

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
REGULAR SESSION**

January 11, 2022

The Pitt County Board of Social Services met in Regular Session at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. The purpose of this meeting was to conduct the official business of the Pitt County Board of Social Services. Board members and Management Team staff present:

Board Members

Members Participating
James Cox, Chair– Remote
Catherine Nelson - Remote
Darone Dancy – Remote
Shelia Bunch – Remote

Agency Staff

Members Present
Dr. A. Frazer, Interim Director – Remote
Angela Hart, Business Officer - Remote
Tammy Lewis, CW Prog. Admin. – Remote
Cynthia Ross, Adult Prog. Manager – Remote
Bryan Averette, ESS Admin. – Remote
Sonya Scott, FSS Admin. – Remote

County Manager Rep.

Members Present
Brian Barnett– Remote

Call to Order

Chair Cox called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Moment of Silent Prayer

Chair Cox offered a moment of silent prayer or meditation before the meeting began.

Roll Call:

Chair Cox Present	Shelia Bunch Present
Darone Dancy Present	Catherine Nelson Present

Adopt or Revise the Agenda

Item presented by: Chair Cox

Discussion: The agenda for today's meeting was reviewed by the Board.

Motion Made: To approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Made by: Catherine Nelson

Motion seconded by: Darone Dancy

Motion passed: The motion was passed unanimously.

Vote Record:

Chair Cox Yes	Shelia Bunch Yes
Darone Dancy Yes	Catherine Nelson Yes

Action on minutes of previous meeting

Item presented by: Chair Cox

Item Description: Minutes of the December meeting

Discussion: Chair Cox asked if there were any revisions to be made to the minutes of the meeting.

Motion Made: To accept the minutes as presented.

Motion Made by: Shelia Bunch

Motion seconded by: Catherine Nelson

Motion passed: Unanimous

Vote Record:

Chair Cox Yes	Shelia Bunch Yes
---------------	------------------

Darone Dancy Yes

Catherine Nelson Yes

Employee Recognition

Dr. Frazer recognized the new hire by stating their name and position. He also recognized service awards by listing employee's name and years of service.

Items for Consent

Dr. Frazer reviewed the information noting it was part of the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) to assist with utilities. There were no questions.

Motion Made: To accept the budget amendment as presented.

Motion Made by: Catherine Nelson

Motion seconded by: Shelia Bunch

Motion passed: Unanimous

Vote Record:

Chair Cox Yes Shelia Bunch Yes

Darone Dancy Yes Catherine Nelson Yes

Items for Report

Item Presented: LIHWAP & LIEAP

Item Presented by: Bryan Averette, ESS Administrator

Mr. Averette reviewed the LIHWAP information on the handout. As of today, 34 households approved and 38 households were with a large part being denied due to applying in December when it was for priority groups only. LIEAP information on the handout was reviewed as well. As of January 11th, there was \$608,037 left to spend. Had 1403 households receive assistance, due to automated payments. Half of the ARPA allotment has given to us by State with the rest to follow shortly.

Item Presented: Holiday Cheer Christmas Update and Recognition

Item Presented by: Chandra Mewborn, CW SW Supervisor and Cynthia Ross, Adult Prog. Manager

CW Holiday Cheer – Ms. Mewborn said it was another successful year. She extended heartfelt thanks to the community partners who assisted with the Holiday Cheer program: The Schmidt Family with Project Elf, Compute North, Weyerhaeuser, THE Bridge Foster Ministry, ECU, United Real Estate, Knights of Columbus Ministry, Greenville Charity Drag Brunch, Pastoral Care Department of Vidant, Greenville NC ALumknee Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Iota Kappa Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, SECU, Ignite Church, Open Door Church, Metrics, Tedi Bear Advocacy, Great Harvest Bread, Pitt Co. Division of Adult Corrections, Walmart, Mayne Pharma, Share Our Blessing Ministry, Blessings Book Club. Michels and GaYQui- Dental, The Women of the Moose Lodge and the countless citizens that made monetary donations. There were enough gifts and donations provided that Foster Care was able to share with the families being served through CW Assessments and In-Home Services as well. She also thanked her staff for their hard work. Also, extended thanks to an anonymous donor for packages of diapers, wipes, pull-ups, coats and toboggans that were sent.

Adult Holiday Cheer – Ms. Ross shared an update via a PowerPoint. Thanks to all of the individuals, organizations and groups who donated and/or sponsored, which allowed 160 adults to have a Merry Christmas. Thanked everyone for their assistance and/or contributions.

