

BECKY MORROW  
INTERIM DIRECTOR

**County of Hoke**  
**Department of Social Services**

P.O. Box 340  
RAEFORD, NC 28376-0340

TELEPHONE  
(910) 875-8725

FAX  
(910) 875-8119

**MINUTES FOR MEETING OF**  
**THE HOKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD**  
**MARCH 26, 2018**

A meeting of the Hoke County Department of Social Services (the “**Board**”) was held at 4:00 p.m. on March 26, 2018 in the Commissioners Room located in the County Administration Building (Pratt Building) at 227 N. Main St, Raeford NC, pursuant to notice duly given. The following Board Members (“**BM**”), constituting a quorum, were present:

Carl Pevia, Chair  
Charlotte Kelly, Vice-Chair  
Bill Evans  
Allen Thomas, Jr.  
Brenda Branch

Also present representing the Department were Becky Morrow, Interim Director of the Hoke County Department of Social Services; Jonathan Charleston, Department of Social Services Attorney; Barbara Mena-Peña, Administrative Officer; and Ellen Leichliter, Administrative Assistant.

Chair Pevia called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Thereafter, Chair Pevia asked BM Branch to give the invocation. Chair Pevia noted there were no public comments. Chair Pevia asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Chair Kelly made a motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of (a) the February 19, 2018 minutes; and (b) the next meeting date of April 30, 2018 in the agency’s T.B. Lester, Jr. conference room. BM Thomas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Pevia asked Interim Director Morrow to present the Day Care discussion. Ms. Morrow presented the February 2018 statistics for DCDEE (Division of Child Development and Early Education) including the amount of \$185,702 for non-Smart Start and the \$19,316 for Smart Start; a total of \$205,018 with a spending coefficient of 102%. Non-Smart Start unexpended funds were \$562,725; Smart Start unexpended funds were \$3,387. Interim Director Morrow stated when all of the Smart Start funds are depleted those children will be applied to the non-Smart Start funds. Interim Director Morrow stated she and Tammy Brewer, Social Work Supervisor for Family Support Services, are monitoring the spending;

we have \$187,575 per month available to spend for the remaining months (March, April, and May) of the fiscal year. The Board discussed the Day Care update.

Chair Pevia invited Ms. Mena-Peña to present the FY2018-2019 budget presentation. Ms. Mena-Peña guided the Board through the budget highlights (including the budget summary, staff and funding updates, vehicles, capital outlay and detail of updates compared with FY2017-2018). The Board discussed the projected increase in the attorney line item. Interim Director Morrow and Mr. Charleston met prior to the budget preparation and discussed an expected increase in the budget due to the increase in the volume of child welfare cases, increase in court preparation and time, changes expected to be mandated by the state, etc. Interim Director Morrow stated a separate line item in the amount of \$65,000 was proposed for the child support legal fees as the federal reimbursement rate is sixty-six percent (66%). Interim Director Morrow stated the legal fees line item in the amount of \$240,000 was proposed and encompassed appeals, child welfare, adult protective services, Board and personnel expenditures with a reimbursement rate of fifty-two percent (52%) to the county. The Board also discussed the overspending of the FY2017-2018 appeals line item. Chair Pevia expressed he wants to continue to pay the twelve (12) monthly increments of the contract total and wants to know the reimbursement amount to the county. Chair Pevia stated he was instructed two years ago by the Chairman of the Hoke County Board of Commissioners to include an appeals line item in the budget. Ms. Mena-Peña said there is a spreadsheet tracking the details paid for attorney expenditures in the board packet or distributed at the Board meeting. BM Thomas asked for a motion to alter the attorney line item to revert to \$224,000 (including the twelve equal monthly payments) and attorney fees for appeals to \$16,000 for the FY2018-2019 budget. No motion taken. BM Thomas stated we will have an appeals line item. BM Thomas said there needs to be a clear definition what we are willing to pay (included in the scope of the contract) and anything above and beyond will be applied to the appeals line item. The Board expressed concern that the FY2018-2019 budget was presented to the county manager prior to the review of the Board. Ms. Morrow explained her expectations were to review the budget with the Board in this March meeting and present to the county manager in April. Ms. Morrow shared that the department was notified of the March 19<sup>th</sup> budget deadline the last week in February. Ms. Morrow and Ms. Mena-Peña assured the Board any amendments recognized by the Board will be conveyed to the county manager. Ms. Mena-Peña continued presenting the budget highlights. Ms. Morrow gave details to the Board for requesting the new child welfare positions in the budget highlights. The Board discussed the positions and the issue of space in the agency. Chair Pevia stated of sixty-six (66) line items, fifty-nine (59) line item amounts changed. The Board discussed the line item amount changes. The Board asked for clarification of the changes. Ms. Mena-Peña referred the Board to the page titled "request for new line items or increase in an existing line item" with the described explanation and/or justification listed. BM Thomas asked about the \$500,000 difference between the FY2017-2018 approved expenditures amount of \$7.6M to the FY2018-2019 proposed expenditures amount of \$7.1M. Ms. Mena-Peña explained the decrease is due to (1) day care is paid to the providers directly from the state via NC Fast and (2) the majority of the NEMT (non-emergency Medicaid transportation) is paid directly to the providers through the state via NC Tracks. The Board discussed the FY2018-2019 budget presentation. Chair Pevia and Vice-Chair Kelly want to join Ms. Morrow and Ms. Mena-Peña for the budget

meeting with the county manager. Mr. Charleston suggested, given the Board's discussion, to consider voting to recess the meeting to review the budget and reconvene at the same location. The Board agreed to reconvene on Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. and bring forth proposed changes.

Prior to the Director's comments, Chair Pevia asked for motion for a closed session. BM Thomas made a motion for a closed session to consult with counsel and discuss a personnel matter pursuant to the N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and 143-318.11(a)6, which was seconded by BM Evans. The vote was unanimous. Those in attendance during the closed session included Chair Pevia, Vice-Chair Kelly, BM Evans, BM Thomas, BM Branch, and Mr. Charleston. BM Thomas made a motion to exit the closed session which was seconded by Vice-Chair Kelly. The vote to exit closed session was unanimous.

Chair Pevia asked Interim Director Morrow for the Director's comments. Ms. Morrow apologized the budget was not brought forth to the Board prior to the submission. Ms. Morrow said based on the timing there was no way the budget was ready to call a meeting because we were working on the budget up to the due date. Chair Pevia said, on behalf of the Board, we are doing our best to make sure we understand our role; he said the only out of the norm was the submission prior to our review. Chair Pevia stated we are assured whatever decisions (groupings, etc.) you made in the budget were justified and the Board appreciates your expertise. Ms. Morrow shared there is training being held for the income maintenance team. Ms. Morrow will meet with each social worker to better understand each caseload and suggest new tactics/training that are compliant with policy. Ms. Morrow has met with Mr. Charleston asking for further information on some petitions; Ms. Morrow wants a meeting with the attorney and the chief judge. Ms. Morrow shared statewide there is an agreement to be signed before July 1st by each county manager describing certain requirements for child welfare. Ms. Morrow advised we are getting our child welfare staff ready for NC Fast (a current go-live date of September 2018). Ms. Morrow is working on enhancing the court case preparation with the staff.

Chair Pevia made a motion to reconvene on Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. BM Thomas seconded the motion; the vote was unanimous. Chair Pevia made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by BM Thomas. The vote was unanimous.

---

Carl Pevia, Chair

---

Becky Morrow, Secretary

---

Date