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

Cherokee County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
August 19, 2025

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Cherokee County Department of Social Services was duly held on August 19, 2025, at 5:01 P.M, at 4800 West Highway 64, Murphy, N.C. 28906.

Board Members Present:
Bo Phillips, Chair
Dr. Catherine Yost, Member
James Jallah, Member
Pat Ivie, Member
Staff present:
Amanda T. McGee, DSS Director
Brandy Clonts, Administrative Officer/Clerk to the Board

II. Discussion and Adoption of Agenda

•**Motion to Adopt Agenda:** Mr. James Jallah made a motion to add the item and adopt the agenda. Dr. Cathrine Yost seconded. All voted in favor.

III. Meeting Minutes

•**Motion to Approve Minutes:** Mrs. Pat Ivie made a motion to approve the July 15, 2025 meeting minutes. Dr. Cathrine Yost seconded. All voted in favor.

IV. Public Comments

None

V. Management Reports

A. DHHS MOU Data 2025 – Attachment 1

- The MOU data for 2025 was reviewed. All programs are above the performance measures with most achieving 100% across the board. All questions from the board were addressed and answered by Director Amanda McGee.

B. Cherokee County Court Improvement – Continuance Report Attachment 2

- Director Amanda McGee discussed the continuance report and explained the various reasons for case continuances.
- Chairman Bo Phillips requested that future reports include an asterisk (*) next to cases where the reason for continuance is related to child-specific issues, rather than court or parental delays.
- Dr. Cathrine Yost requested that a comparison of continuances vs. non-continuances be included.
- Director McGee will provide the updated report with these additions at next month's board meeting.

C. DSS Service Report – Attachment 3

- The DSS Service Report was provided and reviewed.
- Director Amanda McGee noted that Adult Protective Services (APS) and Child Protective Services (CPS) reports are expected to continue increasing.
- She also explained that the Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) program is seeing a decline in usage, as many clients are transitioning from Medicaid Direct to Medicaid Managed Care plans, which affects transportation service numbers.

D. Safety Threat Analysis – Active Shooter Training

- Chief Justin Jacobs from the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office conducted an Active Shooter Training session on July 22, 2025. He reviewed notable shooting incidents from the past 20 years and provided instruction on the use of first aid, tourniquets and other life-saving measures.
- Discussion of county polices regarding weapons in the DSS building.
- The Board requested that Director McGee invite the County Manager Randy Wiggins and County Attorney Darryl Brown to the next board meeting on September 16, 2025, for further discussion.
- Director McGee will also gather and present policy information from other County DSS agencies regarding firearms in the workplace at the next meeting.

E. Supervisor Program Updates

- Director Amanda McGee reported that the Adult Protective Services (APS) monitoring went well. She also expressed confidence that the upcoming Child Welfare monitoring, scheduled for the following day, would go well based on the preliminary reports she has already received.
- Additionally, Director McGee noted that the Economic Services program is performing at or above performance measures.
- There are no programs in jeopardy of a corrective actions.

F. Retention Data /Staff /Unit Accomplishments

- Director Amanda McGee reported that CCDSS continues to perform at a high level, consistently meeting all established standards. She praised the team, noting that staff morale and performance remain strong, and there are no red flags to report at this time.
- The current employee retention rate stands at 86.25%, reflecting a stable and committed workforce.

VI. Old Business

A. DSS Board Member Conflict of Interest – Attachment 4

- Director Amanda McGee noted a revision to the draft DSS Board Member Conflict of Interest document, specifically the removal of the month of July from the Reporting Requirements section.
- **Motion to Adopt**: Mrs. Pat Ivie made a motion to adopt the revised DSS Board Member Conflict of Interest policy. Dr. Catherine Yost seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

VII. New Business

A. Nomination of Officers for FY 2025-2026

- Director Amanda McGee reviewed the applicable laws regarding sitting board members and recommended that the board vote on the position of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary for the FY 2025–2026 term.
- **Motion was made**: Mr. James Jallah made a motion to re-elect Bo Phillips as Chair, Not appoint a Vice Chair and retain Brandy Clonts as Clerk of the Board. Dr. Catherine Yost seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

B. DSS Goals for 2025-2026

- Director Amanda McGee proposed holding a Planning Meeting each February, allowing time for the board to assist with budget planning prior to the DSS budget submission deadline in April.
- During the planning meeting, the board can assist in setting both financial and agency-wide strategic goals. Director McGee will develop and present proposed strategic goals at the February meeting.
- **Motion to Adopt**: Mrs. Pat Ivie made a motion to hold a Planning Meeting annually in February. Dr. Catherine Yost seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

C. Medicaid Cuts

- Director Amanda McGee provided information regarding proposed Medicaid cuts to provider rates to all board members via email prior to the meeting. The board reviewed the material prior the meeting.
- No further discussion was noted at this time.

