**King and Queen Department of Social Services**

**King and Queen CH, VA 23085**

**Social Services Advisory Board Minutes**

**August 27, 2024**

**Present**

Vivian Seay, County Administrator

Angie Alley, Chair

Bette Albert, Vice Chair

Alda Norris, Member

Sandra Burrell, Member

Kimberly Sadler, Member

Betty A. Dougherty, Director

Linda Cooke, Assistant Director

Lisa Lose, Administrative Office Manager

Becca Pike, Family Service Specialist IV

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on August 27, 2024, by Angie Alley, Chair.

**Public Comment Period**

No public comment to be noted.

**Christmas Wishes Program**

Becca Pike presented the Christmas Wishes Program presentation.

**Consent Agenda**

The June 25, 2024, meeting minutes, statistical reports, and the Directors report were included in the consent agenda. Alda Norris made a motion to approve the consent agenda and Sandra Burrell seconded the motion. The consent agenda was approved.

**Director’s Report**

**Parental Child Safety Placement Program (PCSPP)**

The 2024 General Assembly adopted legislation creating the Parental Child Safety Placement Program effective July 1, 2024. The Parental Child Safety Placement Program establishes practices and timelines around the utilization of alternate living arrangements where children are residing in the care of relatives and fictive kin to prevent entry into foster care. This program is a trauma-informed approach to ensure decisions are family driven and protecting the rights of parents.

The PCSPP creates a structured pathway to prevent court involvement and unnecessary foster care placement when the local Department of Social Services (LDSS) conducts a Child Protective Services (CPS) family assessment or investigation. The PCSPP codifies a process for developing a Parental Child Safety Placement Agreement to be established voluntarily between the child’s parent(s), the relative or fictive kin caregiver(s), and the LDSS to provide services and supports to prevent a child’s entry into foster care when it has been determined that the child cannot remain safely in their current home.

Within five days, a decision must be made whether the child may return home or if the department will open an In-Home Services case (foster care prevention) while the child remains with the temporary caregiver. If an In-Home Services Case is opened, the department will work with the family for up to 90 days to alleviate or resolve the family issues that led to the assessment or investigation so the child may return home. The agreement may be extended an additional 90 days if further time is necessary. After the 90-day time frame (or after the additional 90 days as appropriate), the department must determine whether to return the child home or seek court intervention, which may result in temporary custody given to the caregiver or placement in foster care.

The relative maintenance support payments made to relatives or fictive kin are not funded through CSA so this program has the potential to reduce CSA funding going forward by reducing the number of children coming into foster care.

**Fatherhood Incentive Grant**

We applied for and was awarded a $12,500 grant with no local match to do activities and programs in our County with a focus on fatherhood. The programs will be intended to engage and support fathers in building and maintaining relationships with their children. Our Family Services Supervisor, Brittany Lawson plans to take the approach of forming a multidisciplinary workgroup of professionals to plan the first event. I will give you an update once we have designed and established the programs.

**Virginia Sun Bucks**

Virginia is working with the US Department of Agriculture to pilot a new program called Virginia SUN Bucks. Through SUN Bucks, some families will receive extra money to help with the cost of groceries that include fresh fruit, vegetable, whole grains, dairy and meat at grocery stores, farmers markets and other places that accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT benefits.

Each school-aged child that meets the program requirements will get a one-time payment of $120. Benefits will be issued either on the family’s SNAP EBT card or a pre-loaded Virginia Summer EBT card that looks just like a debit or credit card and can be used to purchase groceries.

The good news is many families automatically qualify for Virginia SUN Bucks and will not need to take steps to receive this new benefit.

**Cooling Assistance Program**

We are currently accepting applications for our Cooling Assistance Program. Cooling Assistance provides purchase or repair of cooling equipment and/or payment for electricity to operate cooling equipment. The application deadline to apply is August 15.

**Disaster SNAP Program**

All our employees recently received refresher training and are prepared to administer the Disaster SNAP program in the event that we experience a crisis/disaster in our County. Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) is a nutrition assistance program with temporary eligibility standards that serves disaster survivors. Typically, eligible households receive one month of benefits issued via an EBT card, which can be used to purchase food at most grocery stores; D-SNAP is similar, yet distinct from SNAP in the eligibility requirements.

