

**Scotland County of Social Services Board**

**July 20, 2023**

**Regular Meeting**

*The vision of the Scotland County Social Services Board is to foster individual responsibility and to create a strong cooperative community that is responsive to the needs of its citizens.*

**DSS Board Members Present:** Board Vice Chair Dorothy Tyson, Darrell Gibson, Andy Kurtzman, Mollie Flowers, Amanda Holland

**DSS Staff Present:** April Snead, Jessica Buehler, Carolyn Lewellen, Monnie English, Shannon Hammonds, Wendy Stanton, Joy Hine

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Dorothy Tyson. Mollie Flowers led the opening prayer.

A motion to approve the agenda for the July 20, 2023 meeting, with an amendment to include the FY 24 Strategic Plan, was made by Darrell Gibson and seconded by Mollie Flowers. The Board unanimously approved and the motion accepted.

Amanda Holland was sworn in by Mandy Clark from the Clerk of Courts office of Scotland County. Mrs. Tyson welcomed Mrs. Holland.

Director Snead informed the Board that before an additional term can begin, applicable members would need to be sworn in again.

Open Forum

- None

A motion to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2023 meeting was made by Darrell Gibson. Mollie Flowers seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved and the motion accepted.

**Director Snead gave the Administrative Report**

Please see the attached report

Discussion from the Administrative Report:

**Budget and Finance:**

Scotland County government has until September of the following fiscal year to close out the previous year's budget. FY 23 numbers are not final as of now. Director Snead stated that by August, more accurate numbers will be available. The Reentry budget will remain on the odd schedule of September-August of each year. Director Snead informed the board that the Reentry Program received a \$70,000 allocation. The FY 24 strategic plan is woven into the

**Personnel:**

Director Snead informed the Board that the IMC I positions have been offered since the numbers have been finalized. Also, interviews are currently underway for the child support supervisor position.

**Food and Nutrition Services:**

Director Snead informed the Board that recertifications now have to be completed and if a client is no longer eligible for services, they will not receive it. This has now almost doubled the amount of recertifications the unit has experienced since COVID restrictions were put into place.

Mrs. Lewellen and Director Snead have been working together to determine what the unit will need in order for work to be done in a timely manner. A decision will be made soon about if overtime will be needed. As of now, there are vacancies in the unit and newer staff are not ready for a caseload.

**Adult and Family Medicaid:**

The Department will review files before the REDA Audit begins to determine what can be fixed before the auditor receives those files.

**Children Services:**

As of now, there are two vacancies in the unit, one investigative and one on-call. The foster care unit is fully staffed, but not fully trained. Director Snead stated that the unit is working to be creative and keep caseloads manageable. Mrs. Tyson asked if the state mandated number for caseloads were being met. Director Snead stated that in investigations, the number was being met. However, for in-home services, as well as foster care, this number was not currently being met. Once foster care is fully trained, cases will be able to be shifted and then the state mandated number for caseloads will be met in foster care as well. Mrs. Tyson asked if the Department would be fined for not meeting the caseload mandated number. Director Snead informed the Board that although the Department cannot be fined for that in particular, if findings are found in an audit, there will be paybacks. This can take place due to someone rushing. Director Snead also stated that finances have to be done correctly from the beginning as the Department would be required to pay back a portion of funds for the time that a child has been in care. Director

Snead stated that safety will always be the first priority while other state requirements in regards to paperwork, will come second.

**Reentry Program:**

Director Snead informed the Board that numbers for the program have almost doubled since the Reentry Day in April. Staff continue to work on an increase in participation and awareness of the program.

**Scotland County Area Transit System (SCATS):**

There is a grant that can be used for operating costs such as fuel and driving time. There is no county match. SCATS is exploring the possibility of expanding the dialysis service into Saturdays. This would be a way to expand SCATS services. Vehicle operators have shown an interest in this. Expanding the dialysis service would not require an eight hour shift on Saturday.

Mr. Kurtzman asked for an update on the part-time driver that has been working full-time hours. Director Snead informed the Board that the driver's time has not changed. However, positions have now been posted that no longer require a CDL. Applications have been received. Once filled, the part-time driver will see a reduction in hours.

