

**Advisory Social Services Board (ASSB)**  
Wednesday, July 19, 2023, 7:00pm-8:30pm  
Pennino Building, Conference Room 505  
12011 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035

**MEETING NOTES**

**Attendees:**

**Laura Martinez**, Providence District, President  
**Raymond McGrath**, Mount Vernon District, Vice Chair  
**Julian De Phillips**, Mason District, Secretary  
**Noah Abraham**, At-Large – Chairman’s Office  
**Ben Zuhl**, Dranesville District  
**Andre Lee**, City of Fairfax  
**Karen Darley**, Braddock District  
**Alice Foltz**, Sully District

**Members Absent:**

**Joe Koszarek**, Hunter Mill District  
**Mary Wilcox**, City of Falls Church

**Positions Vacant:**

Springfield District  
Franconia District

**Staff Present**

Michael Becketts, DFS Director  
Melanie Fenwick, DFS Senior Policy Analyst  
Tara Turner, Director, Fairfax County Area Agency on Aging  
Claudia Vila, Disability Rights and Resources Manager

**The meeting was held in person with no members participating remotely.**

**Meeting Opening**

Chair Laura Martinez called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and performed the roll call.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the June 21, 2023, meeting were approved with no changes.

**New Member Orientation**

- Melanie Fenwick announced Alice Foltz’ resignation and Saud Hasan Shah’s resignation in absentia.

- New member orientation will be held on August 9 at 6pm. Ben, Julian, and Noah are new members who have not attended the orientation. Members who would like a refresher are also invited to attend.

### **Director's Announcements**

#### **New Board - Homelessness Continuum of Care**

- The Board of Supervisors (BOS) recently approved the charter for a new Continuum of Care (CoC) Board in partnership with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness. Director Becketts would like to know if someone from the ASSB is interested in serving. Noah Abraham agreed to serve on the board.

#### **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee**

- Alice Foltz is a member of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) and her seat will be vacant when she moves from the jurisdiction in August. Alice Foltz discussed the role of the committee and time commitment. Raymond McGrath will serve on the AHAC.
- Chair Martinez affirmed the representation on these two committees.

#### **SNAP Work Requirement Changes**

- At last month's meeting, there was a question regarding the impact of the SNAP work requirement changes. The work requirements changed to expand the age range for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDS). Out of over 28,000 households receiving SNAP benefits, there were 715 in the ABAWDS range of 18-49 years of age. It is estimated that 973 additional people in the ABAWDS range of 18-54 years of age range would be required to participate in work requirements but not clear if they are in another exempted category. Director Becketts is meeting with some other local directors to point to state data and possible reports that could outline this issue. The VDSS data expert left which has reduced the ability to leverage that data.

### **Family Resilience & Wellbeing – Adult and Aging Services**

Tara Turner, Director, Fairfax Area Agency on Aging and Claudia Vila, Manager, Disability Rights and Resources present information to the Board as follows:

- Established under the Older Americans Act of 1973, Area Agencies on Aging respond to the needs of Americans 60 and over. Focused on providing services that help older adults remain independent as long as possible. Disability Rights and Resources promotes inclusion and independence of people with disabilities.
- Statistics were provided to highlight the demographics of served populations as well as demonstrate the need. Disparity between CDC and Census metric of Americans with disabilities is highlighted to point out the challenge in disclosure and reporting.
- The impact of shifting demographics on care and support needs was discussed in relation to the rapidly growing aging population.

- Some examples of the available caregiver and support services provided are: support to address the impact on mobility in the home, home delivered meal programs, and congregate nutrition programs and the ElderLink program which is a 30+ year community partnership and joint venture with Inova Health System. Staff who work on the resource line are bilingual or have access to immediate access to translation services.
- Disability rights and resources promotes employment opportunities for youth with disabilities such as the John Hudson internship for college students or recent graduates with disabilities and mentorship with FCPS students with disabilities on National Disability Employment Awareness Month.
- The SHAPE the future of aging strategic plan (2023 – 2028) was recently approved by the BOS. The plan aims to make Fairfax County a place where older adults can continue to thrive and live safely.

### **Chair's Announcements**

#### **One Fairfax BAC Focus Group**

- Melanie Fenwick explained the One Fairfax/Chief Equity Office will be holding a focus group to gather information from board and commission members about their thoughts, opinions, and experiences related to the demographic composition of boards and commissions.
- Seeking 1-2 representatives from each board and commission. The focus groups will be 1.5 hours and will be held either in person or virtually in August and September.
- Laura Martinez and Julian De Phillips will participate on behalf of the ASSB.

#### **Human Services Issue Paper**

- Director Becketts explained the county has consolidated the Human Service Issue Paper with the Legislative Agenda and there will no longer be a separate Issue Paper.
- The ASSB has an opportunity to submit a new legislative or budget initiative or policy statement to the BOS for consideration or to recommend that existing positions be retained in the legislative program. The deadline to submit is August 3.
- It may be possible to submit a letter late since the ASSB does not meet in August. Director Becketts will advise.

### **District Items**

- Dranesville District: Ben Zuhl discussed a concern about the fees paid to court appointed attorneys and stated children are more likely to stay in the custody of their parents when the quality of legal representation is better. Citing Valerie L 'Herrou of the Virginia Poverty Law Center, court appointed attorneys receive \$120 per case. Ben asked the ASSB to consider inviting Senator Barbara Favola and Valerie L ' Herrou to the next meeting to discuss the issue. The ASSB noted additional clarification is needed regarding attorney compensation as there may be some distinction between

jurisdictions. Director Becketts will follow up on this and invite the Office of the County Attorney to brief the board at the September meeting.

- Sully District: Alice Foltz thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve for two terms. She described her advocacy work and motivation to serve and expressed her appreciation for the professionalism, skill, and caring of the Fairfax County employees.

**Adjourned:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

**Next ASSB Meeting:**

Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm