



## **LINCOLN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD MEETING MINUTES March 26, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Lincoln County Social Services Board was held on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Social Services Building. Members present were Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson; Jill Eaddy, Daphne Ingram, and Cathy Davis. Others in attendance were Matthew Hillman, Director; Kelley Miles, Deputy Director; Ruth Lockman, Business Manager; Mendie Kelly, Children Services Program Manager; Jason Hughes, Placement Services Program Manager; Tiffany Barnette, Medicaid Program Manager; Roni Duckworth, Economic Services Program Manager; Jennifer Sigmon, Adult Services Program Manager; and, Denise Dula, Economic Services Support Supervisor/Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board.

**Call to Order**-Chrystal Hoyle called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**Invocation**-Daphne Ingram gave invocation.

**Adoption of the Agenda**-Adoption of the Agenda was approved by motion from Cathy Davis, second by Daphne Ingram, with all members in favor.

**Public Comment**-No public comments were made.

**Minutes**-Minutes from the February 27, 2024 meeting were approved by motion from Daphne Ingram, second by Jill Eaddy, with all members in favor.

**Old Business**-Matthew Hillman gave an update on Medicaid Expansion. Mr. Hillman stated he was happy to announce Lincoln County met the timeliness standard last month for Medicaid. The volume of applications for Medicaid Expansion is dialing down. An uptick in Medicaid applications is expected to come in waves. Earlier in the month, Mr. Hillman sent Board members a "Dear County Director" letter regarding a blanket waiver for Medicaid report card failures for the month of February 2024. Due to the increased application volume from expansion and numerous system errors during the month of February 2024, there was a significant impact on local DSS agencies to process Medicaid applications timely. A NCFAST Report Card for Medicaid dated February 1, 2024 was presented to Board members reflecting Lincoln County and other surrounding counties applications volume, total approved and denied applications, overdue, and percentage totals. Mr. Hillman stated he would like to commend Tiffany Barnette and her staff on a job well done ensuring our community access to healthcare. Board members echoed those sentiments.

**New Business**-Matthew Hillman expressed March is Social Work Appreciation Month. The Social Work Month 2024 Proclamation theme is “Empowering Social Workers”. Throughout the month, social workers have been recognized for their continuous hard work and dedication. Events have included Least of These Carolinas providing social workers with lunch from Mabry’s Que House food truck; luncheon provided by managers for social work staff; Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) online event; and, Speak Up for Children will be providing an upcoming function for social workers. Mr. Hillman noted at the conclusion of the Board meeting today, we will adjourn and move to the training room for the reading of the Social Work 2024 Proclamation and refreshments. Mr. Hillman presented the written Proclamation to Board members for their signature.

Mendie Kelly presented to the Board the Community Child Protection/Fatality Annual Report for 2023. Ms. Kelly explained the North Carolina General Assembly created local teams in each county to review and recommend system improvements leading to reduced incident of child abuse, neglect, and fatality. The Lincoln County Community Child Protection Team (CCPT) meets monthly to review active cases of neglect and abuse from the Department of Social Services. The Child Fatality Prevention Team (CFPT) reviews child fatality cases on a quarterly basis in February, May, August, and November of each year. CFPT cases cannot be reviewed until at least one year after date of death. The Community Child Protection/Fatality Annual Report was presented to the Board of Commissioners on February 19, 2024 by Sherry Reinhardt, Chairperson for the Lincoln County CCPT/CFPT. This presentation helped inform the Commissioners of service gaps in the community and identify ways to improve the delivery of services to protect our most valuable resources, our children and families. Board members thanked Ms. Kelly and all DSS staff for ensuring the safety of children in our community.

Next, Jason Hughes stated a very formative event was held this month for DSS foster parents empowering them with confidence in handling situations involving substance use among children in their care. This event was hosted by Integrated Care of Greater Hickory, Lincoln County Health Department, and the Lincoln County Drug Prevention and Recovery Coalition. Topics included personal stories shared by adoptive parents; Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome; commonly used/misused substances and symptoms; co-occurring disorders and treatment planning; and, untreated complex trauma. Macedonia Baptist Church of Lincolnton provided a delicious meal and childcare for foster parents in attendance.

Matthew Hillman informed Board members of the Children and Families Specialty Plan (CFSP). The CFSP is a statewide NC Medicaid Managed Care plan that will support Medicaid-enrolled children, youth, and families served by the child welfare system in receiving seamless, integrated, and coordinated health care. As a statewide entity, the CFSP, regardless of a member’s geographic location, will provide members with access to physical and behavioral health, pharmacy services, long-term services and supports, as well as, services to address unmet health-related resource needs. Mr. Hillman will keep the Board updated on the progress of the CFSP.

Matthew Hillman noted Lincoln County has a County Wellness Program for their employees. A newsletter is sent out monthly with activities and tips for living a healthier lifestyle. Recently, the

wellness committee coordinated ten minute chair massages at five different departments. There has been positive feedback from staff.

**Budget Reports**-Ruth Lockman stated things are going as planned with our 2023-2024 budget. Ms. Lockman expanded detail of line items 18, 21, 22, and 32 on the FY 2024 YTD Expenditure Report provided to Board members. Board members thanked Ms. Lockman for doing an awesome job. Ms. Lockman stated if Board members had questions regarding the budget, to please contact her and she would be glad to explain.

**Statistical Reports**- Matthew Hillman stated the statistical data continues to look good. Staff members continue to strive to do their very best in all areas of DSS.

**Other**-No information was presented.

**Closed Session**-No closed session needed.

**Date of Next Meeting**-April 30, 2024

Motion to adjourn by Cathy Davis, second by Daphne Ingram, with all members in favor.

This meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

At this time, Board members moved to the training room for Social Work Appreciation Month-Reading of Social Work 2024 Proclamation and refreshments.

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Date Minutes Approved

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Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson

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Matthew Hillman, Director

Respectfully Submitted:

Denise S. Dula  
Economic Services Support Supervisor;  
Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board of Lincoln County DSS  
Cc: file copy