

**BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES  
MEETING MINUTES**

**May 15, 2013  
1:00 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Tiena Fletcher, Chair  
Frank Auman, Vice Chair  
Monica Walters, Secretary  
Scott Johnson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Lisa Alexander  
Randy Smith  
Sandra Smith  
Jack Williams

Chairperson Tiena Fletcher called the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Board meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. on May 15, 2013.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Since there wasn't a quorum, the Board will vote on approval of the March 20, 2013 minutes at the next meeting. The Board will also vote on the Proposed Rule for Final Adoption—Credit Reports for Foster Children Ages 16 and Older.

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Clyde L. Reese, III thanked staff for their presentations to the Board.

The legislative session went well for DHS. There is an increased positive focus on the Division of Aging. The elderly population in our state and nation is growing, and as a result, we see increased abuse, neglect and exploitation of our elderly. The Commissioner publicly thanked the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and Director Vernon Keenan, the Prosecuting Attorneys Council, and the General Assembly itself for working with DHS on HB 78. This will provide increased protection for our elderly who are subjected to abuse. This goes hand in hand with the Alzheimer's Taskforce since much of the abuse is on elderly individuals who are in certain stages of dementia or Alzheimer's. We are pleased to have our Aging Division Director, Dr. James Bulot, lead that effort to develop a state plan for Georgia. Georgia does not have an Alzheimer's state plan now, so the focus of this taskforce will be to create one. HB 78 is going to give law enforcement, along with District Attorneys, increased ability to successfully prosecute elder abuse. After the signing of this bill, the statutes will be located in a concise place in the Georgia Code so that law enforcement can easily identify and to

make it easier to charge alleged perpetrators. So in the years to come there will be an increased focus on aging services and on how we protect that population.

Commissioner Reese said the Governor and OPB really helped DHS with the budget. Cuts were made but overall they were managed in such a way that it didn't affect child welfare and our eligibility workers. There was recognition that this is an important area and we need to help it as much as possible. In the future, we'd like to increase our number of adult protective services workers in Aging – we don't have enough around the State, particularly with the increase in the caseloads. Also in our child protective services area, we want to have more child protective services case workers in the field to help protect children and families. So from a legislative and budget standpoint, DHS did well.

The Commissioner will have someone make a presentation at the July meeting on the TANF legislation and our EBT conversion and our move from one EBT card to an EBT card and a branded debit card for child support and TANF benefits. We've taken steps within our office of the Inspector General to proactively address this with not only vendors throughout the State in these type of venues, but also our TANF recipients as to what is an acceptable venue to use their benefits. We have administrative rules put in place so there are certain things we can do in that regard. With regard to larger system changes to address what legislators would like us to do; we are going to have to work with Xerox, the new vendor, to accomplish this. This will be a major focus of ours this summer and in the fall prior to the next General Assembly.

Commissioner Reese said IES is a very important project -- one of the three most important projects going on in the agency primarily because it not only affects DHS, but it affects numerous state agencies (the Department of Community Health, and the Department of Public Health).

It was a difficult decision to cancel the procurement and not move forward with the vendor that we chose to enter into contact negotiations with. Professional discussions and negotiations were held, but we decided to bring this in-house and do it ourselves. The timeline is very short, but our staff, under Venkat's leadership, is working with DCH to accomplish this. The ultimate outcome will be good for the State, particularly for this agency if we are to take advantage of the 90/10 funding, and by the end of 2015 replace SUCCESS with a new state of the art web based system.

We made a threshold decision to maintain an integrated eligibility system and continue to have determinations made in the DFCS offices around the State for Medicaid, TANF, food stamps and the childcare subsidy. Public Health is working on a separate interface to bring WIC into the system. The Board will be given updates.

Earlier this month Chairman Fletcher and Commissioner Reese toured Houston County DFCS, Ms. Fletcher's home county. They did a walk through to meet with staff and employees to see what the working conditions were. Also to get to know staff better and to thank them for the work they do. Commissioner Reese would also like to tour with all the other Board members in their home DFCS county offices.

Commissioner Reese recognized Rosa Waymon, Director of Human Resources, who will be retiring the end of this month. He said it's good to be able to retire when you are still in your right mind and in good health so you can actually enjoy that time. He thanked Rosa on behalf of the Department and the Board for her tenure and service. He appreciated her efforts to work with him on changes in the last 2 ½ years and went on record to wish her a very successful retirement.

Ms. Waymon thanked Commissioner Reese for his comments and said it was her pleasure to have been of service to him and the agency. She was glad to have had the opportunity to touch people's lives in a way that you can see the immediate results. She expressed her pleasure in knowing and working with the Board members over the years.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chairperson Fletcher congratulated Rosa on her retirement and thanked her for her service to the Board and DHS.

She stated that she enjoyed her walk through at the Houston County DFCS office and the child support office with Commissioner Reese. She commended and thanked the Commissioner for doing this around the State.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

### **THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board of Human Services is scheduled for Wednesday, July 17, 2013 at Two Peachtree Street, N.W., Suite 29.250, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

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**Monica Walters, Secretary**

**APPROVED:**

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**Tiena Fletcher, Chairperson**