

Department of Family and Children Services, Clayton County

Board of Directors Meeting

held

Wednesday, April 28th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via Teams

Board Members Present:

Quen Howard - Board Member
 Charlton Bivins - Vice Chairman
 Mr. Sidney Richardson - Board Member
 Dr. Barbara Pulliam - Board Member

Absent Board Members:

Tia Simon-Wade - Chair

Staff Members Present:

Deneka Manning - County Director
 April Booker - OFI Supervisor/Admin
 A’Kera Clay - Recording Secretary
 Nancy Ward - Program Coordinator

1. Call to order and Invocation

The meeting officially started at 10:31 a.m. No invocation was performed.

2. Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bivins placed a motion on the floor to approve minutes. The minutes were approved at 10:31 a.m. with a unanimous vote.

4. Program Reports

a. April Booker – OFI Report

Ms. Booker highlighted key changes for OFI. Clayton County SNAP had a 97% standard of promptness (SOP). For Family Medicaid, the SOP was 95%. For TANF, the SOP was 99.5%. The county is holding the standard.

For the month of March, there were 35,487 total active SNAP cases. There were 76,078 active clients. There were 3,033 applications processed. There was a monthly expense of \$15,700,560 for SNAP benefits.

For the month of March, there were 328 total active TANF cases. There were 644 active clients. There were 167 applications processed. There was a monthly expense of \$86,819.

For the month of March, there were 40,233 total active Medicaid cases. There were 83,664 active clients. There were 1,921 applications processed.

Ms. Booker then gave the state OFI updates. The temporary 15% increase continues. She explained the deposit date criteria. P-SNAP also continues. She explained the deposit date criteria.

There has been updates to the Gateway Customer Portal. All program areas accept application for benefits through the Georgia Gateway online portal, but the house that the system will allow customers to submit differ by program. Medical Assistance (MA) is available 24 hours. SNAP and TANF is available Monday-Friday, 5:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m., excluding holidays.

There has been updates to EBT Online Purchases. Publix will now be joining the Online Purchasing Program, allowing SNAP recipients to buy food online while also promoting social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, they are helping families with transportation and mobility barriers. There were already partnerships with Walmart, Amazon, Instacart.

Staff updates were discussed. There is a continuous recruitment for GA Pathways staff.

b. Deneka Manning – SS Report

Ms. Manning highlighted key changes. The number of CPS reports are still low compared to March 2020. In March 2021, there were 151 CPS reports assigned and 355 CPS reports assigned in March 2020. This is a trend that is being identified throughout the state of Georgia. There is an assumption of this decrease being due to virtual schools, which do not allow teachers the opportunity to fully assess abuse and or neglect. Clayton County Public Schools is anticipating a hybrid schedule. There could be an increase once schools begin face-to-face lectures again.

The number of children in foster care was 203 in March 2021 and 139 in March 2020. There were 9 adoption finalizations in March 2021 and 2 in March 2020. The 9 were adoptions that were pending due to the delays in superior court's operations, caused by COVID. There were 49 foster homes in March 2021 and 57 in March 2020. More recruitment efforts are being made as the state begins to allow workers to maneuver more throughout the community. The county wants to begin advertising, which was a suggestion from the state office's Resource Development Coordinator. The suggestion included creating a T-Shirt that would have the contact information for individuals who are interested in becoming foster parents. Ms. Manning also asked whether the board members would be interested in advertisement through T-Shirt. VC Bivins suggested having the designs duplicated on the front and back of the T-Shirt, as well as ensuring that the design was catchy.

(Approaching Executive Session at 10:32 a.m.)

5. Executive Session

a. Personnel Report

The state is hiring again. Two PRNs have been hired for 30-90 days (they started on Monday), to assist with caseloads, considering the turnover rate. The need for an additional PRN will be assessed at the end of the 90 days. Board continues to support PRN's being hired according to budget allocation. She will discuss if there is a need for an additional PRN, with the board. VC Bivins asked if the PRNs are experienced and or past employees. Ms. Manning stated that the two that were hired, are past DFCS employees, with experience. The personnel report was discussed.

b. Budget Clarification

The budget was discussed. Ms. Manning provided an update. Per accounting, the county no will be permitted to replenish the fund balance of any amounts that were used. The fund balance is like a savings. Therefore, the board and county leadership will use discretion when using the funding. Mr. Bivins asked if there was funding used to cover an expense that the state usually covers. Ms. Manning stated that she would go review these expenses to determine if any amounts were state funds.

County Leadership will request an extension since the county received the funds at the beginning of March 2021. Ms. Quen Howard stated that if the money is already allocated, then she believes that the county will be ok with approval.

(Executive Session ended at 10: 47 a.m.)

6. Other Matters

a. Past Involvements and Projects/Events

- a. Ms. Manning discussed the April Child Abuse Prevention Month recognition efforts made. Monday was Making a Difference Day (a day where people in the community helped to prevent child abuse), Wednesday was Winning Wednesday (staff shared success stories), Friday was Featured Friday (discussed policies that were relevant to preventing child abuse).
- b. Ms. Manning discussed the April 15th Agency Meeting. This happens quarterly.
- c. Ms. Manning discussed the April 22nd State of the County Address.

b. Future Involvements and Projects/Events

- a. Ms. Manning discussed the Virtual Meet & Greet on May 4th at 10 a.m. via Teams and the Curb-Side Lunch/Cook out on the 6th at 12:30pm. These events will take place in recognition of Employee Appreciation Week. The 6th is also National Day of Prayer. Minister Mormon from Tabernacle of Praise Church International will attend, to say a prayer for staff. All staff who are interested in this have been invited.
- b. There are 9 foster care children who are graduating in May. The county would like to prepare gifts and celebrate. The board and county brainstormed briefly. A’Kera will send out the graduates’ preferences in gifts.
- c. There were a series of surveys sent from the state office, the district, and county to gauge staff’s morale and ideas surrounding coming back into the building. A’Kera and other administrative staff will be participating in a state and county initiative, which will provide an on-site non-licensed counseling support/chaplain for staff. This goes beyond the State Employee Assistance Program (EAP). VC Bivins supported this effort but expressed some concern regarding confidentiality. More information will be provided later.
- d. The next newsletter is scheduled to be sent out in June.

7. Date of Next Board Meeting

The date of the next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 26th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.
via Microsoft Teams.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully yours,

Charlton Bivins _____

**Charlton Bivins, Vice Chair
Clayton County, DFCS Board**

Deneka Manning _____

**Deneka Manning
County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS**

Kimberly Scott _____

**Kimberly Scott
Interim Deputy County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS**

A’Kera Clay _____

**A’Kera Clay
Recording Secretary**