

The Northampton County Board of Social Services met in the Board Room of the Social Services Building on August 16, 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, Janice Langley, Board Member, and Mozella Francis, Director.

On a motion by Mr. Murray, the minutes of the July 19, 2022 meeting were approved. Ms. Langley seconded the motion. There was no public comment or correspondence.

The Board was provided a copy of the FY 2023 budget. Ms. Francis reminded the board that June is not a normal month compared to the previous months as June starts the beginning of a new fiscal year. As well, in the months that we have three pay periods such as September, there will be a significant increase in administrative spending. On budget line 866, PSSF, Safe and Stable Families, we started with \$18K, as this is the amount the state awarded. The balance is now \$28K as Ms. Francis requested an additional \$10K that carries a local match. On budget lines 896 and 898, COVID/APS funding is helping significantly however, budget line 896 will have to be expended by the end of September. DARS, Department of Rehab Services has put in for an extension.

Mr. Murray inquired if the county still has an unallocated amount of rescue funding available. Ms. Francis will submit the remaining amount from the \$75K that has not yet been submitted for reimbursement and inquire if there is additional funding available. Ms. Francis will update the board

at the October meeting. **Mr. Murray motioned that the Board accepts the financial report as presented. Ms. Langley seconded the motion.**

On the Family Services side, there are currently no significant changes in regards to CPS or APS. Child Care numbers. The new childcare rates will go into effect on October 1st.

Ms. Francis informed the board that she is a member of the VLSSE childcare committee. This committee is very informative and is instrumental in staying abreast of changes. Childcare is no longer under the VDSS but is now under the Department of Education.

Within the VIEW program, the budget reflects spending of over \$16K within the first quarter of this fiscal year. VIEW allows the agency to provide supportive services for our VIEW clients who are actively involved in an activity, i.e., training, active job search, etc. The increased need for support with sheltering has significantly affected the VIEW budget for this quarter.

The agency hosted the Virginia Mortgage Relief Group from Richmond. The group wanted to target underserved areas that had not taken advantage of the Mortgage Relief Program. Five applications were taken for Northampton County. If approved, the relief could pay up to \$40,000 per client.

There has been a significant increase in SNAP applications. SNAP fraud has been in the news recently. The case aired was of a woman who was

advertising “food stamps” for sale on Facebook. Ms. Francis reported, “Unfortunately, this behavior often skews the perception of those who receive the benefit honestly and who use the benefit according to the guidelines.” Ms. Francis noted that the agency has a full-time Fraud Investigator that continues to be diligent in staying on top of these types of internal and external referrals. Cases that are determined to be with “intent” are referred to the Commonwealth Attorney’s office.

In the fraud unit, for June, we were able to disqualify over \$4K due to over-issuance. As a result, Northampton Social Services was able to save more than \$5K that would have been disbursed. Ms. Francis will report this information to the board monthly.

The agency has kicked off the backpack program. We appreciate Franktown United Methodist Church for their tremendous contributions of supplies for this drive. We will begin to disburse supplies to clients beginning next week.

Ms. Francis provided an update on the Agency’s collaboration with the NFP (Nurse-Family Partnership) through the health department of which Ms. Francis is a member of the board. The goal is to provide young mothers/parents with basic parenting skills and education for those with children from birth to four years old. The program is hands-on and in the mother’s home with a nurse. A graduation ceremony will be forthcoming for the mothers that have participated in the program over the past four years and the Agency will be supporting this initiative.

Ms. Francis provided an overview of SB-1339 which surrounds Foster Care and encompasses the numerous changes to laws governing the provision of services in the Commonwealth. The bill allows the Commissioner of Social Services to develop and implement a corrective action plan for or assume temporary control over the foster care services of a local board of social services where the child is not receiving the appropriate level of care as established in the requirements put in place. Ms. Francis will provide the board with the Agency's caseload standard for the workers and provide a monthly update to our board of directors.

Ms. Francis provided an overview of the Department of Housing's grant aimed at homelessness and helping individuals to obtain permanent housing. The current grantee will not reapply at the end of this grant period. Ms. Francis was approached to determine her interest in applying for the grant once it has ended. Ms. Francis has requested a review of the existing grant to determine the infrastructure needed. **Ms. Langley made a motion to allow Ms. Francis to investigate the grant for the potential of tweaking the grant towards the benefit of Northampton County. Mr. Murray seconded the motion.**

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.

Mr. Murray made a motion to authorize Ms. Francis to use her discretion to use the FY 2023 Comp plan to the benefit of obtaining and sustaining the necessary staffing to run the agency.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.

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

Edith Johnson, Chairman
August 16, 2022

Attested by _____
Mozella F. Francis