Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services

Virginia Department of Social Services
5600 Cox Road
Glen Allen, VA 23060

April 16, 2025

Attending: Don Carey (Chair), DeRonda Short (Vice Chair), William Boone, Zulma Santos, Sheryl Garland, Matthew Melvin, Maria Benjamin, and Les Ford

Absent: Coke Stewart, Sarah Owen, April Morefield

Also in Attendance: James Williams (Commissioner) and Michelle L'Hommedieu (Assistant Attorney General)

Meeting called to order at 10:04am – Mr. Carey

Acknowledgement and Approval of Remote Participation by Board Members
The Chair announced that Buckey Boone requested to participate remotely. A physical quorum was present. After multiple attempts, due to technical difficulties, Mr. Boone was not able to participate remotely.

Comments from the Commissioner – Commissioner Williams provided an overview of current agency priorities. Ms. Garland inquired about the career pathways pilot, regarding training for team members and participant numbers. Commissioner Williams responded that members would receive the presentation provided to local departments of social services.

COMMENT PERIOD
April Payne – Ms. Payne with the Virginia Healthcare Association Virginia Center for Assisted Living shared concerns about the involuntary discharge regulations.

Lauren Freedman – Ms. Freedman with Experience Senior Living shared concerns about the involuntary discharge regulations.

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives – Rebecca Morgan, President
Ms. Morgan acknowledged April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. She shared there are activities planned and they will educate the community about how they can help prevent children from abuse. She also shared the League is planning the spring conference being held in Alexandria VA this year. The focus is what is happening at the federal level, such as funding cuts and policy changes. The League is also working on kinship initiatives.

Bertha Judge, Chair Personnel Committee and Director, Prince George DSS – Ms. Judge shared there are five charges and she spoke about three of them. First, the HR manual is being revised and updated.

The manual has not been updated since 2011. Second, they are working on internships. Third, she shared they are working on occupational titles and review of salary ranges. Ms. Judge also shared they are working on rebranding and marketing tools.

Child Care Initiatives to Assist Working Parents – Jenna Conway gave a presentation on Child Care Initiatives to Assist Working Parents.

ACTION ITEMS

1. **February 2025 Meeting Minutes**
   On Motion Duly Made**,** (DeRonda Short), second (Matthew Melvin), motion approved with all in favor.

2. **ALF Liability Insurance Committee Recommendations**
   On Motion Duly Made**,** (Les Ford), second (Matthew Melvin), motion approved with all in favor.

3. **22VAC40-191, Background Checks for Child Welfare Agencies – Fast Track Regulation**
   The agency is still working with the Office of Attorney General on this regulation; therefore, it is not ready for action.

Survey of Assisted Living Facilities-Survey Results – Tara Ragland provided the survey results of assisted living facilities and compliance with liability insurance requirements.

22VAC40-72, Standards for Licensed Assisted Living Facilities. Minimum Liability Insurance- Draft Proposed Regulation for Discussion – Tara Ragland provided information on the draft proposed regulation. It was agreed the agency will brief members at the June 2025 meeting on the process and steps involved when facilities are not compliant with regulations.

Overview of Regulatory Reduction in Division of Licensing Programs – Tara Ragland provided an overview of licensing regulatory reduction actions planned for this year.

Kinship Update – Carl Ayers provided an update on kinship. Ms. Garland asked for metrics regarding removal from foster care and placement changes. Mr. Ayers will provide follow up information.

Update from Bylaws Committee – Mr. Carey provided the Board an update from the Bylaws Committee. He and Ms. Short were unable to meet and reach a consensus after the February 2025 meeting but agreed to make another attempt before the June meeting. If consensus is not reached, two versions will be provided to the Board for consideration in June. One version will address the ability of the chair to vote and increasing the number of allowable virtual meetings from two to three. A third possible update in that version will address the Board's role in advocacy, for which Office of Attorney General guidance is pending. The other version will include changes recommended by Ms. Short, in addition to addressing the ability of the chair to vote and the number of allowable virtual meetings. Should the committee reach a consensus, one recommendation will be presented to the Board in June.

Appoint Nominating Committee for New Officers – Mr. Carey appointed Maria Benjamin and Les Ford as the nominating committee for new officers.

Board Member Comments – There were no Board member comments.

Meeting adjourned at 1:23pm