

**Department of Family and Children Services, Clayton County
Board of Directors Meeting
held
Wednesday, January 23, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Tia Simon	-	Board Chairman
Quen Howard	-	Vice Chairman
Charlton Bivins	-	Board Member
Dr. Barbara Pulliam	-	Board Member
Dr. Chantara Carter	-	Board Member

Staff Members Present:

Dr. Nia Cantey	-	County Director
Deneka Manning	-	Deputy Director
A'Kera Clay	-	Administrative Assistant
Nancy Ward	-	
Patrice Davis	-	Recording Secretary

1. Call to order and Invocation

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 10:09 a.m. She welcomed everyone. Invocation was offered by Dr. Pulliam. Dr. Cantey introduced her Administrative Assistant, Ms. A'Kera Clay.

2. Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by the Chairman and seconded by Dr. Carter.

4. Board Responsibilities (Executive Session)

a. Report by Dr. Cantey

Dr. Cantey reported on the different documents she issued to the Board Members regarding their responsibilities. She went through each hand-out individually. She also explained what function they played regarding being on the Board. Dr. Cantey mentioned the discrepancy with the Board pertaining to supporting staff receiving supplements. She also spoke about advocacy regarding the Board, the Charter, and the examples of expenditures. The handbook also explains the different responsibilities regarding fiscal.

Dr. Cantey explained the hand-out regarding child welfare fund. She said It outlines spending and speaks to the different categories, eg. Clothing. She said the State pays for this, but there are times when the State can't pay. Dr. Cantey explained that sometimes there are unapproved placements.

Dr. Cantey then went on to talk about the Foster Care Fiscal Policy. She said this policy is what is followed to pay the foster parents. Some things may not be covered in their per diem. If the foster parents do certain things for the children eg getting them a haircut or issuing medication, this policy allows them to be reimbursed. She said this policy can be revised at any time. She then gave an example -- If a Gwinnett County foster parent has a Clayton County child, the monies spent will be reimbursed at Gwinnett's per diem and not Clayton's. Mr. Bivins asked if there was a set rate. Dr. Cantey said they have a set per diem. She explained to him that every county does not receive county dollars. Ms. Howard asked Dr. Cantey if a child is with a foster parent if the need of the child is paid for. Dr. Cantey said things that are considered "normal parenting" is reimbursed. Ms. Howard asked if foster parents are aware of monies they are entitled to. Dr. Cantey said yes. Foster parents have meetings with the County monthly. She said they get a per diem and some needs of the child is paid for.

Dr. Pulliam then asked how a child from Clayton would get to Gwinnett. Dr. Cantey explained that sometimes the reason for this move is school needs, behavior issues, disruption of placement or siblings may cause them to reside in Gwinnett. She said there probably isn't a home in Clayton that matches the needs of the child. Dr. Cantey said the children are tried to be kept in a 30 mile radius so that they may be familiar with family and friends in the neighborhood. If there is no placement within that radius DFCS would go outside the area.

Dr. Pulliam said in because of educational needs of some of our children, they cannot be educated in their district. Mr. Bivins said the discrepancies are coming from the standpoint of the Grant. Dr. Cantey said the Grant mainly has to do with the services of the building. She said it is not specific what type of services they are talking about, but she makes them aware of the services we offer; Medicaid, Child Care, Wick, TANF, Foster Care, Family Preservation.

Mr. Bivins asked about what is explained as a supplement and bonus. Dr. Cantey said a bonus is not a supplement. She said a supplement is normally given just like in the other counties. Mr. Bivins agreed that it was retention money, but Dr. Cantey explained to Mr. Bivins that we are the only county who do not receive retention. She continued to explain the difference with other counties that they give their staff supplements especially on a month to month basis. Dr. Cantey explained to him that bonus would be given based on performance. The word bonus is never used; we always say supplement.