**Other Impacts:**

Director Snead informed the Board that printing issues are still taking place. The current software was purchased in November of 2023. County IT is working to work this out with the vendor. A meeting took place last week and it seemed that the issue had been fixed. After that meeting, The Department now has random people that cannot print throughout the building. The Department is working to figure out where we go from here. The majority of staff are no longer having printer issues. County IT has been in the building resolving printing issues. Mr. Gibson asked if the problem was the software itself. Director Snead stated that the vendor has said the problem is the county server while County IT believes that issues are related to the software. The Department could remove the software. However, staff enjoy the software, when it works. Mrs. Razon is the IT liaison, but her main job is finance.

Mrs. Holland asked if there are other counties with the same software. Director Snead stated that this software is different and is called MyQ. Thin clients work with the software well. Now the issue has begun to affect those that do not use a thin client. Mrs. Tyson asked if there is a difference in the computers that are being affected. Director Snead stated that yes, but even those with the same computer may or may not have an issue. Director Snead continued by stating that it would be possible to hire a private company to look into the issue. As of now, COECO is checking in daily. Also, the printer hacking has stopped. The Department is working with COECO to get money back onto the county's account to reimburse for the paper lost. The company has agreed to do this.

A motion was made by Darrell Gibson to approve the Administrative Report. The motion was seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The Board unanimously approved and the motion was accepted.

**Unfinished Business:**

Social Services Institute - August 2 - August 4, 2023

Director Snead informed the Board that the Social Services Institute had a limited capacity this year. Due to this, Mr. Kurtzman was approved while Mrs. Holland was not. The Board will have one representative present. There will be Department staff present as well.

**New Business:**

Election of FY 24 Officers

Darrell Gibson nominated Dorothy Tyson for the position of Board Chair. The Board unanimously agreed and the nomination was approved. Dorothy Tyson will now serve as the Board Chair.

Mollie Flowers nominated Andy Kurtzman as Board Vice Chair. Darrell Gibson moved to close nominations. The Board unanimously agreed and the nomination was approved. Andy Kurtman will now serve as the Board Vice Chair.

Schedule of FY 24 Board Meetings

A motion to approve the FY 24 Board Meetings schedule was made by Darrell Gibson. Andy Kurtzman seconded the motion. The Board unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

Mrs. Tyson reminded the Board that a quorum would be three of the five members present. Also, meetings are open to the public.

NC Archives Retention Schedule Approval

Mrs. Tyson asked if all needed to be approved today. Director Snead stated that documents are the same as they were last year. However, approval is required each year. Mr. Kurtzman asked who is held accountable for the retention of documents. Director Snead stated that supervisors, managers, and the Director are held accountable. As of now, the Department does not destroy records due to being mostly paperless outside of Child Welfare. Director Snead discussed the purging project taking place in the Child Welfare unit. Director Snead informed the Board that this is the first time a purging project has taken place within the unit. Space is the reason the project is happening now. Mr. Kurtzman asked if those files are placed somewhere digitally. Director Snead stated that documents that have been purged are not retained digitally. Adoptions can be sent to the state in digital form, but others cannot.

Mr. Gibson asked for this to be tabled for now. Mrs. Tyson stated that the Board would like to receive copies of these and place this item on the August agenda to allow for time to review.

#### Local Childcare Policy Approval

Director Snead stated that this policy pertains to what would happen if services needed to be reduced. This policy discussed the priority of services in the case that a reduction would need to take place. Services have never been reduced in Scotland County. Mr. Gibson asked for an explanation on how the priority list is determined. Director Snead stated that factors such as eligibility and need are taken into consideration. For example, children in foster care will be at the top of this list if this is needed for their safety. Those that are only able to work because they receive the daycare services would be next on the list. The priority list is recommended by the state and most counties follow the same priority list. Mrs. Holland asked for clarification on child welfare. Director Snead stated that in this instance, child welfare is a daycare code more than a child protective service. Mrs. Tyson questioned why children with developmental needs are lower on the list. Director Snead informed the Board that the five priorities before children with developmental needs contain so few children that those with developmental needs would continue to receive services.

