ACTION 1

Minutes

Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services

October 17-18, 2012

Galax Municipal Building
111 E. Grayson Street
Galax, VA 24333

Wednesday, October 17, 2012 @ 9:00 a.m.

Attending: Robert Spadaccini, Sr. (Chair), Willie Greene (Vice Chair), Trudy Brisendine, Jack Knapp, Thomas Atwood, Noelle Shaw Belle (for Mr. Wilson), Commissioner Martin Brown.

Absent: Michelle Larkin, Bela Sood, Ray Johnson, Heidi Metcalf Little, William Henderson

Meeting called to order at 9:00 – Robert Spadaccini, Sr., Chair –
The Chair welcomed newest Board members Thomas Atwood and Jack Knapp. He noted that Wanda Bailey from the Western Regional Office was present to take meeting minutes and that Noelle Shaw Belle from the Office of Attorney General was attending for Allen Wilson.

Welcome and Introductions – Susan Clark, Director, Galax Department of Social Services
Ms. Clark introduced her staff and expressed appreciation of their work and services provided. Galax City Manager Keith Barker welcomed Board Members.

Review of Agenda – Karin Clark, Regulatory Coordinator

Recognition of former Board member Barbara Manuel – Robert Spadaccini
The Chair recognized Ms. Manuel's service to the Board and presented an engraved bowl in appreciation.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Comments from Commissioner of Social Services– Martin D. Brown
Commissioner provided a presentation intended to help Board members better understand DSS services and customer needs/usage. The presentation covered benefit programs, family services, customer portal/systems modernization, and strengthening families.

Regarding the decrease in foster care cases, Mr. Atwood inquired about contributing factors. Commissioner Brown responded that a practice shift in philosophy with emphasis on safety, family engagement meetings, recognition that the child may be better off remaining with their families, and providing services based on individual child needs, are contributing factors.

CommonHelp: Commissioner explained that all residents of Virginia can apply for benefits online from any location. Fairfax led the way with the program kickoff. Customers may apply for child care, SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, LIHEAP, and check eligibility for benefits. In response to a Board member concern about lack of human interaction with applications completed online, Commissioner Brown noted that some programs

are more involved and will always require human interaction. The paper application is 14 pages long. It is time saving to complete online and frees up time for caseworkers to refer to other sources of help.

Commissioner referenced the establishment of the Enterprise Delivery System Program Office (EDSPO), with a November 1, 2012 target date.

Regarding the Innovators for Success Council and utilizing the five protective factors to strengthen families and encourage father engagement, the Chair inquired as to whether the father's information in OASIS is a mandatory field. Commissioner commented that the field is there, but is not required in OASIS. This differs from other information systems, such as for TANF, where establishing paternity is required. The systems do not "talk," and privacy laws must be abided relative to information sharing.

Commissioner announced that J.R. Simpson would be leaving the agency effective November 15, and he reminded them of Nick Young's November 1 retirement. Ms. Brisendine requested that Mr. Simpson be invited to the December Board meeting for recognition.

Briefing on Virginia Beach Child Fatality – Paul McWhinney, Deputy Commissioner for Programs
Mr. McWhinney briefed the Board on the child fatality case study. The briefing included the sequence of events, responses to media, gaps in communication and practice, corrective action plan, and suggestions for systemic changes to improve the process.

Intensive Case Management Project– Phyllis Sisk, Assistant Director, Division of Child Support Enforcement
Ms. Sisk updated the Board on the ICMP, covering the legislative history of the project, locations, barriers to support, ICMP process, and project statistics. She explained that unemployment by the non-custodial parent is not a factor in project participation, but that the NCP must meet the eligibility requirements. Barriers to supporting children include education/training issues, health issues, parenting issues, and others. Ms. Sisk indicated that a participant must meet one of the barriers in order to participate, and that a participant is placed by the court. The ICMP works with those unable pay, not those unwilling to pay.

Follow-up to October 16 Assisted Living Facility Advisory Meeting – Lynne Williams, Director, Division of Licensing Programs
Ms. Williams thanked the Chair and members for their interest and attendance at the meeting, noting it is a multi-year project. Members were encouraged by the active participation of advisory committee attendees and the well thought-out approach. Board members had several questions in follow-up to the PowerPoint presented at the advisory meeting, and noted some concerns about specific proposed provisions. Ms. Williams indicated that Board concerns would be factored as the proposed regulation is prepared for December 2012 Board.

Update on Human Trafficking – Kathy Cooper, State Refugee Coordinator
Ms. Cooper briefed the Board on the Office of Newcomer Services (ONS) role, and provided information on refugees, unaccompanied minors and victims of human trafficking. House Bill 2190 (2012) directed DSS to develop a plan for service delivery to human trafficking victims. Ms. Cooper discussed the activities of workgroups established to meet the HB 2190 directive. Work groups were established to help with victim identification, victim assistance, and outreach and awareness. A law enforcement officer is assigned to each work group.

The Chair inquired about how the Board might assist in addressing the problems. The biggest challenge is education and communication with other agencies. There is currently one regulation on this specific program and it pertains to funding. The Chair indicated that this presents an opportunity for the Board to address the situation. Ms. Shaw Belle questioned the Board's authority, given the federal oversight. The Chair requested that we determine where we stand relative to state regulations on this topic.

COMMENT PERIOD

Comment from the Public None

Comment from Local Boards and Directors of Social Services

- **Tommy Casteel, Western Regional Director**, welcomed Board Members to the region and recognized the local directors in the audience.

- **Cathy Pemberton, Powhatan DSS Director**, spoke regarding CommonHelp, acknowledging the personal touch will be lost. Receiving more applications online limits ability to see what is going on in the homes.

Comment from Local Boards and Directors of Community Action Agencies None

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Services Executives – Carl Ayers, President
Mr. Ayers provided background on the League, committees, training, and other activities. Training has been an ongoing issue and begins with directors/management. Since 2005, there have been over 92 director changes out of 120 offices.

Mr. Ayers expressed concern about proposed changes to the APS regulation and the direction in which DSS is heading. Social workers assess needs of adults 60 years of age and older/18 years and over and disabled, and determine eligibility for services such as home-based care, transportation, and health care. Services are provided on an individual basis. Workers refer any possible criminal or licensing issues to other entities. Their responsibility is to the individual adult. Mr. Ayers explained concerns with new due process provisions in the proposed regulation. The Chair asked that a copy of Mr. Ayers' concerns be distributed to members. Commissioner Brown indicated that the proposed regulation will be fully vetted as it moves through the process.

Rooftop Community Action Program – Chris Thompson, Executive Director
Ms. Thompson briefed the Board on her agency, and noted that she has compassionate and caring staff and wonderful community partners. Her agency works with low-income families that may not be eligible for social services benefits/services. There are 60 staff, all volunteers. The largest program, Head Start, focuses on family support. They also offer weatherization, income tax assistance, housing vouchers and emergency assistance.

Galax Department of Social Services Presentation – Susan Clark, Director
Ms. Clark showcased the collaborative approach her city takes to helping families. She introduced the following partners, each of whom spoke to the role of their organization in the collaborative approach to service delivery in Galax:

- Keith Barker, Galax City Manager
- Bill Sturgill, School Superintendent
- Ken Miller, 27th District court Services Unit

- Chris Shackleford, Director, Chestnut Creek School of Arts
- Rick Clark, Galax Chief of Police
- Dr. Tom Whartenby, Pastor, Galax Presbyterian Church

Recess and Galax DSS Tour
Board members toured Galax Department of Social Services upon recess.

Thursday, October 18, 2012 – Board reconvened @ 9:00 a.m.

Attending: Robert Spadaccini, Sr., Willie Greene, Trudy Brisendine, Jack Knapp, Thomas Atwood, Michelle Larkin, Noelle Shaw Belle, Deputy Commissioner Margaret Schultze (for Commissioner Brown)

Absent: Bela Sood, Ray Johnson, Heidi Metcalf Little, William Henderson

Tour Rooftop of Virginia CAP
Board members toured Rooftop of Virginia Community Action Program.

Introduction of Local Directors
Tommy Casteel introduced the following local directors: Mike Mullins – Wise, Randy Blevins – Washington County, Roger Ramey – Norton, Susann Demory, Assistant Director – Wise, Gary Blankenbeckler – Scott, Susan Clark – Galax, Bob Gose – Bristol City, Rex Tester – Tazewell, Kimberly Sobey – Bland, Sherri Nipper – Giles, Carl Ayers – Floyd, Cathy Pemberton – Powhatan, Larry Lindsey – Montgomery, Mike Jennings – Carroll

Western Region Local Director's Association – Larry Lindsey, Director
Mr. Lindsey indicated that there are 22 agencies in the western region and they work with all available resources to get the job done. He provided statistics on his region relative to caseloads. One of their key partners is Virginia Tech. Mr. Lindsey introduced Mary Beth Dunkenberger and Holly Lesko, who spoke about the New River Valley Partners for Self-Sufficiency Program.

Working with High Risk Cases – Tommy Casteel
Mr. Casteel presented Board with demographic information, including caseloads, unemployment and poverty. Agencies in his region are focusing on factors that place children at high risk of abuse and neglect. He stressed that we need to improve education to the community on identifying high risk cases and practicing prevention. Substance abuse is a contributing factor and a long standing issue, but progress is being made in understanding it. Law enforcement and faith based organizations understand this issue better than anyone, but drug addiction cannot be remedied overnight. Mr. Casteel noted that we need to do a better job at identifying high risk families, providing preventive services, advocating with legislators, and shifting resources to practice prevention.

Resolution for Galax DSS - Robert Spadaccini and Margaret Schultze
Susan Clark was presented with a resolution recognizing her agency and locality for their unwavering commitment to the citizens of Galax.

