



**LINCOLN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 27, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Lincoln County Social Services Board was changed and held on Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Social Services Building. The members present were Alex Patton, Chairperson; Dr. Sherry Hoyle (via Zoom); Jill Eaddy; and Mike Devine. 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, Business Operations Supervisor/Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board. Also in attendance was Cindy Beaver, Child Support Supervisor, to give an overview for Child Support Awareness Month.

Call to Order-Alex Patton called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Invocation-Mike Devine gave the invocation.

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

Public Comment-No public comments were made.

Minutes-Minutes from July 29, 2025 meeting was approved by motion from Jill Eaddy, second by Dr. Sherry Hoyle, with all members in favor.

Old Business-Matthew Hillman stated an informal update had been given to DSS regarding the Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit (REDA)-Round Two. As a result of enough improvements being made during the audit, DSS does not believe they will be placed on an Accuracy Improvement Plan (AIP). Mr. Hillman noted a final update should be given during the Board meeting in September 2025.

Matthew Hillman expressed the Partnership and Technology of North Carolina (PATH NC) went live on August 11, 2025. PATH NC is a children services support network that streamlines data collection from multiple agencies and organizations throughout the full life of each case to better support work. Events held on opening day included breakfast, lunch, and snacks for staff and state trainers and numerous preparation talks supporting each individual workers' needs. So far, Lincoln County DSS has experienced a positive shift to PATH NC. However, statewide there

have been a lot of help desk tickets regarding the new system along with issues regarding timeframes, policy interpretation, and intervention.

Matthew Hillman noted the Social Services Institute was held Wednesday, August 6, 2025-Friday, August 8, 2025. DSS had approximately sixteen-eighteen staff members attending along with several Board members. Staff enjoyed overall good training sessions and allowed them to network with others in the state doing the same type of job.

Matthew Hillman gave a legislative update and noted the following:

- North Carolina lawmakers passed a “mini-budget” also known as House Bill 125 in July 2025 to fund essential state services while a full budget is negotiated.
- Updated projections for the State Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Medicaid rebase have been shared. Currently, there is a 319 million dollar shortfall for the Medicaid rebase. The rebase has fallen short in recent years, but the state compensated the underfunding by using federal COVID (and other) funding. Those funds and options are no longer available. Therefore, the underfunding of the Medicaid rebase by the General Assembly will require cuts to Medicaid. Mr. Hillman expressed starting at the end of August 2025, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHSS) will begin to implement rate reductions of three percent across all providers, as well as rate reductions of eight to ten percent for selected providers, and elimination of certain services altogether with an effective date of October 1, 2025. The fear is reduced rates, and the elimination of services could drive providers out of the Medicaid program which threatens access to care for those who need it most.
- NC S400 is a bill that establishes a framework for creating Local Adult Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs). An MDT in North Carolina is a group of professionals from different agencies who collaborate to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older and disabled adults. Mr. Hillman stated Lincoln County DSS has already established an Adult MDT and plans to present it to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.
- The federal mega-bill could leave North Carolina with a big bill for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The federal government used to pay all the benefit costs. This will change and states will be required to pick up a share of the expenses based on their payment error rates. The federal government will continue to pay the entire cost for states with error rates below six percent. Beginning next year, the federal government will no longer split SNAP administrative costs with the states 50-50 but will pay twenty-five percent.
- Effective October 1, 2025, law mandates criminal history record checks for all county and city government applicants seeking jobs that involve working with children. The cost per background check is currently \$38.00. Mr. Hillman stated DSS is working with Human Resources to ensure all staff of DSS undergoes a background check to meet the plan requirements.

New Business-Matthew Hillman noted August is Child Support Awareness Month. Roni Duckworth, Economic Services Program Manager, introduced Cindy Beaver, Child Support Supervisor. Ms. Beaver presented a power point presentation detailing the child support unit and duties associated with the job. The mission of child support is to ensure both parents support their children to the best of their ability. Services provided by the child support unit include locating noncustodial parents, establishing paternity, establishing child support orders, enforcing and modifying orders, and collecting and processing payments. State Fiscal Year 2025 collections for Lincoln County were \$4,394,198.39 with workers having 1,958 cases. Ms. Beaver noted the child support unit consists of one supervisor, one lead worker, two establishment workers, two intergovernmental workers, three enforcement workers, and one administrative staff.