The following pre-conditions must be met before the D-SNAP can be authorized:

* The President must proclaim a disaster for individual assistance in Virginia. After this decision, states and localities can request the D-SNAP.

* Commercial channels of food distribution (wholesale and retail food outlets) must have been both DISRUPTED and subsequently RESTORED such that they are now currently available.
* The regular program must be unable to handle the increased number of households needing food assistance expeditiously.
* Commercial channels of food distribution must be DISRUPTED under any of the following conditions, provided the condition was directly caused by the disaster:
1. Retail food outlets are closed.
2. Normal operating hours of food outlets are reduced to the extent that a household's opportunity to purchase food supplies is significantly reduced.

c. Power failure significantly restricts the operation of food outlets.

1. Household access to retail food outlets is limited because of disruption to transportation (such as damage to roads or bridges or disruption in otherwise availability of public transportation).
2. Unusually heavy demand for food exists such that a household’s opportunity to purchase food supplies is significantly reduced.

1. Delivery of food supplies to food outlets is significantly hampered to the

extent that a household’s opportunity to purchase food supplies is significantly reduced.

* Commercial channels of food distribution will be considered RESTORED when conditions or operations have been improved to the extent that households have reasonable access to food outlets with sufficient food supplies.

**Hunger Action Month**

Hunger Action Month is observed in September to raise awareness about food insecurity in the U.S. and take action to end hunger. When people are fed well, their minds and bodies are nourished, and individuals go from just living to thriving.  During the month of September, we will wear the color orange (the designated color for Hunger Action Month) one day each week. We will also be hosting a month-long food drive to fill our agency’s food pantry.

**2024 Christmas Wishes Program**

King and Queen Department of Social Services is currently seeking sponsors for our 2024 Christmas Wishes Program. Each year we provide Christmas gifts to children in need during the holiday season. Sponsors are asked to purchase gifts for any number of children they would like to sponsor and return them to King and Queen Social Services. The following are some guidelines for sponsors that we have in place to keep consistency in the program.

* We have a three-gift rule. Each child receives three gifts at $25 per gift, totaling $75.
* You may wrap the gifts, but you don’t have to wrap them.
* Whether wrapped or unwrapped, please display the child’s code legibly and prominently on each item to facilitate sorting at distribution time.
* Gifts are to be delivered to King and Queen Social Services on an assigned date.

To become a sponsor, please email brittany.lawson@dss.virginia.gov or call our office at 804-785-5977. We are very thankful for your time and support!

**Note: If you would like to make a monetary donation to the holiday program, checks can be made out to King and Queen Department of Social Services and mailed or dropped off to the following address:**

**King and Queen Department of Social Services**
**PO Box 7**

 **242 Allen’s Circle**
**King and Queen Courthouse, VA 23085**
**Attn: Brittany Lawson**

**Board Member Training Session**

Betty Dougherty presented the Board Member Training presentation.

**County Administrator Comments and Update**

The County Administrator, Vivian provided several key updates. She reported that the property acquired two weeks ago is designated for the new elementary school, which will be built behind the high school and will include a middle school wing. The long-term vision is to consolidate all schools into an educational campus. Additionally, she proposed the potential construction of a bus maintenance shop on the campus to ensure the proper upkeep of school transportation.

Vivian also distributed sign-up sheets for the King and Queen County notification system, explaining that it would allow residents to stay informed about updates and changes within the county. She shared that the telework building is ahead of scheduled and will feature a Sentara office offering a variety of services, including access to a nurse practitioner, for both county residents and others.

Furthermore, Vivian sought support for a proposed data center and announced a meeting on September 9th to discuss expanding bus services for local residents.

**Board Member Updates from Districts**

Alda Norris distributed a news clipping regarding two postal workers who encountered a distressed dog, leading them to discover a woman in need of assistance after a fall. Following this, a proposal was made for the county to collaborate with postal workers to serve as wellness check partners. A meeting is being planned to discuss this initiative, thought the date and location have yet to be determined.

Additionally, there are plans to speak with Vivian about the feral cat issue in King and Queen County. Kim provided a contact for assistance in addressing the matter, Gina Fetteroff.

Next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2024. The meeting was adjourned at 11:39.