

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES  
HELD  
April 18, 2012**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Frank Auman, Vice Chair  
Monica Walters, Secretary  
Scott Johnson  
Randy Smith

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Lisa Alexander  
Tiena Fletcher, Chair  
Ann White  
Sandra Smith  
Jack Williams

Mr. Frank Auman, Vice Chair, welcomed all and called the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Board meeting to order at 2:20 p.m., April 18, 2012.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There being four Board members present, no action was taken on the March 21, 2012 meeting minutes.

## **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Clyde L. Reese III stated that the last two agenda items (two reports from the legal section) would be reported on at the May meeting.

The Commissioner spoke on the following:

An agency-head meeting with the Governor was held this morning wherein the Governor talked about his strategic plan for the State of Georgia. He spoke of a leaner, more responsive state government. He would like to replenish the state's reserves so the resources that would be available to us will be targeted in areas where they are most needed. He asked that we pose two questions as we work on our strategic plan. The first question is "does state government need to be providing this service or doing this work?" If the answer is no then we will not move forward in that particular initiative. Second, "can state government do it effectively?" If the answer is no, then we will not move forward. So we will work on our strategic plan, our goals and objectives with that in mind. All agencies are to submit their strategic plan to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget by June 15th and will be incorporated into the overall State Strategic Plan. Then, as we move forward, agencies will be required to provide two annual performance reports. Our first performance report on how we implement our goals and objectives will be due December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year, and our second will be due June 30, 2013. We will be tracked and our performance will be measured with regard to what our goals are.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Agency legislation passed and the Governor will probably sign it soon. We've been working since the initial proposal was outlined to prepare for the transition. There is no executive director and no board yet, so our transition team and staff, in addition to their daily duties, have been working very hard to prepare for the transition. The goal is to present to the new leadership an agency that can stand on its own and that can provide those services to their clients with minimal or no disruption in services. We've been looking further into the details and our staff will begin site visits to Warm Springs, the Social Security Disability Adjudication section in Stone Mountain, and to the Georgia Enterprises for the Blind facilities in Bainbridge and Griffin to determine what they do so we can provide the support that's needed. This will be by far the largest attached agency in state government. They have almost 2,000 employees around the state. The infrastructure, the administrative day to day support, particularly in the first year, will need our help, so

we want to be ready to provide that support and will continue toward that goal on a weekly basis.

Commissioner Reese spoke of the child deaths that were discussed last month and the proactive measures being considered to address the issue. The goal was to work with the media to help get the word out about dangers to children and how communities as a whole, parents and families in particular, could help us prevent deaths. One category of deaths that we continue to see result from co-sleeping accidents -- either children sleeping in a crib incorrectly with articles around them, or sleeping in beds, sofas or with older siblings or even adults, where the children are suffocated as a result. Our communications staff has worked very hard with the media outlets to ask them to help get the word out. The First Lady's Children's Cabinet and the Governor's Office of Children and Families are going to work with us on a campaign to target co-sleeping accidents and deaths. Also this week, Fox 5 News and the on-line news service of Georgia Health News will do a story on co-sleeping dangers to help us get the word out. This is the kind of effort we want to maintain -- start out with co-sleeping then talk about water safety regarding pools, ponds and lakes, particularly during the summer months. We will also talk about car seat safety and gun safety -- parents and adults keeping guns away from children. This is good news and we are pleased to report that we were able to get the media outlets to agree to help get the word out and will continue to stress that.

Commissioner Reese reported that with the exception of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services transition as an attached agency, the bill that probably has the greatest affect on us will be the drug testing for TANF applicants. The Governor signed that bill earlier this week and we're determining how this will be implemented. The bill calls for the Department to propose administrative rules to support any testing program. Similar programs have been challenged around the country on legal grounds. Those activities are being monitored and we anticipate providing the Board with more information next month.

The multi-year lease Senate Bill 37 legislation passed. This constitutional amendment would allow the state to enter into multi-year leases. This has an effect on the Department because we have over 300 leases and Vocational Rehabilitation has many leases around the state also. So this constitutional amendment will be required to go on the ballot in November to be voted on.

And last, the Department will be kicking off an expanded communications plan regarding the distribution dates for EBT SNAP benefits. The retailers, grocery store owners and vendors around the state, have talked to us about expanding the distribution dates over the period of the month. This would help them with their inventory and staffing control on a monthly basis. We listened to those concerns and wanted to make sure this was done in the proper way. We will expand the distribution dates during the month for EBT SNAP benefits. We will have an extensive public campaign to make sure our clients are aware of the changes and how they will be implemented. The retailers, grocery store owners and associations have pledged to

help us get the word out to our clients. We want to do it in a way that does not negatively impact the recipients of the benefits. When it's actually in place, we feel that it will be better for everyone concerned. So probably beginning next week, we'll start getting out the word across the state in as many different ways as possible to prepare people for that change. You will be kept posted of the progress.

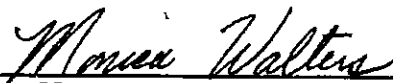
This concluded the Commissioner's report.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There being no further business, Vice Chair, Frank Auman, adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

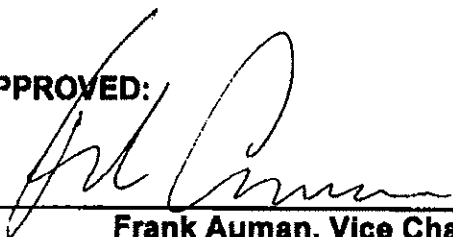
### THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Human Services will be Wednesday, May 16, 2012, Two Peachtree Street, N.W., Suite 29.250, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Monica Walters, Secretary

APPROVED:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Auman, Vice Chair