

The Cleveland County DSS Advisory Board met on Monday, June 27, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

Board members present: Chair Mary Accor, Allison Gragg, and Betsy Wells

Visitor present: Charles Accor

DSS staff present: Katie Swanson, Sherry Vess, Misty Merritt, Alice Wilson, Destiny Davidson, Andrea Power, Kerry Rice, Mary Etters, and Annette Pendergraft

County Attorney present: Chuck Wilson

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:**

Chair Accor called the meeting to order at 4:07 PM and recognized that we do not have enough board members present to meet the quorum. Chair Accor led the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JUNE 27, 2022, DSS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING:**

Chair Accor presented the proposed consent agenda for the June 27, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting for consideration. Chair Accor asked that only emergency items be added to the agenda and added that we do have one addition. Director Swanson asked that we add the transition of outgoing Chair and incoming Chair to the consent agenda.

**Motion: A motion was made by Allison Gragg with a second by Betsy Wells to approve the proposed agenda for the June 27, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**CITIZEN RECOGNITION:**

No citizens requested to appear before the Board.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

A. Minutes

The Clerk to the Board emailed the minutes from the April 25, 2022, meeting to Advisory Board members prior to the June 27, 2022, meeting.

B. Personnel Report

The Clerk to the Board emailed the personnel report to Advisory Board members prior to the June 27, 2022, meeting.

Director Swanson updated the board on current vacancies within the agency. We currently have an Administrative Assistant I position open, Child Support Agent I, 2 Child Support Agent II positions, Child Support Agent Lead, IMC I, 8 IMC II positions, PA III-Clerical, SW III Adult, 2 SWIAT workers, 2 SWIII workers, 2 Program Manager positions and a SWSIII position.

C. Executive Summary

The Clerk to the Board emailed the Executive Summary to Advisory Board members prior to the June 27, 2022, meeting. Director Swanson reminded everyone that we would continue to update and provide graphs for a clearer interpretation of items that are listed in the executive summary.

D. Vacant Board Seat

Director Swanson addressed that we currently have a vacant seat for our board. Denise Wright is rolling off the board and the seat has been advertised as vacant. The Board of Commissioners adopted for specific seats being filled that are beneficial to our board. We need to recruit for an aging services provider, licensed foster care parent, or a current or retired health care provider. An advertisement for the opening will be sent out to board members to share with possible candidates.

E. Transition of Chair (addition to the Consent agenda)

Mary Accor has served as Chair to the DSS advisory board for many years and is transitioning to a regular board member. Allison Gragg has agreed to be our Chair for a term of one year. We will need to vote at our next board meeting when we have a quorum available for the appointment of Allison Gragg as Chairperson.

**CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION:**

Chair Accor presented the consent agenda for the June 27, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting for adoption.

**Motion: A motion was made by Allison Gragg with a second by Betsy Wells to approve the consent agenda for the June 27, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

A. Energy Programs—Kerry Rice:

Director Swanson introduced Kerry Rice who presented the Energy Program update for DSS. Kerry started off with the Crisis Intervention Program that assists individuals and

families who are experiencing a heating or colling related crisis that are unable to find assistance from any other source. The CIP program received \$550,185.36 in funding. It served 921 families with a maximum benefit of \$600. The Low-Income Energy Program (LIEAP) provides a one-time annual energy provider payment to help eligible families pay their heating expense. The LIEAP program received \$973,227.44 in funding including \$391,975 from the ARPA and 3 supplements. It served 2,059 families and benefits were given in increments of \$300, \$400, and \$500. The low-income household water assistance program (LIHWAP) provides funds to assist low-income households with water and wastewater bills. It received \$142,296.00 in funding authorized by ARPA and the funding is good thru September 2023. This program served 210 families through May 31 and currently has \$102,093.66 funds left. Based on eligibility families can qualify for unlimited assistance or a maximum of \$600. The Energy Outreach Plan is to reach and serve those eligible for and in need of assistance. We utilize media through press releases and social media posts. We utilize community-based resources by contacting local agencies and community-based organizations and encourage their participation in getting the message out to the community. This plan outlines organizational actions utilized to best serve the community & best practices.

B. Advisory Board Report & Consent:

The advisory board report is a report that the County has requested all boards to complete. This is an organization effort for all boards in Cleveland County. This report will provide information about our mission, goals, objectives, accomplishments and any barriers or challenges that exist as well. Our executive leadership team began working on this report and now is presenting to the board for assistance providing details needed in the report. Upon advisory board input the report will be updated and a final draft will be sent to all board members before the next advisory board meeting.

C. Board Member Recognition:

Director Swanson recognized our outgoing Chair, Mary Accor, and outgoing board member Denise Wright. Mary has served on and off as a member and Chair for the last 20 years. She will continue to serve as a board member after she steps down as Chairperson and will gift her with a glass paperweight in recognition of her service. Denise has completed her term as a DSS advisory board member, and we greatly appreciate her service and will gift her with a clock in recognition of her service. Thank you to both Mary and Denise for your hard work and dedication to the DSS Advisory Board.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

A. Child Protection/Fatality Team:

Chair Accor stated that Lendra Phillips was unable to be present at this board meeting and therefore we will not have a report at this meeting.

B. NCACBSS

Chair Accor did present Betsy Wells with the NCACBSS report. Betsy presented all board members and staff with the NCACBSS Newsletter. The newsletter discussed board member training success, DHHS updates, SSI conference and the proposed Governor's Budget overview. The last NCACBSS board meeting was held on Friday, June 24 where planning for the upcoming SSI conference was discussed. The SSI conference is scheduled for August 3, 4 and 5 in Hickory, NC. The event will have lots of informational workshops for everyone to attend, door prizes, luncheon, and awards. Director Swanson is scheduled to present at the conference.

C. Commissioners

Chair Accor stated that Deb Hardin was not in attendance to provide a report from the Commissioners.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Chair Accor asked if there was any other business to discuss.

**ADJOURN: 5:23 PM**

There being no further business, Chair Accor called for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion: Betsy Wells made the motion, with a second by Allison Gragg that the Cleveland County Advisory Board meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.**

The next DSS Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for July 25, 2022, at 4:00 PM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

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Andrea Power, Clerk to Advisory Board  
Cleveland County Department of Social Services