality improvement, and Casey reengagement.

Permanency outcomes are improving, using a practice model and family engagement to include families, youth, and resource parents in a wide range of decision-making activities; including planning and service delivery for giving them a voice and choice in what happens to their families and children.

The division infrastructure is Leadership, Support, and Accountability.

Gail Nardi, Adult Protective Services (APS) Manager, highlighted Adult Services. There are four areas of APS: Adult Services –provided home based services to 6,697 cases in 2009; Adult Protective Services-15,625 APS reports, of which 8,076 were substantiated; Auxiliary Grants Program-6,426 individuals receiving this grant in 2009; VA Caregivers Grant –program expires in December 2010; and Adult Foster Care Program – decision to use this program is left with local agencies.

She highlighted the Elder Justice Act of 2010.

The Board thanked Mr. McWhinney and Ms. Nardi for their informative presentations.

Recess 4:35 p.m.

Thursday, June 17, 2010

Meeting reconvened by Chairman Brisendine at 9:00 a.m.

Division of Information Technology Overview

Robert Hobbelman, CIO of Division of Information Technology provided an overview of his area, sharing information on DIS reorganization.,

Key Strategic Priorities include creating a more efficient and successful organization focused on technology to deliver "CORE" value-added services: -Customer Oriented, Reliable, and Effective.

Implemented new metrics for optimal recourse allocation to improve productivity, performance, and quality of service; ensures that DIS is strategically aligned with VDSS's goals and priorities; realign division to be able to respond to changing external and internal conditions; determines the interdependencies of new and existing projects; and streamline IT processes to improve technical efficiencies and decrease redundancy.

The division is also implementing Business Process Reengineering (BPR) recommendations, and moving toward a paperless environment.

A Project Management Office was established and initiated division-wide utilization of project tracking.

Ms. Brisendine thanked Mr. Hobbelman for the presentation and passed along a compliment from someone in Northern Virginia that was impressed by the data that can be retrieved from OASIS.

TANF Emergency Funds by Nonprofit Agencies Brenda Gardiner, Policy Information Manager –Strategic Initiatives from Fairfax spoke to the Board on TANF Emergency Funds.

The Commonwealth of Virginia invited localities and other interested parties to participate as third party providers in December 2009. Fairfax County submitted a proposal to the state on January 22. The State submitted plans in early February to HHS. The federal review continued from February through June. State staff completed responses the first week of June and received verbal approval from federal reviewers.

\$1 million in new county funding will leverage federal pass-through funding. Funds will provide emergency services and employment support for families with minor children whose household income levels are at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

The County Plan includes basic needs and emergency supports, and employment services. (A copy of the full report is attached to the Minutes.)

Board Member Comments

Barbara Manuel thanked presenters and staff for their hard work and said she would miss Ms. Luca and Mr. Brown.

Willie Greene said it had been a good meeting; he welcomed Commissioner Brown to the department and wished Ms. Luca and Mr. Brown the best; they will be missed.

S.E. Culpepper thanked Ms. Rengnerth, Mr. Martin, Ms. Schultze, and Commissioner Brown for their hard work and dedication to the Board's mission. He thanked Ms. Luca and Mr. Brown for their service to the Board these past eight years. They will be missed.

Bela Sood echoed comments that Ms. Luca and Mr. Brown will be missed. She said these are clearly difficult times now, but with a little "heavy lifting", we can move forward. She welcomed Commissioner Brown to the department.

Margaret Luca said she had many wonderful experiences on the Board and it had been an important part of her life. She commented that the work done by Ms. Rengnerth and Mr. Martin is extremely beneficial to this Board and thanked them.

She complimented Ms. Brisendine for her leadership over the past two years as Chair and thanked the department for their assistance to her over the past eight years. She congratulated Commissioner Brown on his appointment; to Margaret Schultze for her work with the Board; and to Eddie Harrison from Russell County for being so diligent in attending Board meetings. She closed in saying that she hoped the Board would be allowed to resume travel to outlying local agencies in the near future, as it was important to hear from local agency directors and staff on issues particular to their areas. (Other members agreed.)

Danny Brown said he had been truly honored to serve on this Board for the past eight years. He thanked Margaret Schultze, Pat Rengnerth, and Richard Martin for their assistance to the Board. He remarked that Commissioner Brown was inheriting a very competent staff and wished everyone the best.

Chairman Comments

Trudy Brisendine thanked Commissioner Brown for attending the Wednesday night dinner to honor outgoing Board members. She thanked Ms. Schultze for serving as Interim Commissioner and for a job well done.

Outgoing Member Recognition Award

On behalf of the department, Commissioner Brown recognized Margaret Luca and Danny Brown for their service and dedication to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia over the past eight years. As outgoing members of this Board, Ms. Luca and Mr. Brown were presented with an engraved Revere Bowl.

Agenda items for August/future meetings

- Need to elect Chair at the August meeting
- FACT presentation at a future meeting
- Budget update from J.R. Simpson at the August meeting

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Rengnerth