Dr. Cantey went on to another document regarding the concerns about Fiscal. The Fiscal documents were then showed. She then explained monies to the Board based on this document. Dr. Cantey explained that \$93,000 was awarded but it did not show up until July 1. She reminded the Board about the phone call we had with

Lori from Accounting regarding the \$97,000 and the error in tracking. She also reminded the Board that we were short \$23,900 from last year and that this amount would come out of the \$97,000. She then spoke about the depletion in the money. She explained that an emergency meeting was called to purchase projectors and televisions. 5 televisions were purchased. Dr. Cantey said we thought we had more money hence the reason to purchase the items. The money did not come around until July. We thought we had \$30,000 in excess then realized that was not the case. We later realized we had a fund balance of \$97,000. She continued to report that Lori told us we were short \$20,900 for the PRNs. (This was FY18). After the Board approved the purchase, 5 televisions were purchased. One is currently in the Board Room. The training rooms were also given TVs but they were too small. They were returned and converted into gift cards (\$1,500). Dr. Cantey said we had to wait to also have the building brought up to code to accommodate having the TVs hung. The wiring had to be done and also getting WIFI. We had to get State approval done for us to be considered a Training Agency to have internet in the building. This took 6 months. She continued to explain that DFCS Clayton County would be considered a training area for the State. Most people normally go to Macon. Nancy Ward then passed a sheet to all Board Members to explain what was purchased.

Ms. Howard asked Dr. Cantey if she didn't know that WIFI wasn't in the building. She said yes but the problem was only with the size of the TVs. Dr. Pulliam then asked about the gift cards. Dr. Cantey said that money is being used to purchase pampers and supplies. She said this money is originally county dollars converted into a gift card from Walmart.

Dr. Cantey explained to the Board that the TVs we need requires additional approval. The regional accounting office and the state has to approve having televisions done through a purchase order. She said if someone is to be contracted to hang the televisions, they would have to have their paperwork in order. This is a 2 – 3 month process. To hang the television will cost \$9,990. Dr. Cantey explained that this money will come out of the \$20,000 that was originally approved. This was approved in May to do the upgrades; 4 TVs in all. One is already in the Board Room. The State already bought the Projector. Dr. Pulliam asked Dr. Cantey if she has a technology person to advise her on these things. Dr. Cantey said there are all sorts of different projectors. She said that's why the State paid for it as a supply. She said it's a \$70,000 dollar expense but it was reduced. She then said she is anticipating the TVs to be hung by the 1st of February. Dr. Cantey then spoke about the furniture which has been cleared. She continued to state that to save cost she had to use people from certain facilities; and we had to wait on the process. She said although this was last year's approval she was just now able to do it. It is taking this long because it is going through a State process.

Dr. Carter then asked if the furniture was for the Board and Training Room. Dr. Cantey said just the Board Room and the sitting area in administration.

Dr. Cantey then went on to talk about the fund balance. This started out at \$97,812.00. There was a \$23,900 PRN cost outstanding. In July we were approved

to hire PRNs because we were not staffing. That total was \$73,912.00 in PRN cost. This is inclusive of the \$23,900. Dr. Cantey explained that \$50,000 was approved for PRNs and Happy Faces in July. The Chairman also tried to go over some of things approved.

Mr. Bivins then asked if we show negatives. Dr. Cantey said we have received to date, \$34,875.00. Nancy Ward will be doing tracking of dollars coming out of the County. Dr. Cantey said we average spending about \$5,000 a month. Anything over that sends off a radar. Ms. Ward sent around tracking documents for the month so the Board Members can see the expenditure.

Dr. Cantey explained to Mr. Bivins about the fund balance. She said although the money is delayed, it doesn't stop our operation. Mr. Bivins said he would like to see a budget based on what we have. Dr. Cantey said as of today, the Block Grant has \$57,410.54. She says we only get a monthly amount. Since they are late, we got \$11,000 this month; which is more than normal. Dr. Cantey says the county sends a document stating the amount issued and that amount would be issued monthly.

