

May 27, 2025

The Alamance County Social Services Board met for its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at HSC Building (1st Floor) 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Mr. Timothy Britt, DSS Board Chair; Mrs. Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair; Commissioner Ed Priola, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candy Snyder, DSS Board Member; Dr. Darrell Warner, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candice J. Gobble, DSS Director; Ms. Virginia Hunker, DSS Business Officer; Ms. Lynette Wellons, DSS Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director; Ms. Heidi York, Alamance County Manager and Ms. Tabatha Brown, Child Welfare Supervisor were present.

Timothy Britt, DSS Board Chair opened the meeting.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda: Timothy Britt, DSS Board Chair

April 2025 items on the consent agenda approved. Candy Snyder, DSS Board Member made motion to approve and seconded by Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Virginia Hunker

	APRIL 2025	% OF BUDGET	PRIOR YTD	% OF BUDGET
REVENUES	\$11,022,416.00	88%	\$10,735,518.00	95%
EXPENDITURES	\$18,333,793.00	68%	\$17,349,562.00	68%

Ms. Hunker reported on April 2025 Revenues and Expenditures. This is the last month before year end. We will not receive year end revenues and expenditures possibility until August 2025.

Fraud: See report –

Unit	April 2025	March 2024	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$15,287.20	\$24,659.75	\$269,478.59	\$211,046.23

Services – Ms. Lynette Wellons/Assistant Director of Services -

Child Support – (Statistical Report Information) – see report.

Unit	March 2025	March 2024	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$942,666.99	\$1,012,966.70	\$9,000,219.52	\$9,163,481.99

Assistant Director Wellons reported on Child/Adult Protective Services Hotline. We are going from a 3-person team for the hotline to a 2-person team due to a resignation that will be effective at the end of May. Between April 1 – now, DSS received 2,142 calls, averaging approximately 56 calls per day. When the hotline is fully staffed, this equates to about 18 calls per worker. Taking a report is a time-intensive process and time sensitive, each call ranges from 30 – 45 minutes depending on the call. We are one of the few counties who have intake team dedicated to CPS/APS Hotlines – most counties rely on rotating staff to manage reports. We will continue to monitor reports and continue to answer all calls as thoroughly as possible.

Assistant Director Wellons announced Child Welfare Social Worker, Ms. Rebecca Kefer was nominated for NC “Rookie Social Worker of the Year” and won this prestigious award. She was nominated by her peers, community members and other staff.

Assistant Director Wellons reported we have completed 30 adoptions this year with one social worker working these cases. This is a huge accomplishment.

Assistant Director Wellons reported Adult Services has completed all Performance Management goals for the calendar year January – April 2025 with 100% of all goals met. This is a huge accomplishment to Adult Services team.

Specific Goal: Adult Services—DSS will complete 85% of APS evaluations involving allegations of abuse or neglect within 30 days of the report.

Specific Goal: Adult Services—DSS will complete 85% of APS evaluations involving allegations of exploitation within 45 days of the report.

Assistant Director Wellons reported we plan to see an uptick of child support referrals due to the federal regulations require Child Support Services to seek medical support as a part of all child support orders and when appropriate to exchange this medical insurance coverage information with Division of NC Medicaid.

Question: What happens after the call?

- We will take allegations to determine if it meets statutory guidelines for acceptance
- Intake SW staffs with Intake SW Supervisor will meet to determine if it's accepted or not, and if it is, under what maltreatment category and timeframe
- Screened out (send letter)
- Screened in and accept report
- Assign to SW
- Investigate the report

- 30 – 45-day timeframe to investigate
- Once assigned, the SW complete the process in our systems to assure the paperwork is complete and available for the assessor
- We can escalate to Program Manager and/or Assistant Director when they need additional guidance applying policy/decision making.

Economic Support: Ms. Danae Pickard

- Continue to watch legislation as it relates to all mandated services for Medicaid and Food Nutrition Services.

Question: Is there any word to cancel the Summer SNAP Program?

No – The SUN Bucks Program is not administered by Department of Social Services. This is a program created by USDA that provides grocery-buying benefits in a one-time payment per eligible child. The SUN Bucks Program was created to help parents purchase nutritional food during the summer months when schools are out.

Due to a NC FAST system defect, 5,489 households eligible for SUN Bucks mistakenly received an EBT card featuring the American flag design. These cards did not contain any benefits and should be destroyed. The new SUN Bucks EBT card will be mailed with the SUN Bucks logo to those affected households starting mid-May. The benefits will be made available on a new SUN Bucks card in late-May. Some households may receive their SUN Bucks card before benefits are available to spend.

Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble

Administrative Support/Personnel: Robert Ring

See Statistical Report – as of April 30, 2025

Vacancies	23
New Hires	8
Interagency Transfers	0
Resignations	4

Mr. Ring reported as of May 27, 2025; we currently have 28 vacancies. 17 of these vacancies are in Child Welfare. These are critical positions.

Mr. Ring reported in April 2025, DSS received the following applications:

Applications Received	179
Forwarded to Hiring Manager	144
Applicants Interviewed	14
Applicants Hired	7

Mr. Ring reported in April 2024, we hired 9 applicants and out of the 9 staff – 5 staff continue to work for DSS.

Director Gobble added with the 179 applications received, 144 of the applications met the qualifications for OSHR. When the applications are forwarded to hiring managers, they are screened more in detail for qualities that would represent DSS. We have encountered with some applicants; interviews have been scheduled and there are no/shows and/or cancellations. We have also encountered applicants who have been interviewed and once we get to the offer process, they rescind the offer due to salary.

Director Gobble reported we are incorporating phone interviews in our interview process effective July 2025. We are also incorporating new conversation portion of the interview process.

Director's Report – Candice J. Gobble, Director–

Director Gobble reported the Reconciliation Bill has passed the House and is now heading to the Senate. It has been reported that TANF (Work First) and SABG (Adult Services funding) has been cut out of the bill.

But SNAP continues to be in the bill where the proposal is to link State funding responsibilities to their performance on error rates. This suggests that States should contribute to the costs of SNAP benefits based on the efficiency in processing benefit payments. The proposal also introduces a sliding scale system, where states with lower error rates would pay less, while those with higher rates could face significant financial responsibilities.

The proposed system would require states with the lowest error rates to cover 5% of SNAP benefits, while states with error rates exceeding 10% might be responsible for up to 25% of the costs. This change is set to take effect in the fiscal year 2028. Currently, the federal government fully covers SNAP benefit costs and shares administrative expenses with states. Under the new plan, federal support for administrative costs would decrease to 25%, further increasing the financial burden on states.

The proposed bill would change the work requirement for parents with children over the age of 6 and adults aged 55 to 64. Adults subject to the requirements would only be able to receive food benefits for *three months in a three-year period* unless they show compliance with a 20-hour-per-week work requirement or prove they qualify for an exemption such as having a disability.

For Medicaid cuts there would be adding new work requirements for people who are covered under the Medicaid expansion that will reduce coverage, and place restrictions on how states like North Carolina pay for Medicaid, among other changes.

There may be between 244,000 and 496,000 North Carolinians would have their health insurance taken away by implementing work reporting requirements. This requirement would apply to everyone enrolled in Medicaid expansion aged 19 to 64 (which covers the entire expansion age range.)

The new bill has proposed substantial federal funding cuts to the Medicaid program over the next 10 years. The cuts would propose to reduce the 90 percent federal matching rate that states receive for the Medicaid expansion population covered under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), known as enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage, or FMAP.

The federal government now pays 90 percent of the costs of covering Medicaid enrollees who gained coverage through the expansion. The legislation would penalize states that cover people who are undocumented with state-only funds by cutting their Medicaid expansion match rates from 90 to 80 percent. The reduction would begin October 1, 2027.

Director Gobble reported the Single Audit will start in June. The audit is conducted by CPA Firm. This year this audit will focus on areas of Economic Services, Child Welfare and Fiscal. DSS staff has been notified of items needed and we are working on to gather information requested. The results of the single audit are presented to County Commissioners once concluded.

Director Gobble reported on the FY 25-26 recommended budget has been presented at County Commissioners meeting by County Manager. Director Gobble announced she forwarded email to board members regarding impacts to DSS.

The next steps for Budget Process:

- June 2, 2025 – Public Hearing at Historic Courthouse – 6:30pm
- June 9, 2025 – Budget Work Sessions – 9:30am
- June 10, 2025 – Budget Work Sessions – 9:30am
- June 16, 2025 – Budget Adoption Meeting (County Commissioner’s Meeting) – 6:30pm

Question: Can you give more details for services for non-citizens?

- *Director Gobble reported any non-citizens who receive Emergency Medicaid and/or Labor/Delivery Medicaid eligibility is not deemed by Department of Social Services. The eligibility is determined by the State.*

Question: Who is responsible for work requirement?

- *The individual who is applying for benefits is responsible for their own work requirement.*

New Business: Foster Home Licensing & Recruitment

Mrs. Tabatha Brown, Child Welfare Program Manager presented the following:

May is National Foster Care Awareness Month – this is a nationally recognized as a time to raise awareness to the needs of youth in the foster care system and highlight the challenges that they face. In addition, May is a time to celebrate our foster parents and others who contribute to the support of children in care.

