

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AND
THE DURHAM COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD
JOINT MEETING**

Durham, North Carolina

Monday, March 12, 2001

5:15 P. M.

Minutes

Place: Commissioners' Room, second floor, Durham County Government
Administrative Complex, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, NC

Present: Chairman MaryAnn E. Black, Vice-Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, and
Commissioners Joe W. Bowser, Philip R. Cousin Jr., and Becky M. Heron

Durham County Social Services Board—Chairman Haywood Holderness,
Vice-Chairman Joe W. Bowser, Katharine T. Bartlett, and Dr. Iris Carlton-
LaNey

Daniel C. Hudgins, Director of Social Services

Absent: Social Services Board member Cheryl Amana

Staff Present: County Manager Michael M. Ruffin, County Attorney Chuck Kitchen,
Deputy County Manager Carolyn P. Titus, and Clerk to the Board Garry
E. Umstead

Several Social Services staff members were present.

Presider: Chairman Black

Opening of Joint Session

Chairman Black called the joint session to order.

Chairman Black asked Rev. Holderness to introduce the Social Services Board members.

Chairman Holderness explained the purpose of the meeting and briefly discussed the agenda.

FY 2000-2001 Accomplishments

Dr. Carlton-LaNey presented DSS accomplishments for FY 2000-2001 using the program overview beginning with the mission statement. She used charts to explain various aspects of the Social Services program, Child Welfare program, Adult Services program (Fullerton Elderly Project), food stamp accuracy rate, Medicaid, North Carolina Health Choice, Child Support program, and the Work First program.

Recommendation on Electing County vs. Standard County Status for Work First

Dr. Carlton-LaNey presented the following information on Durham County being an Electing or Standard County:

DURHAM COUNTY WORK FIRST PLAN
ELECTING COUNTY VERSUS STANDARD COUNTY

Recommendation on Electing Status: Based on the budget estimates received on February 15 and a subsequent conference call with Representatives of the State Department of Health and Human Services, Dan Hudgins, Director, recommended to the Social Services Board that Durham remain a standard county. The Social Services Board voted unanimously at its meeting on February 28 to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that Durham withdraw its request to be an electing county.

Background: On September 25, 2000, Durham County's Board of Commissioners voted to recommend to the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that Durham County be given Electing status to implement its Work First Block Grant. At that time, it was agreed that a final recommendation would be made to the BOCC whether it is in the county's best interest to be an electing county or return to being a standard county once the budget estimates were received on February 15, 2001.

Impact of Change: Based on an initial review of Durham County's Work First plan for FY 2001-2003, minimal changes will be required to operate Durham's plan as a standard county. Specific changes are as follows: As an electing county, Durham would shorten the time limit individuals must wait before being eligible to reapply for services once they have exhausted their 24 months of eligibility if there is a disability. As a standard county, individuals must wait 36 months. As either a standard or electing county, an individual may apply to the local review board for an extension of benefits. As a standard county, families can receive a 12-month exemption from participation in employment services for a child under age one. Our proposal as an electing county would provide a 3-month exemption from participation for the birth of each child, but the total exemption would still only be 12 months. The basic difference involves how the 12-month exemption could be used. As a standard county, the participant could use all of it with one child and as an electing county it could only be used in increments of three months.

As a standard county, we will request that the state provide a waiver for both of the items identified above so that they can be implemented as a standard county.

Facilities

Chairman Holderness presented to the County Commissioners slides of Social Services Department facilities that need renovations to provide better working conditions for employees and the clients that use the facilities.

Challenges

Ms. Katharine Bartlett presented to the Commissioners the challenges of the Social Services Department. The challenges confronting the department follow:

CHALLENGES

- Assuring that families leaving Work First have sufficient resources to meet their basic needs such as child day care and health insurance
- Providing comprehensive range of services for the growing elderly population that provides the least restrictive placement consistent with their needs and assuring that individuals in institutional settings receive appropriate care
- Providing access to a full range of residential placement resources for children that are affordable and community based
- Partnering with neighborhoods to assist at-risk families and to provide neighborhood based services for children in the Child Welfare system
- Recruiting and retaining the quality of staff necessary to provide good customer service and meet the complex needs of Durham's most vulnerable citizens
- Responding to the needs of the growing Latino/Hispanic population
- Having facilities that assure that both consumers and staff have a safe and efficient environment in which to work
- Having the technology that will promote timely and efficient services

Actions

No official actions or votes were taken at this meeting.

Adjournment

Chairman Black adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Garry E. Umstead, CMC
Clerk to the Board