

The Northampton County Board of Social Services met in the Board Room of the Social Services Building on February 15, 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 January 25, 2022 meeting were approved and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. There was no public comment or correspondence.

The Board was provided a copy of the FY 2022 budget. The \$75K requested on budget line 858, which was approved by the state, will be returned because the Agency continues to be understaffed and we are fast approaching the closing of the FY. **Mr. Murray inquired about the \$29,500K local match? Ms. Francis responded that it will not be used for that budget line but will be used as increased matching funds will be required due to other budget lines increasing.** Ms. Francis noted on budget line 814, Fostering Futures, that there was a \$95.67, stand-alone expenditure compared to previous months. In December, maintenance payment checks for December and January were cut in the same month so that youth could receive their checks before the first of the year.

Ms. Francis introduced our new Commissioner, Dr. Danny Avula, formerly the State Director for the Virginia Department of Health. He understands our population's challenges. **Mr. Murray inquired if he has to be confirmed? Ms. Francis responded that**

**he is an appointed official and no confirmation is required. The Commissioner's position is appointed by the Governor. Mr. Murray suggested inviting Dr. Avula to the eastern shore and meeting with our board members as well, a tour of Northampton county.** The board and Ms. Francis welcomed the idea.

Ms. Francis informed the board of the newly approved Elderly Simplified Application for seniors applying for SNAP. Ms. Francis welcomes the updated application as it will greatly benefit our seniors.

Ms. Francis provided an update on the local agency profile FY23. She noted the state has made some aesthetical and presentational changes. Within the pictorial and graphical data displayed, she noted the income levels and the percentage of those above the poverty line, most notable is the percentage of the uninsured for Northampton County. There were also other revisions made in regards to data. Discussion with the board ensued. Ms. Francis explained how the social services budget was comprised noting that most of the budget is derived from federal and state funding. She continued that the local match was expended on services and benefits to the community of which most will be turned back to the locality. In FY21 approximately \$57M in services and benefits were expended in Northampton County. Further, Ms. Francis explained that less than 0.4% during FY21 of the local funding given to social services was not eligible for reimbursement back to the locality. **Mr. Murray added that he looks at the local match every year and suggested that the updates be**

**provided to the board of supervisors' meetings for informational purposes.**

Ms. Francis briefed the board on program updates. The foster care program is very close to acquiring the Agency's third foster home; this is very exciting and welcoming news for foster care. In the benefits program, Ms. Francis noted February, March, and April historically receive fewer applications partially due to the Fuel Program but trend back to normal in April and May. Ms. Francis informed of the unprecedented number of applications received in this year's Fuel Program and noted the applications will continue to be received and processed until March 15, 2022.

Ms. Francis reviewed the services programs. Family Services, specifically in-home services, and Adult Services have continued to increase.

There are currently five clients participating in the Virginia Initiative for Education and Work (VIEW) program. Each week, a workforce professional attends the work sessions and provides assessment testing, work readiness, and placement initiatives.

The child care program continues to receive more applicants while mid-income families are still eligible for the program.

Ms. Francis provided an update to the board on staffing. Currently, four positions will remain advertised in the Post until they are filled. Interviews have been scheduled for the coming week.

On a motion by Chairwoman, 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.

Coming out of the closed session, Mr. Murray motioned that the director is permitted to donate one of the agency vehicles to support a Fostering Futures youth scheduled to age out of care. Ms. Langley seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March, 15, at 11:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

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Edith Johnson, Chairman  
February 15, 2022

Attested by \_\_\_\_\_  
Mozella F. Francis  
Director