#### Child and Community Protection Team Member Appointment

Director Snead informed the Board that the Child and Community Protection Team meets on a quarterly basis. The team is transitioning back to meetings being held in person. This team meets in conjunction with the Child Fatality Prevention Team.

Darrell Gibson asked Amanda Holland if she would be willing to serve on the Child and Community Protection Team. Amanda Holland agreed. A unanimous vote was taken and Amanda Holland will now represent the Board on the Child and Community Protection Team.

#### Energy Outreach Plan Approval

Director Snead informed the Board that this plan is required to be approved if there will be community partners helping. The Department is fortunate to have community partners. LIEAP will begin in December and will end in March. The Laurel Hill Community Center will be a new partner this year. Mr. Gibson asked if there is a community partner in Gibson. Director Snead informed the Board that she has previously presented this at a Gibson Town Hall meeting. However, due to office hours, contact can be hard to make. Mr. Gibson stated that a new clerk had just been hired.

#### FY 2024 Strategic Plan

Director Snead stated that the strategic plan is built to reflect requirements as well as goals in which staff members, supervisor, managers, and the Director believe will have a positive impact on the agency. Director Snead reviewed the strategic plan with the Board.

The Department will work on several projects throughout the year. A brochure will be created to give an overview of the services offered. Cynthia's Place, which is used for parents to visit their children that are currently placed in foster care, will receive its first makeover in fifteen years. The Department collected \$149,000 in adoption funds and that will be used to complete the project. Director Snead informed the Board that a committee had been created to oversee the project. A major change will take place in the back room of Cynthia's Place. The Department has seen a rise in children having to stay overnight at the agency. The back room will be equipped with beds for children to sleep. The reception area will also have a kiosk that will allow clients to sign in and staff will be notified that a client is in the lobby.

There are also several goals that the Department has on the strategic plan for FY 24. These goals reach several units and personnel is the only unit as of now to have no established goals, but they may come at a different time. For example, units will work to claim all reimbursement possible. Finance will also work on creating a standard operating procedure manual. Personnel completed their standard operating procedure manual last year.

Director Snead briefly explained that the food and nutrition services unit will work on same day processing of applications. Mrs. Tyson asked if this is currently reflected in the administrative report. Director Snead informed the Board that scores are reflected in the administrative report.

Director Snead informed the Board that the additional position asked for in the children services unit was denied. However, the Department has a new licensing worker in the foster care unit, Nora Nicholson. A MAPP class will take place soon. Mrs. Holland asked if Ms. Nicholson had received MAPP training. Director Snead informed Mrs. Holland that although Ms. Nicholson had not received MAPP training, there are other staff in the unit that have been MAPP trained and would lead the class.

Director Snead also discussed the documentation goal for the children services unit, which is for all documentation to be up to date within seven days of interactions. Director Snead informed the Board that this will not be discussed at monthly quality assurance meetings. Director Snead stated that she hopes that the new Director will continue to keep their fingers on this as up to date documentation is vitally important.

Director Snead discussed exit interviews. The Board was informed that staff exiting give feedback and the feedback usually proves to be useful for the Department. Currently, there is about a 50/50 split in who staff chose to have the interview with. They have the option to

complete the interview with either Director Snead or Monnie English, who oversees personnel for the Department. Director Snead stated that staff will stay in a hard job if they have a supportive relationship with their leadership.

Lastly, Director Snead informed the Board that the passenger manual that the Department has worked on for SCATS clients is almost complete. The Department will complete the driver's manual next. Director Snead stated that the strategic plan is a living plan and changes can be made. Mrs. Holland asked how often the Department reviews the strategic plan. Director Snead stated that each month the strategic plan is woven into the administrative report and presented to the Board. Also, the Director reviews the plan quarterly to update.

A motion to approve the FY 24 Strategic Plan was made by Mollie Flowers. Andy Kurtzman seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved and the motion accepted.

A motion to enter into executive session was made by Darrell Gibson and seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The motion passed unanimously and the Board entered into executive session.

#### Executive Session

- Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(6) To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

A motion was made by Darrel Gibson and seconded by Mollie Flowers to reenter regular session and adjourn the meeting. All in favor.