Item Presented: CDBG & CIP Update

Item Presented by: Sonya Scott, FSS Administrator

Ms. Scott went over the CDBG block grant that has a total of \$899,484 total left. As of January 6th, had issued \$88,722 in assistance with a remaining balance of \$810,762 left. Have received 874 utility applications with 577 of those being

approved. Have received 122 eviction applications and approved 39 of them as of January 6th. Chair Cox asked about the spending. Ms. Scott stated they had thought the funding would run out by December but still have funds available. Ms. Hart stated it was a five-year grant and we are currently in year two or until funds are gone. Sonya went over the CIP information on the hand out.

Interim Director's Report

Dr. Frazer noted he had sent copy of report with the Covid Guidance flyer for their own reference. Covid is a very serious problem across the State as everyone is experiencing significant call out and pressure on workload. Getting constant updates from Dr. Silvernail helping with the CDC guidelines and updates. There is 10-20% staff out across the board, due to being sick, quarantining or on FML, which is increasing the vacancy effect. Working on program review to spot gaps and how to fix them. Vice Chair Nelson asked if staff were allowed to work remotely. Dr Fraser said not at this time as it was too complex for staff to work from home, due to lots of components with hardware and computer access. Will continue to keep it as a possible option. Regarding the Medicaid Transformation, the State is doing a great job with the ombudsmen engaging the public. The rollout will be December 1, 2022. At this point on the vacancy report, we have 44 vacancies now. Can see how COVID affects the vacancies, due to its impact on career decisions. Struggling to fill positions but looking to implement plans to find new hires and keep current staff. Did not fill any positions over the holidays. Chair Cox asked roughly where the vacancies fell. Dr. Frazier stated in Child Welfare there's 13 vacancies and in Adult Services there's 3 vacancies with a 5% turnover from October to December. Will review employment strategy. There are 19 in Economic Support Service. Those are the two biggest gaps. Vice Chair Nelson asked what is done for retention and are exit interviews conducted. Dr. Frazer stated the County Human Resources conducts the exit interviews but it's not public information. We follow the County's retention policy for current staff. Reviewing them now to bring to the Board at the retreat. Dr. Bunch asked about offering a sign-on bonus. Dr. Frazer said there was not one at this time but looking into it. Mr. Barnett said there were no sign-on bonuses. Dr. Frazer stated he is working on staffing requests and working with Angela Hart on the budget numbers. Hopefully, by end of the month will have the numbers for the Board. Chair Cox noted it's complex now with COVID and vacancies. Dr. Frazer stated he is looking to do a revised strategy plan with new five-year and 10-year goals. Just received the REDA reports and we scored 100% accuracy, 0% error and 100% control. Gave credit to the staff. Chair Cox asked about needing to revise the strategy plan. Dr Frazer stated the current data being used runs out this June, so need to create new goals. Chair Cox noted it'd been awhile since they had received an update. Would like an update before moving on to revisions and asked for it to be on agenda next month. Vice Chair Nelson wants the revised strategy plan crafted with the complexities of COVID and vacancies. Doctor Fraser reviewed new hire information and recognized service awards recipients. Chair Cox revisited needing to have the retreat now or later given the challenges right now and opened it for comments. Vice Chair Nelson stated it we might could do a remote retreat to discuss the issues about engaging and retaining staff. She noted her preference of moving forward with retreat. Mr. Dancy was in agreement with that. Dr. Bunch agreed. Chair Cox instructed Dr Frazer to move forward with a retreat, preferably the February meeting if possible.

Director Recruitment

Mr. Dancy noted the position was closed now and Human Resources had forwarded the applications to Raleigh to be qualified by the State. The search committee is ready to go, once we get applications back from the State. Chair Cox asked about timeline. Mr. Dancy stated they hope to have them back by end of January and then move to next stage. Will not be ready to do anything at next board meeting.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Dancy told Dr Frasier to stay the course but may want to think out of the box. Dr. Bunch stated it may help to do a video or something pulling all the positive work out done by our Agency as that may help getting staff and break the myths and bad media for social services. Vice Chair Nelson considered the need to be creative and think of the generations we are dealing with. Maybe get PIO to do a success video. Chair Cox appreciated everyone's input. Dr. Bunch wanted to give a shout out to those who keep coming to work and staying through the Covid pandemic and surges

Motion: Motion made to adjourn

Motion Presented by: Catherine Nelson
Motion Seconded by: Darone Dancy
Motion passed: Motion passed unanimously

Vote Record:

Chair Cox Yes
Darone Dancy Yes

Shelia Bunch Yes
Catherine Nelson Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Augustine Frazer
Interim Director

Susan May
Clerk to the Board

James Cox
Chair