Board members thanked the child support unit of Lincoln County DSS for their hard work and efforts to ensure the children of Lincoln County are taken care of by their parents.

Matthew Hillman stated the More Than a Job NC program had recently gone through a Management Evaluation (ME). Roni Duckworth, Economic Services Program Manager, explained More Than a Job NC is federally funded as part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E & T) program which receives funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Participation in More Than a Job NC is voluntary for eligible Food and Nutrition (FNS) recipients. The services offered include employability assessments, employee plans, job search assistance, interview preparation, and support services including transportation and childcare. The ME was done in early August 2025 and included fifteen cases open in Lincoln County. The ME covered twenty-four different areas. Lincoln County DSS passed the ME. Ms. Duckworth expressed she was over-all pleased with the progress of the recently developed program, and she looks forward to the growth opportunities it will offer the citizens of Lincoln County.

Matthew Hillman explained Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Office Replacement Plan would begin in December 2025. Last year, sixteen offices were fully painted and supplied with new office furniture. It is planned to paint and furnish sixteen more offices this year. Offices were prioritized to complete the worst ones first then move to the second group and so forth. Staff have had positive reactions to the renovations.

Budget Reports-Ruth Lockman presented Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Final Projections. Board members were given Fiscal Year End 2024-2025 Expense-Revenue Reports in their monthly Board packet. During the Board meeting, Ms. Lockman presented a comparison chart for End of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 versus Fiscal Year 2024-2025. The data was very self-explanatory noting the increases in both expenses and revenues for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. She expressed there are two additional deposits not included in the totals for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. Ms. Lockman explained specific line items having the most impact due to under/overspending or realization of revenue. She stated overall, she is pleased with the final projections for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, and if any Board member had questions, to please give her a call.

Statistical Reports-Matthew Hillman stated Lincoln County DSS statistical data continues to look good. He shared a colleague who had approached him this year at the Social Services Institute and commended Lincoln County DSS on their statistical numbers.

Other-Matthew Hillman stated Dr. Devdutta Sangvai, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, would be visiting Lincoln County DSS on Tuesday, September 16, 2025. It is a great honor for Lincoln County DSS to be chosen. Mr. Hillman noted a planning committee has been put together to oversee the logistics of the meeting. All Board members are invited to attend. As more information is learned, Board members will be notified.

Matthew Hillman explained each fiscal year, Board members will be asked to sign a Compensation/Travel Form indicating if they would like to receive or chose to opt out. Board members present signed the new forms for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Mr. Hillman noted if Board members changed their minds at anytime during the year and would like to receive compensation and travel, they are free to do so.

Closed Session-No closed session needed.

Date of Next Meeting-Due to a conflict, Alex Patton stated a need to change the next scheduled Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 30, 2025. All Board members agreed the Social Services Board Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 1:30 p.m..

Motion to adjourn by Jill Eaddy, second by Mike Devine, with all members in favor.

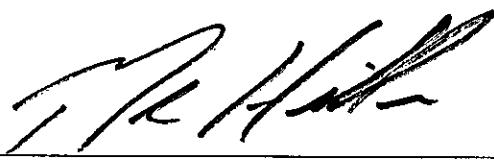
This meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Date Minutes Approved-September 23, 2025



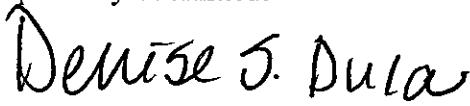
Alex Patton

Alex Patton, Chairperson



Matthew Hillman, Director

Respectfully Submitted:



Denise S. Dula

Denise S. Dula, Designated Clerk
Social Services Board

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