Jessica Buehler, Clerk to the Board

Dorothy Tyson, Board Chair

## **Administrative Report**

**July 2023**

### **Budget and Finance**

- The FY 23 DSS budget amount is \$8,544,084. The FY 23 SCATS budget amount is \$619,512 requiring an approximate 20% match in county funding. The Reentry budget is

in mid-year, as the budget runs from September 10th to September 11th each year.  
Spending through June is:

- DSS 97.9%
- Reentry 30%
- SCATS 90%
- The FY 24 budgets are finalized. The DSS budget is \$9,287,766 and the SCATS budget is \$773,834. Reentry remains in mid-year, ending in September.
- Increase foster care reimbursement through a joint finance/program reconciliation process. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Create a user guide for finance staff and finance processes. **(Strategic Plan)**

## Personnel Services

- The Department has thirteen vacancies, one IMC III (QA), one SWIAT (on call), four IMCII's, one IMV I (frozen), one IM Supervisor II, four IMC Caseworker I's, one Child Support Supervisor II. The turnover rate for FY 24 is 2% compared to FY 23 28% agency wide turnover rate.

35 Positions with Turnover in FY 23

25 Resignations

6 Terminations

4 Retirements

- One part time SCATS driver is working over 20 hours each week. This becomes a concern, as Scotland County is legally required to provide benefits. Suan Sanderson and interim manager Robinson have been notified and a new posting no longer requiring a CDL has been posted.
- The personnel staff will attend a career fair this month.

## Child Support

- Child Support ended the year meeting all self-assessment goals and performing higher than the Statewide average in all categories. The unit also met all incentive goals with the exception of total collections, only missing it by less than \$63,000. However, the unit's collections for FY23 of \$5,493,675 was still an impressive feat when considering that Scotland County ranked in the top in the state for the highest unemployment rate for ten months of the time period July 2022-May 2023.
- The unit will Show Cause 90% of all new orders when no payment is made in the first 90 days of court order origination. As of the end of June, 33 cases have not had a payment in the first 90 days, 24 have had a show cause filed. The unit is at 73% of the goal. **(Strategic Plan)**
- The year started with 808 arrears cases without an arrears frequency. As of the end of June, the unit has reduced the number of cases by 244 with a goal of reducing by 50%. While the unit only reduced the number of cases without arrears frequencies by 31%,



they did have several obligors to pay their arrears in full to avoid an increased monthly payment. This was a result of this campaign. **(Strategic Plan)**

## **Economic Services:**

### **Child Care**

- The Daycare unit currently serves 576 children. This number fluctuates each month based on the attendance reported by the daycare centers. The waiting list has been depleted at this time. These children are attending 18 daycares in Scotland County and 32 daycares outside Scotland County.
- During FY 23 the Daycare unit's combined spending coefficient was 98%.
- The Daycare unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. During the month of July the accuracy rate was (TBD). **(Strategic Plan)**

### **Food and Nutrition**

- The FNS unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. During the month of July the accuracy rate was (TBD). **(Strategic Plan)**
- The unit strives for a same day processing goal of 40% for expedited applications and a 12 day average for non expedited applications. During the month of June expedited applications were at 20% and non-expedite were at an average of 16 days. **(Strategic Plan)**
- The amount of recertifications are beginning to increase. In July, 723 recertifications are expected. The unit is preparing staff and additional staff to work from home, as they receive 15% more cases to process.
- On June 7, 2023 the BDT (Benefits Data Trust) text pilot program sent out 1138 text messages to clients about FNS recertifications, 44 clients opted out, and 314 clients engaging with texts. These are state wide numbers and we have requested it to be broken down by county.

### **Medicaid**

- The Medicaid units are meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. During the month of July the accuracy rate was (TBD). **(Strategic Plan)**
- SAA scoring is (TBD) , SAD scoring is (TBD) for the month of July **(Strategic Plan)**
- House Bill 76 - Medicaid Expansion passed but is not ready for immediate implementation, as it is tied to the state budget. The state budget is not forecasted to pass until mid August.
- Twenty files were reviewed for a Special Assistance audit. Results showed concerns with financial eligibility determination. The agency is in the process of rebutting results before a final report is released.
- The REDA (Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit) began March 2023. This is a 10 month audit that pulls 20 cases per month. We are now in our fourth month of the audit. Audit results vary from month to month.

