

The Accomack County Board of Social Services met at its facility on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 9:30 A.M. Present in person were Ms. Reneta Major, Chairman; Mr. Jackie Phillips; Mr. Robert Martin; Mrs. Minnie White; and Mrs. Vicki Weakley, Secretary.

Ms. Major called the meeting to order and welcomed the Board Members. Mr. Phillips gave the Invocation.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 3 – Approve Minutes of March 18, 2025**. Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mrs. White, to approve the Minutes as written. Hearing no discussion, the motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 – Welcome New Employees & Promotion: Borja Knight, Jaelyn Killmon, and Jill Fitzgerald**. Mrs. Weakley introduced Borja Knight who joined the Adult Benefits Unit as a Benefits Program Specialist I, and Jaelyn Killmon who started with the agency as an intern and has now joined the Adult Protective Services Unit as a Family Services Specialist I. Next, Mrs. Weakley introduced Jill Fitzgerald who was a Fiscal Assistant III. She has been promoted to a Benefit Programs Specialist I. Ms. Major welcomed them to their new positions. The Board, in unison, expressed the same.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 4 - Fraud Report**. Mrs. Weakley stated that due to documentation not being entered correctly by workers, Mr. Parks is being walked through a process with the State which should lead to more claims coming through. No questions or concerns were raised.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 5 – Presentation from Sylvia Stanley, Family Services Supervisor – Child Welfare**. Mrs. Weakley introduced Ms. Stanley to the Board. The Board in unison welcomed her. Ms. Stanley provided members with a brochure clarifying the services provided by the Child Welfare Unit. Ms. Stanley stated that she is the supervisor of the Child Welfare Unit. The Child Welfare Unit has two big programs, Child Protective Services and Foster Care. She referred to the brochure which highlights these programs and other services. Child Protective Services workers investigate cases of abuse and neglect. If a child comes into the agency's care as a result of abuse or neglect, they enter the foster care program. The foster care workers then work with the family for reunification. Presently, there are twenty children in foster care with this agency which is the largest number it has been in the past 10-15 years. Ms. Stanley complimented her workers on the great job they do maintaining these cases. Mrs. Weakley added that with having twenty children in foster care, the agency currently has three foster care workers, two of which have resigned so all the work is falling on one worker which is a near impossible job. Mr. Martin inquired what causes the increase in foster care. Ms. Stanley replied that there are several factors, but the most common are referrals of mothers who are substance abusers, poverty because parents just don't have the income to support their children, and housing is a big issue where parents become homeless. Ms. Stanley confirmed Mrs. Weakley statement that as of May 31, 2025, the unit will have one foster care worker. Ms. Stanley stated that she was a social worker for 20+ years and she is aware of the stress. She has assumed cases to help the workers because it is a lot of work. The agency has five approved foster homes. Years ago, families would call regularly wanting to be approved foster parents. Now, the agency struggles to find foster parents, and the pay is more than it has been in the past. Two additional families were just approved to be foster parents, but they must go through foster parent training which will be held in the Fall. Ms. Stanley asked the Board if they knew of any families who would be interested in becoming foster parents, to have them reach out to her so they can join the training in the Fall. Other programs that the Child Welfare Unit is involved in are the foster care Christmas party, foster care birthdays, and the Independent Living program (four foster care children are currently in that program). The agency has had two adoptions finalized this year. There are a total of seven children in foster care with a goal of adoption. The agency has twenty-three children that receive adoption assistance. These children have been adopted, but they receive assistance whether it is a payment or through Medicaid. The agency must monitor those cases until the child reaches the age of 21. Ms. Stanley referred back to the brochure where the special projects are listed to assist our clients and their children. The Salvation Army in August gives a donation so that the agency can purchase clothing for children. The Back-To-School program receives donations or funding from organizations to purchase school supplies. During Thanksgiving, there are individuals and organizations that will donate food baskets or gift

