



## MEETING MINUTES

# July 21, 2026

6:30 P.M.

Development Services Bldg., Room 107 a/b

\*ABSENT FROM MEETING

\*\*ATTENDED MEETING VIRTUALLY

### Open Meeting

Chair Laurie Wilson opened the meeting at 6:31 P.M.

### Approval of Minutes-

The minutes from the June 16, 2026, meeting were reviewed and approved [CT, LHT; unanimous]. The minutes from April 21, 2026, meeting were not approved due to lacking quorum of April attendees for third consecutive month; will return in September.

### Public Comment

None

### Presentation

The Department of Social Services (DSS) Assistant Directors presented their Divisional Updates to the Board. Presenters were: Leslie Carrera, Human Resources (HR); Lucia Dentone, Customer Support and Services (CSS); Meron Gebremedhin, Public Assistance (PA); Jessica McCauley, Family Support Services (FSS); Lena Purifoy, Advocacy Prevention Protection (APP); Liz Roe, Finance; Tony Turnage, Homeless Service Division (HSD); Van Washington, Child Protective Services (CPS); and Phyllis Jennings-Holt presented for She'la White, Children's Services Act (CSA). Notable updates included:

- Phyllis Jennings-Holt informed the Board that, effective April 1, 2026, children in foster care ages 13 and older placed in Congregate Residential Facilities (CRFs) or Therapeutic Group Homes (TGHs) must be placed in facilities holding the required Human Trafficking Prevention Designation for those placements to remain eligible for CSA and Title IV-E funding.
- Van Washington let the Board know that CPS, along with other DSS divisions, is exploring a pilot program using Beam Technology, an AI tool that transcribes casework meetings and converts them into structured case notes, intended to reduce the time caseworkers spend on documentation.
- Tony Turnage reported that the Homeless Services Division experienced substantial growth in call volume in FY26, with total calls handled increasing 27% (from 19,673 to 24,980) and active calls increasing 41.5% (from 13,131 to 18,576).
- Meron Gebremedhin informed the Board of a significant SNAP policy change effective October 2025, shifting from accepting client statements to requiring physical verification of shelter expenses, which has added considerable administrative workload despite an overall decline in active SNAP households.
- Lena Purifoy shared that as of July 1, 2026, cases can only be tracked in OASIS (the Department's case management system) if there is a signed service application. Any outreach work conducted with families prior to this cannot be considered as a case.

**Action Items**

None

**Chairman's Time**

Chair Laurie Wilson led a review of the DSS Advisory Board (DSS AB) draft attendance policy, the adoption of which will amend the Charter. Points of discussion included:

- Pausing stipend payments to members after three or more unexcused absences.
- The Board's role, and that of the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS), in coordinating the reappointment of members no longer able to fulfill Board obligations and attendance requirements.

The Clerk of the Board was asked to contact county staff to determine whether a county policy currently exists to pause stipends for non-attending BOCS Sanctioned Board members, and if not, what authority the Board has to cease stipend payments. The Clerk was also asked to research the Board's options regarding the reappointment process. The Clerk will provide feedback at the September meeting.

Chair Laurie Wilson provided an update regarding the DSS Housing Board. The Chair contacted the current representative and confirmed their desire for continued participation.

**Director's Time**

- A notice by the County Attorney's office reminded Boards of the Virginia Code requirement of adopting a policy for remote participation annually. The Board decided to include adoption of this policy as part of its annual Charter review in February.
- The Director asked to defer discussion of SB 699, a bill dealing with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and dictates actions public bodies can or cannot take during public meetings based upon the public body's posted meeting agenda, until she has the opportunity to confer with the County Attorney on the matter.

**Board Members' Time**

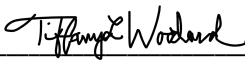
Clarice Torian shared that she met with her Supervisor and had a productive conversation on a variety of topics.

**Executive Session**

None

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** made to adjourn the meeting [LHT; CT, unanimous]. Chair Laurie Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:41 P.M.

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
  
**Clerk to Board**