



**LINCOLN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 29, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Lincoln County Social Services Board was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Social Services Building. The members present were Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson; Dr. Sherry Hoyle, Vice Chairperson (via cell phone); Jill Eaddy; Daphne Ingram (via conference call); and Alex Patton. Others in attendance were Matthew Hillman, Director; Kelley Miles, Deputy Director; Ruth Lockman, Business Manager; Jason Hughes, Placement Services Program Manager; Tiffany Barnette, Medicaid Program Manager; Roni Duckworth, Economic Services Program Manager; and, Denise Dula, Business Operations Supervisor/Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board.

Call to Order-Chrystal Hoyle called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Invocation-Alex Patton gave the invocation.

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

Public Comment-No public comments were made.

Minutes-Minutes from February 25, 2025 meeting was approved by motion from Alex Patton, second by Jill Eaddy, with all members in favor.

Old Business-Matthew Hillman gave an update on the Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit (REDA)-Round Two. We still do not know if Lincoln County DSS will be placed on an Accuracy Improvement Plan (AIP) for failing to meet the requirements of REDA-Round Two. In June 2025, we will learn if there are any paybacks from the audit findings. And, by July 2025, we should be able to confirm if we have been placed on an AIP. During the first round of REDA, Lincoln County DSS was placed on an AIP, achieved success, and was removed from the plan after three months. As more information is obtained, the Board will be notified.

Matthew Hillman followed up on the children services support network that has been launched. Partnership and Technology of North Carolina (PATH NC) will streamline data collection from multiple agencies and organizations throughout the full life of each case to better support work. PATH NC onboarding begins in July 2025. Counties are hopeful the data tools will equip local and state child welfare leaders for improved oversight and accountability and achieve compliance with federal mandates.

New Business-Kelley Miles expressed April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. Ms. Miles noted the handouts provided to Board members regarding Child Abuse Awareness Month were done by Program Manager Mendie Kelly, who was not in attendance due to a death in her family. Ms. Miles stated emails regarding Child Protective Services (CPS) were sent out to all staff members during the month of April. Also, information was shared on the Lincoln County Government Website and Facebook page. The color blue signifies child abuse awareness. Staff were encouraged to wear blue on Friday, April 4, 2025 on National Wear Blue Day. Blue pinwheels were placed at the entrance of DSS. The blue pinwheel is reflective of the bright future all children deserve and the belief of getting it correct early is more beneficial than trying to fix it later. Ms. Miles gave examples of ways to recognize child abuse, who should report child abuse, and a synopsis of what CPS does to ensure the safety of children. Lincoln County CPS data for 2024 included a total of 1,407 reports received through CPS intake; 552 reports accepted for investigation/assessment; and, there were 1,497 children reported to be abused and/or neglected.

Board members voiced their gratitude to all Child Welfare staff for the work they do to provide safety for the children of Lincoln County.

Matthew Hillman discussed legislative House Bills before the General Assembly of North Carolina and Senate Bills that will impact services/programs within DSS. Mr. Hillman gave a summary of House Bill (H.B.) 612 which is to make various changes to laws affecting juveniles and associated services; county social services departments and boards; and, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Also, H.B. 162 is an act providing that counties and cities shall require criminal history record checks for applicants for employment if the position being filled requires the applicant to work with children in any capacity. H.B. 391 appropriates funds to enable additional adult protective services workers to investigate elder abuse reports. Senate Bill (S.B.) 5912 is a bill to be entitled an act to appropriate funds for matching grants for counties and private employers to assist with capacity building in childcare. Mr. Hillman stated he would send Board members an email with the various bills attached for their reference.

Matthew Hillman noted the SUN Bucks Program would occur again this year. In the summer of 2024, North Carolina launched its newest food assistance program which provided grocery-buying benefits to qualifying families with school-aged children during the summer months. During the summer of 2025, qualifying families will receive a one-time payment of \$120.00 per eligible child. Households with an active FNS case will get SUN Bucks on their existing EBT card. All other households with different kinds of benefits, such as Medicaid or TANF, will be mailed a SUN Bucks card.

Budget Reports-Ruth Lockman gave a detailed summary of 3rd Quarter Fiscal Year 2024-2025 projections. A breakdown of line items having the greatest affect due to underspending or overspending was explained with the impact acknowledged. In addition, Ms. Lockman noted all county departments are struggling with lap salaries and overbudgeting of expenses. Overall, Lincoln County DSS is in a good place with their current budget. Ms. Lockman said if any Board member has a question or concern regarding a budget line item, to please contact her and she will be glad to explain. The Board members thanked Ms. Lockman for her informative report of 3rd Quarter Fiscal Year 2024-2025 projections.

Statistical Reports-Matthew Hillman stated Lincoln County DSS continues to maintain great statistical data. Staff work hard to ensure goals are met on a timely and consistent basis.

Other-No information presented.

Closed Session-Chrystal Hoyle expressed a need for Closed Session. Ms. Hoyle stated the Board would enter Closed Session *pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11* (a)(1) To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State of the United States or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. *G. S. 7B-302 (a)(1)* Jill Eaddy made the motion to enter the Closed Session, second by Alex Patton, with all members in favor. The Board entered the Closed Session at 2:10 p.m.

Return to Regular Session-Jill Eaddy made the motion to return to Regular Session, second by Alex Patton, with all members in favor. The Board returned to the Regular Session at 2:33 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting-The next regular Board meeting date is scheduled for Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. However, due to scheduling conflicts, Board members agreed to change the meeting date and time. The Social Services Board Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Dr. Sherry Hoyle, second by Alex Patton, with all members in favor.

This meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

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Date Minutes Approved

Chrystal Hoyle, Chairperson

Matthew Hillman, Director

Respectfully Submitted:

Denise S. Dula
Business Operations Supervisor;
Designated Clerk to the Social Services Board of Lincoln County DSS
Cc: file copy