ON MOTION DULY MADE *(Ms. Brisendine) and seconded, moved to adopt the resolution recognizing the Galax Department of Social Services. Motion carried with all in favor.*

Regulatory Update – Karin Clark
Ms. Clark reviewed the regulatory status report and noted that effective November 1, the Board will have 47 regulations in place.

ACTION ITEMS – Karin Clark

1. Approve August 2012 meeting minutes
   ON MOTION DULY MADE *(Ms. Brisendine) and seconded, moved to approve the August 2012 minutes with one grammatical correction. Motion approved with all in favor.*

2. Eligibility Worker Appreciation Month
   ON MOTION DULY *MADE (Mr. Greene) and seconded, moved to approve the Eligibility Worker Appreciation Month resolution. Motion approved with all in favor.*

   Ms. Elaine Burgess, representing the Benefit Programs Organization, was present to accept the resolution.

3. Local Human Resources Manual – Changes to Chapter 7 – Amma Appiah, Policy Analyst, Sr.
   ON MOTION DULY MADE *(Mr. Knapp) and seconded, moved to approve the changes to Chapter 7 of the Local Human Resources Manual as presented. Motion approved with all in favor.*

4. 22VAC40-740, Adult Protective Services – Exempt Action
   ON MOTION DULY *MADE (Mr. Atwood) and seconded, moved to approve the exempt action for 22VAC40-740 as presented. Motion approved with all in favor.*

5. 22VAC40-211, Resource, Foster & Adoptive Family Home Standards – NOIRA
   ON MOTION DULY MADE *(Ms. Larkin) and seconded, moved to approve the NOIRA for 22VAC40-211 as presented. Motion approved with all in favor.*

6. Establish 2013 meeting schedule
   ON MOTION DULY MADE (*Ms. Brisendine) and seconded, moved to approve the 2013 meeting scheduled as presented. Motion approved with all in favor.*

Child Fatality Committee Report – Trudy Brisendine
Ms. Brisendine provided a handout listing four recommendations to the Board, from the Child Fatality Committee. She did so as an alert to the Board on what the committee is considering, and clarified that it is the job of the committee to make recommendations for the Board to endorse. The Board received the following recommendations:

- Support legislation to extend the time frame for resolution of investigations to accommodate inclusion of delayed toxicology reports. There was discussion on the pros and cons of such an extension, the impact on appeals and local practice, and how it might be approached legislatively.

- Support request of DSS to fund one full time employee dedicated to studying abuse and neglect related fatalities. The agency currently has a P-14 doing this, but moving to a full time classified position would pose a challenge.

- Continue to encourage day care providers to call parents if a child expected at day care does not arrive at the expected time. This would help address child deaths due to being left in vehicles. There was discussion on whether this could be done through guidance, regulation, etc. Mr. Knapp would like input from child care providers before this type of requirement is put into regulation. There are already an abundance of child care regulations and this might also present a liability concern for providers.

- Invite the Director of Health Profession (DHP) to attend the December Board meeting to discuss continuing education sessions on child abuse for doctors in Virginia. The Chair noted that he extended such an invitation to the Director of DHP, but that she declined. He asked Ms. Clark to forward the DHP response letter to Board members. Possible next steps were discussed.

Ms. Brisendine indicated the Committee may come back at a later date with more specifics relative to the recommendations. No action was taken by the Board.

Board Member Comments

Thomas Atwood: Mr. Atwood is delighted to be on the Board, was impressed with the presentations and pleased with the many public/private relationships. He appreciated the discussion of risk and would appreciate more statistics on this. He expressed concern that no disciplinary actions were taken relative to the incident in Virginia Beach. The Chair indicated that this would be more appropriate to discuss in executive session and that it was a human resources issue. Ms. Schultze noted that such disciplinary action would be handled by the local government, and that it would be appropriate to see what comes from the corrective action plan.

Jack Knapp: Mr. Knapp thanked Karin Clark for her support and providing presentations prior to meetings. He commended the western region and noted it was helpful to understand the problem being faced.

Trudy Brisendine: Ms. Brisendine thanked Susan Clark for the warm welcome and all of her work. She thanked Ms. Schultze, Karin Clark and the local directors for giving such a good view of what is going on, and welcomed new Board members. She extended thanks to Ms. Shaw Belle and Ms. Bailey for their support.

Michelle Larkin: Ms. Larkin was inspired during her walk through Rooftop Community Action, and enjoyed seeing the work they do.

Willie Greene: Mr. Greene noted his appreciation at being in his home location for this meeting. He recognized the new Board members and thanked the Galax City Manager for his support. He also thanked Susan Clark for an excellent job.

Robert Spadaccini: The Chair thanked Mr. Greene, Susan Clark and the City of Galax. He commented that when meeting in southwest Virginia, Board members are treated like family. He thanked the local directors for their work and the work of their staff, noting the collaborative partnerships are unique and impressive. He thanked Ms. Shaw-Bell and Ms. Bailey for their support.

The Chair announced that a planning retreat will take place after the Board adjourns the December 13 meeting. He thanked members for their dedication and service.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.