

**DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**Minutes**  
**July 21, 2010**

The Durham County Board of Social Services held its regular meeting on Wednesday July 21, 2010, 9:00 a.m., at the Main Street facility in Conference Room 609 Left. The following DSS Board members were in attendance: Chair Gladys Dunston, Mr. Stan Holt, Commissioner Joe W. Bowser and Mrs. Gloria S. Green.

The DSS Department was represented by the following: Director Gerri Robinson, Mrs. Sharon Hirsch, Ms. Rhonda Stevens, Mrs. Toni Pedroza, Mr. John Holtkamp, Ms. Mary Flounoy, Mrs. Cathy Simmons and Ms. Montrella R. Springfield. Mr. Thomas Jordan, Deputy County Attorney attended the meeting as well.

DSS Director Gerri Robinson opened the floor for nominations of new officers on the DSS Board. Board member Gloria S. Green nominated Board member Gladys Dunston as Chair of the DSS Board. Commissioner Joe W. Bowser seconded the nomination. The DSS Board voted Board Member Gladys Dunston as Chair by majority vote. Chair Gladys Dunston designated Board Member Gloria S. Green as Vice Chair of the DSS Board. Board member Stan Holt offered a motion to designate Board member Gloria S. Green as Vice Chair of the DSS Board followed by a second from Commissioner Joe W. Bowser. The DSS Board voted Board member Gloria S. Green as Vice Chair.

The meeting was officially called to order by Chair Gladys Dunston. Chair Dunston asked for amendments to the agenda. No amendments to the agenda. No public comments.

Chair Dunston asked if the Board had reviewed the minutes from the DSS Board Meeting on June 16, 2010. Correction to minutes on page 4 under Budget - Antonia Pedroza: Pass through funding will not be shown in the budget line starting Fiscal Year 2010/2011. Vice Chair Gloria S. Green offered the motion to accept the minutes with noted correction and Commissioner Joe W. Bowser seconded. The minutes were approved by a majority vote with noted changes.

## **DSS Board Report**

Chair Gladys Dunston acknowledged the memorandum from Sharon Hirsch about the Back-To-School Project and encouraged the Board to support.

Chair Dunston requested Director Robinson to move forward with the meeting with Dr. Eric J. Becoats, Superintendent of Durham Public Schools. Chair Dunston solicited the Board to forward items of discussion.

Commissioner Joe W. Bowser will address staff at the All Staff Meeting.

Director Robinson will report on the Human Services Complex at the August meeting.

Board member Stan Holt advised the Board of the status of the draft Governance Policy. Instruments to be drafted are mechanisms for evaluating the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and DSS Board. These mechanisms should not prohibit the Board from voting on the policy. The vote is scheduled at the August meeting.

Chair Dunston recognized concerns and comments from the Board Retreat. The DSS Board will move forward and retain the information to revisit if the need arises.

## **DSS Director's Report**

### **Ten Month Assessment of Durham County DSS**

- Major Corrective Actions
  1. Contract Monitoring/Family First Audit
    - a. Quality Assurance Unit
    - b. Uniform monitoring tool
    - c. Meeting with partners to review change
    - d. FY10/11 transition year for staff to get acquainted with new jobs and contractors adjust to the new systems.
  2. The County Auditor will return in August to monitor the implementation progress. Results will be provided at the Board of County Commissioners Meeting in September.
  3. Child Care practice shift to include funding Family, Friend and Neighbor; eliminate waiting list; (lost \$1M because child care did not have a waiting list); funding reduction and overspending.
  4. Staff use of county cars to reduce travel expenses.

## **Challenges**

- Lack of transparency;
- Customer service tracking and monitoring system;
- Shift from partner focused to customer focused;
- Low employee morale; and
- Continued shift to an evidence and data base management model.

## **Food & Nutrition Services (FNS)**

- Applications up 78%. 132 applications taken on July 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Beginning in July customers eligible for child care maybe eligible to receive FNS.
- Waiting to see the impact in FNS due to changes.

The DSS Board sends their condolences to Pinkie Davis-Boyd, Program Manager FNS during the loss of her mother.

## **Child Support Enforcement Report - Mary Flounoy**

- Thirteen Child Support Agents exceeded the goal in June
- New State Consultant
- State reduction in workforce
- Twenty eight Child Support Agencies moving to the counties
- Mary Flounoy, Program Manager, Child Support Enforcement submitted a report to the DSS Board. Highlights are as follows:
  - 10282 Cases
  - 9071 Cases under Order
  - 12792 Children
  - 10282 Non-Custodial Parents
  - 9410 Custodial Parents
  - FY10 Collections - \$16,691,676.54
  - Strategic Plan
    - Assist in developing CS Court Process
    - Ensure staff work smarter
    - Develop an active list of possible employers
    - Include staff in decision making
    - Re-evaluate processes and adjust to economic environment
    - Re-distribute caseloads
    - Monitor staff customer service skills
  - DSS Board can assist
    - Communicate child support practice in the community;
    - Advocated to State Legislators for job skills training which target non-custodial parents;
    - Advocate for tax breaks for business that hire non-custodial parents;

- o Advocate for viable Fatherhood Initiative program and;
- o Be legislative advocates for mandatory training for teenage parents and training of parents of multiple children born out of wedlock
- DSS Director can assist
  - o Support the work of the Child Support Court Improvement Committee;
  - o Initiate a conversation with NCADSS to support a legislative agenda that include job skills training which targets non-custodial parents;
  - o Support acquisition of at least one contract attorney for CSE and;
  - o Support a partnership with CPSS/CPS which includes parenting class referrals.
- Management can assist
  - o Follow One Family, One Plan, One Team
  - o Use existing technology to research information on customers
  - o Follow established referral policy

Chair Dunston expressed gratitude to Ms. Flounoy for reporting to the DSS Board. Director Robinson affirmed the leadership and management teams will be looking at the recommendations.

Chair Gladys Dunston solicited additional concerns requiring the DSS Board consideration.

Chair Dunston proposed a motion to move in closed session. The motion was seconded by Board member Stan Holt. Commissioner Joe W. Bowser cited Closed Session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6). No action taken.

Respectfully submitted

Chairperson	Date
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Secretary to the Board	Date
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