

**Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services**

**Department of Social Services
Central Regional Office
1604 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, Virginia 23229**

December 15, 2021

Attending: Mr. Clyde Santana (Chair), Ms. Mona Malik (Vice Chair), Mr. John Kines (Secretary), Mr. Kent Willis, Ms. Jennifer Slack, Ms. Megan Miloser, Ms. Lou Ali, Ms. Zulma Santos, Ms. Rachna Heizer, Ms. Sheryl Garland.

Also in Attendance: Mr. Duke Storen (Commissioner) and Ms. Ellen Malenke (Assistant Attorney General).

Meeting called to order at 10:01am – Clyde Santana

Mr. Santana acknowledged the three new board members: Ms. Santos, Ms. Garland, and Ms. Heizer. He also congratulated Mr. Boone on his reappointment for a second term.

The Chair explained that member William Boone requested to participate electronically, pursuant to Article IV of the State Board of Social Services Bylaws. Mr. Boone stated he was participating electronically because he was traveling. He was participating from Days Inn Courtyard, 3601 East Lockett Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86004. On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Kines), second (Ms. Slack), Mr. Boone's request was approved.

Review of Agenda – Karin Clark, Regulatory Coordinator

Comments from the Commissioner – Duke Storen

Commissioner Storen thanked everyone for being there and extended a warm welcome to the new Board members. He congratulated Mr. Boone on being reappointed. He thanked the local departments of social services, community action agencies, contractors, and adult living facility providers. He acknowledged Jim Schuyler and Andy Crawford for their leadership, vision, partnership, and collaboration. He also acknowledged Rebecca Morgan for her leadership with legislative priorities.

He provided local, state, and federal updates.

With the new administration, he shared this may be his last Board meeting as Commissioner. He offered his advice on topics the Board should focus on over the next year:

- Updating the LDSS personnel policies & salary ranges to bring and maintain high quality staff.
- Supporting LDSS that need state intervention to provide services through a current regulatory action.
- Continue pursuing an updated LDSS funding formula.

- Put in place a formal process of equity analysis on rule making.
- Continue to fulfill the statutory authority to oversee LDSS when necessary.
- Continue to advocate as a body for the Department and the people they serve, especially during the General Assembly.

Commissioner Storen expressed it has been an honor to work with the Board.

VDSS Energy Assistance Programs – Angie Morse provided an overview of the Energy Assistance Programs.

2022 Legislation Update – Gena Berger provided an overview of the 2022 legislation update. She referenced two pieces of legislation regarding child support and children’s residential facilities. Ms. Slack asked how the Board could be supportive of the legislation. There was discussion about sending a letter of support to the General Assembly on behalf of the Board, as the Board has done this previously. Staff would provide technical assistance for drafting the letter. Ms. Malenke noted that every member must weigh in on the draft because it will be on behalf of the whole Board.

Mr. Willis moved that the Chair share a draft letter individually with each member for feedback. Members will respond individually with either approval or edits, and the Chair be authorized to sign and send the letter on behalf of the Board.

On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Willis), second (Ms. Ali), motion approved with all in favor. Mr. Willis and Ms. Ali will work on the letter, based on information and technical assistance from staff.

COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments from the public.

There were no comments from boards and directors of community action agencies.

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives – Andy Crawford, President
Mr. Crawford spoke about the work-force crisis and the struggle to hire new staff. He also spoke about the expectations of new hires and not having the adequate tools and resources for local offices. He would like to advocate for resources such as better internet services for the local offices and better pay for staff. He shared there will be a League Committee Chair to give an update at each Board meeting.

Rebecca Morgan, Director of Middlesex County DSS and Legislative Chair, provided an update on legislative priorities.

Linda Gibson, Frederick County DSS, provided an update on the Professional Development Committee.

Comment from the Virginia Community Action Partnership – Jim Schulyer, Executive Director
Mr. Schulyer spoke about organizations suffering from decision fatigue and building the organization of the future. He spoke about Dr. Bob Rosen, who founded Healthy Companies International and the link to Dr. Rosen’s e-book was shared with the Board.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approved October 2021 Meeting Minutes
On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Willis), second (Ms. Ali), motion approved with all in favor.
2. Benefit Programs Specialist Recognition Resolution
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Ali), second (Ms. Slack), motion approved with all in favor.
3. 22VAC40-201, Permanency Services – Final Regulation (2018 General Assembly Updates)
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Malik), second (Ms. Miloser), motion approved with all in favor.
4. 22VAC40-201, Permanency Services – Final Regulation (2019 General Assembly Updates)
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Ali), second (Ms. Slack), motion approved with all in favor.
5. 22VAC40-705, Child Protective Services – Periodic Review Report of Findings
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Garland), second (Mr. Willis), motion approved with all in favor.
6. Pay Band Structure for Local Departments of Social Services – Update Pay Band Maximums
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Malik), second (Ms. Slack), motion approved with all in favor.

Board Member Requests for Future Information

Mr. Boone noted the public comment received on Action Item 3 (Permanency Services) included comments from the Virginia Poverty Law Center. Specifically, he pointed out the comment that Virginia lags in utilizing relatives as foster care placements. He would like to hear from the Department at the next meeting on how the state could encourage and support the local departments to improve this situation.

Mr. Willis requested the Board incorporate into the meetings updates on the principle areas identified by the Commissioner.

Ms. Ali requested that written procedures be developed for the Board to carry out its investigative responsibilities, so they would be prepared in the event of another investigation.

Ms. Garland requested to have an update next year on the impact of the approved pay band maximums.

Meeting adjourned at 12:50pm.