



CHEROKEE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
4800 West U.S. Highway 64, Murphy, NC 28906
828-837-7455

Cherokee County N.C. Department of Social Services

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

May 19, 2026

5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PM by Chairman Bo Phillips

Members present:

Bo Phillips – Chair

Dr. Catherine Yost, Member

James Jallah, member, (via telephone)

II. Approval of the Agenda *

III. Adoption of Minutes

Director McGee requested that the Board amend the agenda to include discussion regarding DSS Board meeting dates and times.

Director McGee informed the Board that newly appointed County Commissioner SueLynn Ledford had expressed an interest in attending DSS Board meetings and requested consideration of modifying the meeting schedule to better accommodate her availability. Upon a motion by James Jallah, seconded by Dr. Yost, the Board unanimously approved the agenda as amended, adding the topic of **DSS Board Meeting Dates/Times** under New Business.

On the motion of Dr. Yost seconded by James Jallah, the Board unanimously approved the April 2026 minutes meeting minutes as presented.

IV. Public Comments

There were no public Comments

V. Old Business

A. DSS Strategic Planning

The Board reviewed and discussed the Strategic Planning Discussion Guide.

Members discussed the development of strategic planning focus groups to gather input and feedback from key community stakeholders. The Board identified the following stakeholder groups for inclusion in the strategic planning process:

- Guardian ad Litem Program
- Law Enforcement
- Child Advocacy Center
- Foster Parents
- Cherokee County School System
- Medical Providers
- County Commissioners
- County Leadership
- Vaya Health
- Business Community Representatives
- Faith Community Representatives
- Mental Health Providers
- Court Partners
- Erlanger Western Carolina Hospital
- Cherokee County Senior Center
- Town Councils of Andrews and Murphy
- Food Bank Representatives
- Tri-County Community College

The Board discussed the importance of obtaining broad community input to assist in identifying priorities and opportunities for service improvement.

VI. New Business

A. DSS board meeting dates/times

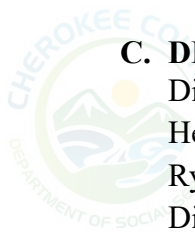
The board discussed the idea of changing the DSS board meeting date and time to accommodate Commissioner's Ledford's interest in attending meetings. Following discussion, the Board agreed to table the matter until the June meeting for further consideration.

B. Community Awareness Event – Adoptions

Dr. Yost presented a proposed community awareness initiative designed to increase public awareness of foster care and adoption.

The initiative includes hosting two annual community events focused on recognizing foster parents, educating the public regarding foster care and adoption, and celebrating adoptive families.

Upon a motion by James Jallah, seconded by Chairman Phillips, the Board unanimously approved the initiative.



C. DHHS Memorandum of Understanding

Director McGee presented the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) required pursuant to Rylan's Law.

Director McGee reported that Cherokee County DSS consistently meets or exceeds all required performance measures and noted that MOU performance data are included in the monthly Board reports.

Upon a motion by James Jallah with a second by Dr. Yost, the Board unanimously approved execution of the MOU.

VII. Management Reports

A. Supervisor Reports

There were no supervisor reports presented.

B. DHHS MOU Data April

Director McGee presented the April DHHS MOU data report. All performance measures meet or exceeded required standards.

C. DSS Service Report

Director McGee presented the April Service Report.

D. Staff /Unit Accomplishments

Director McGee recognized the Child Support Unit for exceeding all State performance measures and achieving exceptional self-assessment scores.

Director McGee also recognized Adult Services Social Worker Jeremy Lance for exemplary service and his commitment to going above and beyond in assisting an adult services client.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Dr. Yost moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by James Jallah and approved unanimously.

Chairman Phillips adjourned the meeting.