## **Work First**

- The Work First unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. During the month of July the accuracy rate was (TBD). **(Strategic Plan)**

## **Program Integrity**

- 100% of cases continued to be investigated timely, despite the transition of PI investigators during the fiscal year.
- In July moving forward fraud referrals are expected to increase, as beneficiaries are held to reporting changes again.

## **Quality Assurance/Training**

- The QA staff and supervisors will meet monthly meetings to collaborate for improvement. **(Strategic Plan)**
- The unit has one vacancy and one new QA in training. The number of QA reviews must be reduced temporarily, as the unit is still half staffed.

## **Social Work Services**

### **Adult Services**

- The unit continues to meet all MOU requirements. One social worker has been on FMLA since February, 2023 is set to return in July, 2023.

### **Children Services**

- Children services currently has two SWIAT vacancy in investigations. Children's services has been able to fill two additional vacancies within the past month. To assist with caseload requirements two Vanguard temporary staff continue to assist.
- The children services unit works to increase retention across the unit. FY 23 CSU turnover was 46%. During the month of June, no resignations were received. **(Strategic Plan)**
- For all children who were victims of maltreatment during a 12 month period, no more than 9.1% receive a subsequent finding of maltreatment. As of June, 2023 repeat maltreatment is 14%. Case decisions are being reviewed to determine if these decisions are feeding into this number. **(Strategic Plan, MOU measure)**
- All social work documentation will be current within seven days. **(Strategic Plan)**. Program Managers in the Children's Services Unit are currently in the process of developing a plan to get documentation up to date and monitor it to ensure it remains so. In July 2023, 8 social workers dictation was current.
- Increase the number of licensed foster homes by 25%. The number of licensed homes in June 2023 was 11. **(Strategic Plan)**

## **Work First Employment**

- The agency has one Work First Employment social worker with a caseload of Work First participants required to have a Mutual Responsibility Agreement.

### **DPS Reentry Program**

- For the month of June, referrals continue to increase.
- Reentry staff moved to DSS from downtown Peden St., and this has been a smooth transition.
- Reentry hired a new Social Worker who began with the agency in June, and she continues to be trained.

### **Scotland Area Transit System (SCATS)**

- SCATS will explore a Saturday dialysis line. **(Strategic Plan)**
- SCATS is working to revise the SCATS Passenger Manual and SCATS Driver Manual. The current Passenger Manual has been reviewed and the final version is in draft format. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Analyze and determine the cost per each SCATS trip. At this time the cost per trip has been analyzed as such **(Strategic Plan)**
- SCATS increased overall ridership by 18.5%.

### **Other Impacts on DSS:**

- Monthly meetings between QA and Economic Supervisors will begin to improve on communication and collaboration.

### **New DSS Initiatives**

- The FY 24 Leadership Development class has been advertised and staff meeting the criteria welcome to apply. The application date closes this month.
- The Department will create a single pamphlet representative of the programs offered through DSS. This work has begun. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Cynthia's Place will be refurbished for better use of space and to replace torn/worn furniture and carpet. Requests for estimates have begun and a Cynthia's Place committee has met. **(Strategic Plan)**
- Three units with information for senior citizens will attend a Senior Services Outreach event this month.

## **Common Acronyms**

ADA - American with Disabilities Act

APS - Adult Protective Services

CPS - Child Protective Services

COVID - 19 - Coronavirus

DCDEE - Department of Child Development and Early Education (Daycare)

DHB - Department of Health Benefits (Medicaid)

DHHS - Department of Health and Human Services

FNS - Food and Nutrition Services

IT - Information Technology

LIHEAP - Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program

LIHWAP - Low Income Housing Water Assistance Program

LBL - Local Business Liaison

MAC - Medicaid Administrative Claiming (funding source)

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

OHSR - Office of Human State Resources

OST - Operational Support Team

REDA - Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit

SCATS - Scotland County Area Transit System

SSBG - Social Services Block Grant (funding source)

SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SWAP - Scotland Wellness Assistance Program

PHE - Public Health Emergency

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

PSNAP - Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

WFFA - Work First Family Assistance