Ms. Howard spoke about the Block Grant payment received. Dr. Cantey said when she get these monies she has to pay it back. Dr. Pulliam asked Dr. Cantey if she does negative spending. Ms. Ward then issued another document to the Board Members showing them what money is spent on. Dr. Cantey said it's a matter of waiting on Regional Accounting to balance the books. She said she will be meeting with them in March to prevent mistakes.

The Chairman said the reason she was asking about the fund balance was because the last meeting Dr. Cantey said it was depleted. The Chairman said although the monies were approved so long ago she wanted an update. She feels Dr. Cantey might be trying to micro manage. The Board wants an update because months have gone by and they have not received any feedback. Dr. Cantey agreed and said the Board will receive updates monthly. December and January will average about \$7,000 per month in spending.

Dr. Carter said this information is helpful and when we meet in February we can talk about monies spent. Dr. Cantey then asked if we could meet quarterly. Dr. Carter continued to say that when we meet in February, she could talk about the monies started with for the month and then show what it was spent on. Dr. Cantey said that might be difficult because when accounting does their balance it will look different from our balance. Dr. Carter said it would be good if the tracking could be sent to her in an email because she wants to know if the money is being spent wisely. She said based on what the money is spent on, she probably can get some help with certain things, example the getting of uniforms for the children. Dr. Cantey said she will do an expense report and send out. The invoice report will change into a tracker. This will be done monthly.

In regards to meeting monthly, the Chairman said we need to meet monthly to know the status of what is going on.

Dr. Pulliam intervened by stating this meeting has been very informative as it relates to expenditures. She said she heard something different today. She said these things could have been covered in a Finance Workshop. She said we don't need to meet over 2 hours to talk about budget.

Ms. Manning said the Board is in a position to ask for whatever is needed. Dr. Pulliam said she is asking for a workshop on Budgeting Finance. It would be less than an hour. She said she has worked with Grants. She then said she understood the process now and wondered why it took her so long to hear this. Dr. Pulliam said another session like this one will probably be needed soon. She said the meeting should not have gone on longer than 90 minutes.

The Chairman said we got a better understanding today because of how the expenditure was explained. She said the meetings normally last 30 minutes, one hour the most. She also states the meetings should continue monthly for them to be kept abreast of the happenings. The Board is the ears and the eyes of the community; we not only speak about the budget. Meetings will continue monthly.

Dr. Cantey then stated that nothing is being requested from the Board in terms of money today.

Ms. Howard spoke about the Walmart gift cards and the balance that is left. Dr. Cantey said she had mentioned what the gift card balance was. Ms. Howard spoke about being respectful to each other and that the Board is here to ask questions about what is going on. She mentioned that if she was ever being disrespectful, she would apologize. Dr. Cantey said the Chairman seem to have been understanding the things that are being spoken about. She then said she accepts full responsibility for not providing a status synopsis on fiscal. She also said some of the questions being asked by the Board members are things that have already been covered. She continued to state that when information is shared she would like to believe that it is being received. She ensured to state that anything the Board has asked for she has provided. Dr. Cantey said she welcomed the apology and the same on her end.

Dr. Carter then thanked Dr. Cantey for the information received. She said she will get the opportunity to go through and email Dr. Cantey for any additional questions needed.

Mr. Bivins said the meetings are lengthy because we are being educated. He said he is the least knowing person in the room. He said the presentation today was good and it makes a lot more sense now. He then continued to talk about advocacy. He said he would like to see a presentation done. Dr. Cantey told Mr. Bivins all he needs to do is to tell her what he wants to see. She will get it to him by the next Board Meeting. Dr. Cantey said each month she will provide a fiscal statement from Regional Accounting. She said Regional Accounting reflects \$68,000 being available, but we are showing that we have \$57,000. She said she will do the stats. The Chairman said she would want to know about the OFI side also. Dr. Cantey said she would email the expenses to the Board Members.