Alamance County Foster Care Needs:

- 119 children in care as of May 2025
- We are need of local foster homes

- The greatest placement needs are for:
 - Older Youth
 - Infants & Toddlers
 - Sibling Groups
 - Only children
 - Children with special needs
- Long-term, respite, day respite and emergency care

What happens while children are in Foster Care?

- Reunification with biological family is the primary goal
- DSS works with the family on a case plan while foster parents care for the children
- Court ordered family visits typically occur weekly – this is the parent’s right and in family’s best interest
- Foster parents support reunification through “shared parenting”

Alamance County DSS Foster Care Goals:

- To ensure quality foster care in healthy, stable and safe homes
- To support efforts to strengthen and preserve the biological family so that children can safely return home
- To ensure a single, safe and nurturing foster care placement by support foster families
- To achieve a permanent plan for the child & family within one year in the form of reunification, kinship care, adoption or guardianship

Need for Local Foster Homes:

- Due to a shortage of licensed foster families across the State, many children have been placed outside of Alamance County and outside of their county of residence
- Many children currently in foster care have a high level of needs requiring specialized placements in therapeutic homes and leveled group homes. Many of those placements can also be found outside of Alamance County.
- Across the State, there have been children who have had to be housed in DSS buildings, which is also due to the lack of licensed foster homes within the State.
- Approximately 70% of children in Alamance County foster care are currently in placements outside of Alamance County.

The Role of a Foster Parent:

- Relationally Oriented
- Committed & Resilient
- Emotionally supportive
- Optimistic & realistic
- Strengths focused
- Trauma Informed
- Empathetic & compassionate

Foster Parents:

- Treat the child as **Family**

- Are an **Advocate**
- Ensure child receives **medical/dental/mental health care**
- **Assist** with transportation to visits & appointments, whenever possible
- Maintain **In-Service training** hours

Foster Parent Licensure:

Training	• NTDC – National Training and Development Curriculum for Foster & Adoptive Families Training (30 hours)
CPR/FA & Medical Administration	• Commit to at least 10 hours per year
Interviews (Couple, Family & Individual)	• Home Safety Assessment

Potential parents would also have to agree to:

- Financial Statements
- Criminal Background Checks
 - Fingerprinting
 - RIL/Statewide & International Background Checks
- Medical Exams for all in the home
- Reference checks

Training for Foster Parents:

- Child Development/Impact of Trauma
- Helping children form attachments
- Helping children manage behaviors
- Building & maintaining connections
- Cultural Humility
- Impact of Providing Foster Care on Families
- Trauma-Informed Parenting

Recruitment:

- DSS hosts recruitment opportunities in the community
- DSS uses billboards and fliers in the county
- There are referral incentives and word of mouth
- We do community outreach at local churches

Foster Parent Support & Connection to Resources:

- Foster Family Alliance
- Community Care of North Carolina
- Family Room: Foster Care Resource Center

Appreciation Events for our Foster Families:

- Appreciation events each year – Foster Parent Events & Annual Foster Care Christmas Party
- We provide gifts with DSS logo to support word of mouth recruitment
- Bring a Friend events & Training Opportunities
- Give-Aways
- Thank you, cards,

Alamance Foster Families Q/A?

- **How many foster homes are currently licensed by Alamance County?**
 - 43 licensed. Of those, approximately 30 are accepting placements/emergency placements
- **What is the longest that one of our foster families have been licensed?**
 - 20+ years
- **How many children have been placed in one foster care family?**
 - 6 children to support sibling placement
- **What are the most adoptions that have occurred in one foster family?**
 - 5

Ms. Brown presented several foster care family bios with facts and comments.

DSS Licensing Team:

Hilary Weber hilary.weber@alamancecountync.gov	(336) 792-0544
Leeshell Collier leeshell.collier@alamancecountync.gov	(336) 264-6583

Question: What is the range/distance for foster families out of County?

- The furthest is approximately 4 hours away.

Question: What are the financial costs for children out of county?

- We pay room & board rate and additional costs such as clothing, food, etc. if needed.
- For those children who are in kinship placements, they receive ½ room & board.

Question: What is room & board rate?

- It will depend on the age range of the child. The rate is no higher than \$810 for child 13 and up.

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 noon **Tuesday, June 24, 2025**, at DSS – Professional Board Room located on the 1st Floor at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm. Motion was made by Candy Snyder and seconded by Vice-Chair Tyronna Hooker.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date Approved: _____