



**LINCOLN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Lincoln County Social Services Board was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Social Services Building. Members present were Dr. Sherry Hoyle, Vice Chairperson; Jill Eaddy; Daphne Ingram; and Alex Patton. Others in attendance were Matthew Hillman, Director; Kelley Miles, Deputy Director; Ruth Lockman, Business Manager; Mendie Kelly, Children Services Program Manager; Tiffany Barnette, Medicaid Program Manager; Roni Duckworth, Economic Services Program Manager; and, Denise Dula, Economic Services Support Supervisor/Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board. Also in attendance was Sarah Dodd, CPS In Home Services Social Worker, to give an overview of the Agency Connection Committee (ACC).

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

Invocation-Alex Patton gave the invocation.

Public Comment-No public comments were made.

Adoption of the Agenda-Adoption of the Agenda was approved by motion from Jill Eaddy, second by Alex Patton, with all members in favor.

Minutes-Minutes from February 25, 2025 meeting was approved by motion from Daphne Ingram, second by Jill Eaddy, with all members in favor.

Old Business-Matthew Hillman gave an update on the Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit (REDA)-Round Two. Last month, Lincoln County finished REDA-Round Two. The audit lasted ten months with 200 cases reviewed. Lincoln County DSS did not pass the audit. Therefore, an Accuracy Improvement Plan (AIP) should be put in place. However, Lincoln County DSS has learned they may not be placed on an AIP because diligent work was done, and improvement was shown throughout the audit process. Once more official information is learned regarding the AIP, the Board will be updated.

Matthew Hillman stated the FY 2026-2028 Work First Plan was approved by Lincoln County Board of Commissioners on February 3, 2025 maintaining electing county status. After the plan was submitted to the state, there was feedback from the Department of Health and Human Services on changes needed with no impact on the budget or substance of the FY 2026-2028 Work First Plan. The updated FY 2026-2028 Work First Plan was placed on the consent agenda

and approved by the Board of Commissioners during their meeting on March 10, 2025. All updated information has been submitted to the state.

Matthew Hillman expressed that a space need assessment was conducted over a two-day period with an architectural firm which included staff involvement analyzing current and future needs of the agency. There will be additional meetings in the future to continue discussion on construction plans.

Matthew Hillman stated the budget meeting with the County Manager for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 had gone well. From our proposed budget, only three percent of our requests were cut with half being the I-Reception system. The one position request was approved. Mr. Hillman said he left the meeting feeling positive regarding Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget for DSS.

New Business-Kelly Miles noted March is Social Work Appreciation Month. The Social Work Month 2025 Proclamation theme is “Compassion plus Action”. 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; breakfast provided by the Child Advocacy Center; adult service workers attended a luncheon at CaroMont in Gastonia, N. C.; and, breakfast supplied by Adult and Children Services Managers, Director, and Deputy Director. Ms. Miles 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 2025 Proclamation and refreshments. The written Proclamation was presented to Board members for their signature.

Matthew Hillman presented to the Board the Community Child Protection/Fatality Annual Report for 2024. Mr. Hillman stated local teams in each county review and recommend system improvements to help reduce incidents 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 Team (CFPT) reviews child fatality cases on a quarterly basis in February, May, August, and November of each year. The Community Child Protection/Fatality Annual Report for 2024 was presented on February 17, 2025 by Sherry Reinhardt, Chairperson for the Lincoln County CCPT/CCFT. This presentation helped explain to the Commissioners the issues and service gaps in the community and identify means to improve resources to protect our children and families. Board Members thanked Mr. Hillman and all DSS staff for their continued work in ensuring the safety of children.

Matthew Hillman discussed energy programs and allocations used to help those in need of heating and cooling assistance. The Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) is a federally funded program that assists individuals and families who are experiencing a heating or cooling related crisis. Lincoln County received \$182,020.00 in Crisis funding for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, with \$182,010.34 spent, leaving a balance of \$9.66. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that provides a one-time vendor payment to help eligible households with their heating bills. Lincoln County received \$320,651.00 in LIEAP funds for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, with \$320,400.00 utilized leaving a balance of \$251.00. In addition, the Disaster Energy Assistance Program (DEAP) was implemented to help low-income households in the Hurricane Helene 25 disaster counties. Lincoln County’s DEAP allocation was

\$349,670.00 with two separate reallocations to other counties totaling \$300,000.00 leaving a current balance of \$31,543.19. The DEAP will be reassessed at the end of March 2025.

Matthew Hillman stated Lincoln County has a County Wellness Program for their employees. Chair massages are offered once a month for a ten minute session costing \$12.00. There is a planned kick-ball tournament. In addition, the Employee Health Clinic is looking to expand their services.

Next, Matthew Hillman introduced Sarah Dodd, CPS In Home Services Social Worker, to give an overview of the Agency Connection Committee (ACC). Ms. Dodd explained the ACC is open to the entire agency. There are fundraisers held to raise money that goes right back into the agency for snacks for staff, the agency Christmas breakfast, etc. Throughout the year, there have been bake sales, t-shirts to purchase, candy grams, super bowl soup event, carnival, etc. The ACC helps to build morale among staff. The Board members thanked Ms. Dodd for her presentation.

Budget Reports-Ruth Lockman stated since 3rd Quarter Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Projections will be presented next month, she did not have a lot to add other than if Board members had questions regarding the expenditure/revenue reports provided for this month, to please let her know.

Statistical Reports-Matthew Hillman stated Lincoln County DSS continues to have great statistical data. This is a true representation of the endless hard work of DSS staff.

Other-No information presented.

Closed Session-Dr. Sherry Hoyle expressed a need for Closed Session. Dr. Hoyle stated the Board would enter Closed Session *pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(1)* To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State of the United States or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. *G. S. 7B-302 (a)(1)* Alex Patton made the motion to enter Closed Session, second by Jill Eaddy, with all members in favor. The Board entered the Closed Session at 2:10 p.m.

Return to Regular Session-Daphne Ingram made the motion to return to Regular Session, second by Jill Eaddy, with all members in favor. The Board returned to the Regular Session at 2:30 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting-Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Alex Patton, second by Daphne Ingram, with all members in favor.

This meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

At this time, Board members moved to the training room for Social Work Appreciation Month-Reading of Social Work 2025 Proclamation and refreshments.

Date Minutes Approved

Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson

Matthew Hillman, Director

Respectfully Submitted:

Denise S. Dula

Business Operations Supervisor;

Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board of Lincoln County DSS

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