cards to provide for a family. During the Christmas season there is the Adopt-A-Family, Angel Trees, and the Toy Closet programs. The Adopt-A Family program is where a family or group would like to provide gifts, decorations, food, etc. for a specific family. The Angel Tree program is various trees out in the community that people can pick from for a specific child and provide the needs or wishes given on the angel ornament. The Toy Closet program is when the agency training room is filled with toys that were purchased from donations and toys donated from the community and organizations. Families in need who also receive services can come and pick out toys for their children. Ms. Stanley continued that March was Social Worker month, April was Child Abuse Prevention month, and May is Foster Care Awareness month. The back of the brochure lists all of the workers within the Child Welfare Unit along with their titles and phone numbers which will change because of the resignations and one retirement. Ms. Major thanked Ms. Stanley for coming in and the Board in unison stated to Ms. Stanley to keep up the good work. Ms. Stanley thanked the Board and stated that she would pass that along to her workers.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 7 & 8 – Child Abuse Prevention Month (April) and Adult Abuse Prevention Month (May)**. Ms. Major stated that Ms. Stanley has spoken about Child Abuse Prevention Month for April. Adult Abuse Prevention month is in May and the Certificates of Recognition by the Governor are attached to the Board's packet.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 9 – Director's Notes**. Mrs. Weakley stated that since the last meeting she attended the VLSSE (Virginia League of Social Services Executive) two-day board meeting (Mrs. Weakley attended virtually.), two MSW intern consults (Both interns have successfully completed their program.), three CPS appeals, nine potential employee interviews, Director's Coffee Break meeting, one student intern consult, Supervisor's meeting, Cisco phone training, and two employee personnel meetings. In Mrs. Weakley's absence in April, Mrs. Greenley attended the Members Helping Members Board Meeting, a full staff meeting, and a State CPS appeal.

Ms. Major continued **Item 10 – Comp Plan Update**. Mrs. Weakley stated that, as members are aware, each year there must be a review of the Comp Plan. There were no Section changes; only a correction that was made to the way On-Call is handled. The procedure has not changed, but it was discovered that the recording of the procedure was incorrect in the Comp Plan. The Comp Plan allows the agency to perform a realignment, but that determination is based on what the agency budget looks like at the time. It has been established that prior to a realignment being performed, it would be brought before the Board for a vote. The agency's budget is tight, but there could be an opportunity to keep salaries in realignment. Mrs. Weakley asked if there were any questions. Ms. Major inquired if there were any cost adjustments made to On-Call. Mrs. Weakley state, no; however, she would like to see the pay rise, but at this time, the budget is not allowing that. Ms. Linton added that there was funding for both departments, but only the CPS workers were on-call. After a sit-down meeting with the CPS and APS units, it was agreed to have coverage in both departments and the funds were divided in half.

Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mr. Martin that the Board accept the change to the Comp Plan. Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major proceeded to **Item 11 – Purge CSA Case Information**. Mrs. Weakley stated that there are CSA (Children's Services Act) Monthly LEDRS, Check Lists, Check Reassignments, Expenditure LEDRS, Purchase of Service Orders and Vendors dated January 1, 2020, through May 31, 2021, that are ready to be purged according to State guidelines. Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mrs. White, that the mentioned records be purged. Hearing no discussion, Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Major continued to **Item 12 – Financial Statement**. Ms. Linton stated that the local budget was \$944,084.00. The Year-To-Date Local Expenditures were \$678,031.20, and the Total Local Balance-To-Date is \$266,052.80. The Balance-To-Date reflects an allocation that all positions are filled; therefore, when she begins a budget, it always shows a negative balance using pass-through. This is not funds that can be distributed because it will be needed for the following year. The agency is reaching the point of being full staffed with the exception of the Child Welfare Unit. Ms. Linton stated that she also tries

to hold back funds if someone is hired in the Child Welfare Unit with prior knowledge to which their salary can be adjusted. She will look into performing a realignment. During the last realignment, some received 10% and higher. Everyone must be reviewed, but the concentration will be on the lower level to increase their salaries because as new employees come in it causes compression. The FY26 budget is going to be tighter than FY25 so going by percentages will be difficult.

Closed Session – On motion by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mrs. White, the Board went into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing items stated only on the Agenda (Foster Care Case #21247084, #21221208, and #21233520, EPPE's for Dawn Parks and Gary Kellam, and Director's Consult) as permitted by the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2.3712. The motion carried.

On motion by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mrs. White, the Board returned from Closed Session and confirmed that the only items discussed were the ones listed on the Board Members' Agenda. Ms. Major called a vote (Mr. Phillips – yes; Mr. Martin – yes; Mrs. White – yes; Ms. Major - yes). The motion carried.

Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mrs. White that the Board accept foster care case #21247084, #21221208, and #21233520. Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whalen that the Board accept the EPPE's for Dawn Parks and Gary Kellam. Ms. Major called a vote for all in favor to signify by Aye. The motion carried.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 9:30 A.M.

Mr. Phillips made a motion, seconded by Mrs. White, to adjourn the meeting at 10:31 A.M.

APPROVED: **Cassandra Reneta Major** _____

ATTEST: **Vicki Weakley** _____