

The Cleveland County DSS Advisory Board met on Monday, September 26, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

Board members present: Chair Allison Gragg, Mary Accor, Lendra Phillips, Deb Hardin, Danny Blanton, Jiselle Bock

DSS staff present: Katie Swanson, Destiny Davidson, Andrea Power, Annette Pendergraft, Misti Merritt, Tracy Tolbert, Sherry Vess, Ali Wilson, Annette Pendergraft, Jasmine Scott

County Attorney present: Chuck Wilson

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

Chair Gragg called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2022, DSS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING:

Chair Gragg presented the proposed consent agenda for the September 26, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting for consideration.

Motion: A motion was made by Mary Accor with a second by Jiselle Bock to approve the proposed agenda for the September 26, 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 August 29, 2022, meeting to Advisory Board members prior to the September 26, 2022, meeting.

B. Personnel Report

The Clerk to the Board emailed the personnel report to Advisory Board members prior to the September 26, 2022, meeting.

Director Swanson updated the board on current vacancies within the agency. We currently have (7) IMC II positions, (2) IMC III, a PA IV, (3) CSA II, a SW III Adult, (2) SWIAT, (6) SWIII, (1) SWSIII and a Program Manager vacancy.

C. Executive Summary

The Clerk to the Board emailed the Executive Summary to Advisory Board members prior to the September 26, 2022, meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION:

Chair Accor presented the consent agenda for the September 26, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting for adoption.

Motion: A motion was made by Deb Hardin with a second by Lendra Phillips to approve the consent agenda for the September 26, 2022, DSS Advisory Board meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Introduction of Jasmine Scott

Director Swanson introduced our newest CW Program Manager, Jasmine Scott. Jasmine was previously employed in Union County and worked for DSS and Public Health during her tenure. She has 8 years of child welfare experience. Prior to working in child welfare, she gained experience in adult mental health and provided direct care to children with physical and developmental disabilities. We are very fortunate to have Jasmine as a part of our team.

B. Budget—Sherry Vess

Director Swanson introduced Sherry Vess with the FY 2023 Budget. The DSS internal budget process starts with zero-based budgeting. Management team is involved in providing recommendations with the budget, at they can help identify cost saving opportunities in the areas of contracted services. The DSS budget is submitted to County finance in March of each year, then formally presented and reviewed in April and finalized in May. Sherry highlighted the break down of our revenue. Most of our revenue comes from federal sources. Very little of our revenue comes from the State, and the remainder comes from County funds. Expenses for 2023 that have been budgeted for is \$22,397,767.00. Budget monitoring and reporting is important and requires engagement of the management team for monitoring. Quarterly variance reporting is done by the management team as well.

C. Inclusion and Belonging—Katie Swanson

Director Swanson spoke about Inclusion and Belonging at DSS. DSS started a director's Practice Academy with Supervisors last year and opened that up to workers this year. The goal is to create a supportive, inclusive, family-like environment. We have had fun "Get to Know Each Other" Events to help us all get to know each other. We also held County and DSS Leadership meetings in March where several ideas were born for creating morale boosters. The morale boosters will be supervisor led for their staff. We will also be holding innovation meetings that will include staff in bringing more ideas to create an environment that is supportive and inclusive.

BOARD REPORTS:

A. Child Protection/Fatality Team:

Chair Gragg introduced Lendra Phillips with the Child Protection/Fatality Team. Lendra reported that they discussed 4 cases and closed all but one case. They decided to keep that case open pending receiving more information from DSS.

B. NCACBSS

Chair Gragg introduced Mary Accor with the NCACBSS update. Mary reported that the last meeting they had recently was a very productive meeting. Sharnese has agreed to have a data base made with all the board chairs and put through to the director's association. This will aid with staying up to date with what is going on in the state and nationally. The overall evaluation of SSI was done, and the consensus was that they wanted to be more actively involved instead of just sitting inside of four walls. Mary expressed how grateful she is that Director Swanson takes an active part in NCACBSS.

C. Commissioners

Chair Gragg did present Commissioner Hardin with Commissioner updates. Deb talked about that the Commissioners are trying to launch their first Citizens Academy to help citizens understand what goes on in county government. Opening ceremonies at the Fair after 2 years off from Covid will take place on Thursday. The Commissioners did have a work session recently that was very productive as well.

MISCELLANEOUS:

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

ADJOURN: 5:11 PM

There being no further business, Chair Gragg called for adjournment of the meeting.

The next DSS Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for October 31, 2022, at 4:00 PM.