



**LINCOLN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 13, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Lincoln County Social Services Board was changed and held on Friday, December 13, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Social Services Building. Members present were Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson; Jill Eaddy; and Daphne Ingram. 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, Economic Services Support Supervisor/Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board.

Call to Order-Chrystal Hoyle called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Hoyle explained one Board member would be arriving soon and another Board member is available by telephone, if needed. Due to a quorum not being present, all items requiring a vote would be moved to later in the meeting.

Invocation-Chrystal Hoyle gave invocation.

Public Comment-No public comments were made.

Old Business-No old business to discuss.

New Business-Matthew Hillman gave an overview of the Work First Program and a Work First Electing County Plan Timeline.

Work First is a cash assistance program designed to aid families caring for children who meet a certain degree of kinship to the child. Participants in the Work First program must complete all items on their Mutual Responsibility Agreement to receive a Work First benefit each month. The North Carolina General Assembly went even further with welfare reform and took the next steps allowing counties to compete for "Electing County" status. With electing status, it offers a limited number of counties the chance to have greater control over local welfare policies and available funding. Lincoln County has been an electing county since July 2007. Our current Work First Plan was approved by the Board of Commissioners on December 13, 2021 for Federal Fiscal Years 2023-2025.

On November 27, 2024, the Department received notice all counties must once again participate in the next Work First planning process for Federal Fiscal Years 2026-2028. Current electing counties must notify the state by January 10, 2025, if they wish to remain an electing county. There are numerous benefits to being an electing county. Electing counties have greater flexibility in developing eligibility policies to better help serve families in Lincoln County. In the past, the state has incrementally adapted the state plan to include policies recommended by counties vying for electing status. Another reason for seeking electing county status for Federal Fiscal Years 2026-2028 would be to realize funding flexibility with the Work First County Block Grant. As an electing county, Lincoln County DSS can make use of approximately \$500,000-\$600,000 of Work First cash assistance in other areas within the agency.

Mr. Hillman stated a request to continue as an electing county and appointment of planning committee members would be presented to the Board of County Commissioners at their meeting on Monday, December 16, 2024. The electing county designation form and plan is due to the state by February 10, 2025.

Board members thanked Mr. Hillman for his thorough explanation of the Work First program.

Next, Matthew Hillman announced Jason Hughes and Jennifer Sigmon would be giving an update on Angel Tree 2024. Mr. Hughes and Ms. Sigmon presented a power point presentation. Mr. Hughes noted angel tree referrals started in early September 2024 with gifts arriving the beginning of December 2024. There were 155 children served in Children Services and Economic Services. Mr. Hughes gave recognition to the many generous sponsors and DSS staff members who helped make Angel Tree 2024 a success. Jennifer Sigmon expressed 137 adults were assisted through Angel Tree 2024. Ms. Sigmon acknowledged the kindness of the numerous sponsors and DSS employees who assisted in making Angel Tree 2024 a great achievement.

Board members thanked Mr. Hughes and Ms. Sigmon and expressed to thank all staff for their unwavering hard work and dedication to ensure the angel tree event is successful each year.

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

Minutes-Minutes from the November 26, 2024 meeting was approved by motion from Jill Eaddy, second by Daphne Ingram, with all members in favor.

New Business Continued-Matthew Hillman noted a copy of the yearly Board agenda for 2025 was included in the Board packets. The agenda lists items specific to each month and is a great pattern of our Board minutes. Also, the agenda enables staff to know when they are doing a presentation to the Board. Board members stated the yearly Board Agenda looked great and would be utilized by everyone.

At this time, the proposed yearly Board Agenda for 2025 was approved by motion from Daphne Ingram, second by Jill Eaddy, with all members in favor.

Budget Reports-Ruth Lockman acknowledged there was nothing new to report. Revenues for the month have not been listed in Munis by county finance. DSS is strategically where we need to be currently. Ms. Lockman stated if Board members had any questions, to please let her know.

Statistical Reports-Matthew Hillman expressed our data continues to look good. Mr. Hillman acknowledged the hard work of all staff to ensure excellence in providing the most efficient services to the citizens of Lincoln County.

Other-Matthew Hillman stated he had received an email from Board member Cathy Davis. Ms. Davis resigned from the Social Services Board effective December 12, 2024. Board Commissioner Jamie Lineberger was copied in the email. The Board of Commissioners will be appointing a member to fill the open spot on the Social Services Board.

Matthew Hillman revealed he had been notified by county management as being chosen as one of two outstanding employees of the year for Lincoln County. Mr. Hillman was very humble and stated this award was the true testament of the hard work of all DSS staff. During the Board of Commissioners Meeting on Monday, December 16, 2024, the employees of the year will be recognized.

Board members and others present congratulated Mr. Hillman on his recognition and the hard work he does daily.

Closed Session-No Closed Session needed.

Date of Next Meeting-January 28, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Jill Eaddy, second by Daphne Ingram, with all members in favor.

This meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Date Minutes Approved

Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson

Matthew Hillman, Director

Respectfully Submitted:

Denise S. Dula

Economic Services Support Supervisor;

Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board of Lincoln County DSS Cc: file copy