

The Northampton County Board of Social Services met in the Board Room of the Social Services Building on July 19, 2022. The meeting was called to order under code §2.2-3708.2 at 9:00 am. Present were Edith Johnson, Chairwoman, Spencer Murray, Board Member, and Mozella Francis, Director.

On a motion by Mr. Murray, the minutes of the June 21, 2022 meeting were approved. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. There was no public comment or correspondence.

The Board was provided a copy of the FY 2023 budget. Ms. Francis advised the Board that having started a new State fiscal year, we have spent all of the FY 2022 local funding. This is the first time in several years that we have been able to close out June without having to send any funds back to the County despite being significantly understaffed. Heading into FY 2023, the remaining line items in the budget are specific to 2022. **Mr. Murray inquired about other line items and if the funds allocated will be expended. Ms. Francis responded, “Yes, and a full report will be provided at the next board meeting”. That shows all local spending for FY 2022.** Mr. Murray motioned that the Board accepts the financial report as presented. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.

On the Family Services side, there are currently no significant changes in regards to CPS or APS numbers at this time. The agency continues to provide support to families to prevent the reoccurrence of abuse and/or neglect post-CPS Family Assessment or Investigation. However, within APS, financial

exploitation continues to prevail and become more complex.

Childcare numbers continue to increase, as anticipated, due to the changes in the income threshold increasing. In Foster Care, the cases remain consistent over the past calendar year. It is the goal of the agency to do the prevention and in-home work to prevent children from having to come into care. The agency is working hard to identify family and fictive kin when at all possible.

Ms. Francis briefed the board on the Office of the Children's Ombudsman (OCO) Department, which was recommended because of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Team (JLARK) study. The Department is a part of the Office of the Governor and its purpose is focused on possible concerns regarding how Social Services has or is handling a Foster Care or CPS case. This office is independent of all other government offices. Ms. Francis stated that the Department is welcomed and looks forward to working in partnership with the OCO as social services conduct the business of keeping children safe.

Ms. Francis presented information on "Ready Regions" which is a transformative network designed to bring unprecedented levels of coordination and accountability to early education programs in every community across the Commonwealth. The program focuses on education for publicly funded childcare facilities and approved day homes with children from birth to four years. The program will bring publicly funded childcare providers into the VQB5 program and will require them to participate to receive government funding. Training for this program commences in October 2022 and subsidy-provided

childcare fees will increase. Social Services is working very closely with representatives from the ready region to support our vendors with this transition.

On a motion by Spencer Murray and seconded by Edith Johnson, 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.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 16, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.

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

Edith Johnson, Chairman
July 19, 2022

Attested by _____
Mozella F. Francis
Director