

Department of Family and Children Services, Clayton County

Board of Directors Meeting

held

Wednesday, January 27th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via Microsoft Teams

Board Members Present:

Tia Simon-Wade	-	Chair
Quen Howard	-	Board Member
Charlton Bivins	-	Vice Chairman
Mr. Sidney Richardson	-	Board Member
Dr. Barbara Pulliam	-	Board Member

Staff Members Present:

Deneka Manning	-	Social Services (SS) County Director
Kimberly Scott	-	SS Interim Deputy Director
Sabrina Watson	-	SS Regional Director
Merion Luke	-	Office of Family Independence (OFI) Administrator
A’Kera Clay	-	Recording Secretary
Nancy Ward	-	SS Program Coordinator

1. Call to order and Invocation

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wade, at 10:10am. The invocation was performed by Vice Chair Bivins.

2. Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

3. Approval of Minutes

Chair Wade placed a motion on the floor to approve the minutes. There was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes at 10:13am.

4. Program Reports

a. Merion Luke – OFI Administrator

Ms. Luke reported the OFI data for December 2020. Clayton County had an overall SOP of 97.10% for SNAP cases. For expedited SNAP cases, the county had a SOP of 97.64%. For un-expedited SNAP cases, the county had a SOP of 97.10%.

For Family Medicaid, the county had an overall SOP of 92.74%. The county had a SOP of 100% for Peach Care. For Pregnancy Medicaid (P01), the county had a SOP of 78.94%. There were a few challenges with processing these cases timely. The main contributing factor identified was case managers not recognizing Medicaid portions while processing SNAP cases. For other forms of Medicaid, the county had a 92.74% SOP.

For TANF, there was a 99.8% SOP. The state expectation standard of 96% was met.

Ms. Luke provided updates. Currently, OFI is going through QA SNAP review. The information for program access (during COVID) has been submitted to the state office. As of now, clients and applicants are not allowed to enter the building, but a “blue box” and secured mailbox have been installed in front of the building. Applicants can access both. The blue box contains all applications that clients would need to apply and or renew benefits. They can drop their completed forms off in the secured mailbox.

On February 8th, the county will be undergoing a review on its virtual lobby. The reviewers will go through COVID protocols to ensure that OFI staff are providing quality services and adhering to state policies.

P-SNAP will be continued as long as the state is operating under a pandemic.

OFI continues to hire staff.

b. Deneka Manning – Social Services Report

Ms. Manning discussed key highlights from the social services report. In December 2019, there were 201 CPS reports assigned. In December 2020, there were 147 CPS reports assigned. She stated that the intakes are still low in comparison to the year before due to the pandemic. There were no fatalities during December 2020. There was one child (who was medically fragile) fatality in November 2020.

In December 2019, there were 231 children in Foster Care in Clayton County. In December 2020, there were 197 children in care. There were 5 adoption finalizations in December 2020 and 6 in December 2019. There were 45 foster care homes in December 2020, compared to the 70 foster care homes in December 2019. There was not any completion of impact classes in December. There are 10 potential foster care homes in the pipeline.

(Approaching Executive Session at 10:25 a.m.)

5. Executive Session

a. Personnel Report

The personnel report was discussed. The county has been approved to hire.

b. Budget Clarification

The budget report was discussed. Some funds that foster care parents submit are paid from the state budget. The only expenses so far are the per diem of board members and the foster care parents’ invoices. Vice Chair Bivins wanted his per diems to go towards any additional needs, such as funds for Holiday events.

The articles of agreement were received, signed, and hand-delivered to the county. Clayton County DFCS was awarded the same amount of \$93,000.00 as the previous fiscal year. The check disbursement has not been received yet. DFCS can operate off the “credit”. DFCS will return any amounts that were spent from the fund balance from the new monies.

The 2021 Fiscal Year Budget Allocation was discussed. Ms. Manning stated that should there be any need to shift the funds, it will be brought to the board’s attention. PRNs,

county operation, and child welfare expenses were included in the budget. Mr. Richardson asked for a budget estimate (itemized budget) to be provided for each Child Welfare category. However, each month, a detailed expense report is provided. Ms. Manning stated that she could provide an itemized budget based on historical accounts. The overall budget is based on historical data. An overall budget is allocated for child welfare expenses, but the county spends from the child welfare budget towards expenses as needed. She stated that she would prefer to have leeway to shift as needed.

Chair Wade placed a motion on the floor to allow the county to make expenditures up to \$1,500.00 without board approval for a year. Mr. Richardson seconded this motion. There was a unanimous vote that Director Manning and DFCS leadership could make expenditures up to \$1,500.00 without board approval.

Ms. Manning asked whether she needed approval for paying rent for a former foster care youth (she is now a part of the public). The youth has been displaced from work due to an injury and is struggling to pay her past due rent. The youth has no other support from family or friends. Requests were made to the state to pay her past due rent, but the youth did not qualify for the programs for youth who have aged out of care (IOP). Howard wanted to know whether there was a post plan for the youth. A budget plan was set for the youth and known resources were provided to her. She has her rent for February.

The first portion (\$1,360) of her past due rent was paid in January 2021. She was requesting for the remaining balance of \$1,360.76. Ms. Manning was requesting board approval since the total amount would exceed \$1,500. The total amount is \$2,720. Per Ms. Manning, in situations such as this, accounting will pay knowing that the check disbursement is coming.

The board stated that the first portion that was paid in January should have been brought to their attention since the expenditure was made after the \$1,500 cap expired, in December. The board asked for Ms. Manning to do so in the future but appreciated her apology, transparency, and discussion. However, the board stated that she did not need approval since they have now voted for the cap to be up to \$1,500.

Ms. Manning stated that she wanted to reiterate that the articles of agreement are very specific about what the monies can be spent on. This not only includes foster care youth, but Clayton County residents as well. She stated that if she can assist with preventing homelessness, regardless of age and or the category of that individual. Vice Chair Bivins asked whether the department has proof that individuals are indigent. Ms. Manning stated that the state requires documentation and justification for all families and individuals requesting assistance. There are families that have been denied because they can not provide proof. She stated that she applies the same documentation requirement for county block grant funds.

(Executive Session ended at 11:24 a.m.)

6. Other Matters

a. Past Projects/Events

- I. 2020 Winter Fest Recap: The administrative staff decorated the lobby. Staff were able to get cloth masks, donated box lunches by Tabernacle of Praise International Church, and cupcakes donated by the board.
- II. December 2020 Newsletter was sent out.
- III. The new furniture for the administrative suite has arrived. The purpose was to ensure that all documents would be secure since the furniture prior was damaged.
- IV. Copies of the annual reports from the other counties were provided as an example or guideline for this year's annual report.

b. Future Involvements and Projects/Events

- I. There will be a February Agency Meeting that will include a Black History Segment on February 11th at 10am via Microsoft Teams. An invite will be sent to board members.
- II. 2021 June Newsletter. The newsletter will go out semi-annually. The next will go out June 2021.
- III. Employee Appreciation Month is in May 2021.
- IV. New Block Grant Application soon to arrive.

7. Date of Next Board Meeting

The date of the next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:37a.m.

Respectfully yours,

 Tia Simon
Tia Simon-Wade, Chair
Clayton County, DFCS Board

 Deneka Manning
Deneka Manning
SS County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS

 Kimberly Scott
Kimberly Scott
SS Interim Deputy County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS

A'Kera Clay _____

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Recording Secretary