Dr. Carter asked about the tabling of the Strategic Plan. Dr. Cantey said there were no changes. Dr. Carter said she wants to make a motion to approve the Strategic Plan. The Chairman then asked if there was any discussion about it. She said it is due and needs to be approved. She asked if all were in favor of the Strategic Plan being approved. All were in favor of it being approved. It was noted that Dr. Pulliam was abstaining from the approval of the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Bivins said he spoke to Mr. John Brinson (Coordinator of the Grant) about the Grant. He said Mr. Brinson told him that the notifications won't start until February 1 and that he will start accepting Grants on March 1. Orientation would be mid-March. The closing date is not known yet. Dr. Carter asked if the Board will receive a draft prior to it being submitted. Dr. Cantey said they can see a copy. Mr. Bivins said he would like to be a part of the Grant writing application process. He said he has some information he would like to contribute that might be beneficiary.

(Executive Session is being exited at 11:28 a.m.)

5. Other Matters

a. Georgia Professional Conference

Dr. Pulliam asked the Board Members if they got the email about the Georgia Professional Conference. She said she plans to attend on February 6 or 7. She said registration will end on January 31st.

b. Appreciation to Dr. Cantey

i. Mr. Charles Bivins

Mr. Bivins spoke about the real reason why we meet here every month. He said it is for a common purpose. He suggested each Board member to say something good about the process. He told Dr. Cantey that the work she is doing he doesn't know how she does it; with the support that she gets from the State and the lack of staffing. He said he personally appreciates everything that she does. He said he will hold her accountable, but it is for the love of the children. He said he wants to let her know that he is with her in all that she is doing.

ii. Chairperson (Tia Simon)

The Chairperson said she appreciates everything that Dr. Cantey and her staff is doing. She said she now thinks everybody is on one accord to understanding the budget. She said it should not be her main focus to talk about the budget at every meeting, but to talk about the children and how they are to be served and protected. She also said she appreciated the Board members and their support.

iii. **Dr. Barbara Pulliam**

Dr. Pulliam said she thinks that when Dr. Cantey is asking for money she is never asking for enough. She doesn't think she is spending enough. She said sometimes it is probably how she (Dr. Pulliam) is interpreting how Dr. Cantey brings her point across. Dr. Pulliam said today was very beneficial and she will try to understand the presentation better. Dr. Cantey said she will try to do a better job at presenting the information. Dr. Pulliam said her job is to be an advocate and to be a support. She said she will do everything she can to do what she is supposed to do for the children in this County.

iv. **Quen Howard**

Ms. Howard spoke about the Estravanganza that occurred at Easter time and how appreciative she was of it. She told Dr. Cantey thanks for all she does and she is very appreciative. Ms. Howard said she knows she has a lot of questions and she will continue to ask. If she does not understand something she will need clarification and that will only come about by asking questions.

v. **Dr. Chantara Carter**

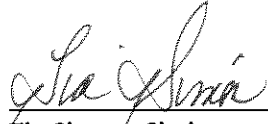
Dr. Carter said she is appreciative of what is being done. Even for the lack of funding that is received and the endless demands of the job. It was her desire to come aboard to help out. She appreciates that the Board is now on one accord along with the DFCS leadership. She said she cares deeply about what DFCS is doing. She said she is looking forward to doing bigger and better things in 2019.

6. Date of Next Board Meeting

The date of the next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 10 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

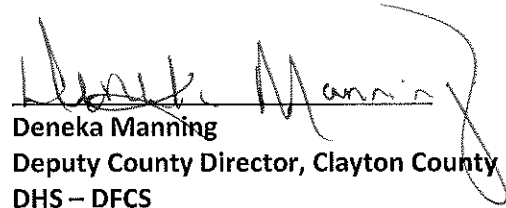
Respectfully yours,



Tia Simon, Chairperson
Clayton County, DFCS Board



Dr. Nia Cartey
County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS



Deneka Manning
Deputy County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS



Patrice Davis
Recording Secretary