VIII. Adjourn

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Mr. James Jallah made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Pat Ivie seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Energy Programs – Measured Monthly

1. The county will process 95% of Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) applications, with no heat or cooling source, or applications with a health-related crisis with a disconnect, final, or past due notice within one (1) business day from the date of application or date all verification is received, whichever comes first.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	100.00%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

2. The county will process 95% of Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) applications, that have heat or cooling source with a past due or final notice, within two (2) business days from the date of application or date all verification is received, whichever comes first

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	100.00%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

Work First

1. The county will process 95% of Work First applications within 45 days of receipt.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	100.00%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

NOTE: The quarterly average will be inaccurate if the data from all three months within that quarter are not recorded.

Food and Nutrition

1. The county will process 95% of expedited FNS applications within the timeframe that allows the household to have access to the FNS benefits on or before the 7th calendar day from the date of application.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	100.00%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	#DIV/0!

2. The county will process 95% of regular FNS applications within the timeframe that allows the household to have access to the FNS benefits on or before the 30th calendar day from the date of application.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	100.00%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

3. The county will ensure that 95% of FNS recertifications are processed on time, each month

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	99.50%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**99.50%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

NOTE: The quarterly average will be inaccurate if the data from all three months within that quarter are not recorded.

Child Welfare

1. The county will ensure that 95% of all foster youth have a face-to-face visit with the social worker each month.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4			
July	100.00%	October		January		April			
August		November		February		May			
September		December		March		June			
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**		
*July and August low percentages are due to two youth on runaway status								**Annual Average**	**#DIV/0!**

2. The county will screen 95% of all reports within required timeframes.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4			
July	0.00%	October	0.00%	January	0.00%	April	0.00%		
August	0.00%	November	0.00%	February	0.00%	May	0.00%		
September	0.00%	December	0.00%	March	0.00%	June	0.00%		
QTR Average	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**		
								Annual Average	**0.00%**

3. For children who were victims of maltreatment during a 12-month period, no more than 9.1 receive a subsequent finding of maltreatment.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4			
July	0.00%	October	0.00%	January	0.00%	April	0.00%		
August	0.00%	November	0.00%	February	0.00%	May	0.00%		
September	0.00%	December	0.00%	March	0.00%	June	0.00%		
QTR Average	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**		
								Annual Average	**0.00%**

4. The county will provide leadership for ensuring 40.5% of children who enter foster care in a 12 month period are discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4			
July	0.00%	October	0.00%	January	0.00%	April	0.00%		
August	0.00%	November	0.00%	February	0.00%	May	0.00%		
September	0.00%	December	0.00%	March	0.00%	June	0.00%		
QTR Average	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**		
								Annual Average	**0.00%**

Child Welfare

5. The county will provide leadership to ensure that of children who enter foster care in a 12 – month period and who were discharged to reunification, kinship care, guardianship, or adoption, that no more than 8.3% re-enter foster care within 12 months of their discharge.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		
July	0.00%	October	0.00%	January	0.00%	April	0.00%	
August	0.00%	November	0.00%	February	0.00%	May	0.00%	
September	0.00%	December	0.00%	March	0.00%	June	0.00%	
QTR Average	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	
							Annual Average	**0.00%**

6. The county will provide leadership to ensure that of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period in the county, the rate of placement moves per 1000 days of foster care will not exceed 4.1.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		
July	0.00%	October	0.00%	January	0.00%	April	0.00%	
August	0.00%	November	0.00%	February	0.00%	May	0.00%	
September	0.00%	December	0.00%	March	0.00%	June	0.00%	
QTR Average	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	**QTR Average**	**0.00%**	
							Annual Average	**0.00%**

NOTE: The quarterly average will be inaccurate if the data from all three months within that quarter are not recorded.

Adult Protective Services

1. The county will complete 85% of APS evaluations involving allegations of abuse or neglect within 30 days of the report

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		
July	100.00%	October		January		April		
August		November		February		May		
September		December		March		June		
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	
							Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

2. The county will complete 85% of APS evaluations involving allegations of exploitation within 45 days of the report.

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		
July	100.00%	October		January		April		
August		November		February		May		
September		December		March		June		
QTR Average	**100.00%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	
							Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

NOTE: The quarterly average will be inaccurate if the data from all three months within that quarter are not recorded.

Adult Protective Services - Special Assistance for the Aged and Disabled

1. Special Assistance for the Aged Applications

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4			
July	100%	October		January		April			
August		November		February		May			
September		December		March		June			
QTR Average	**100%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**		
								Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

2. Special Assistance for the Disabled

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4			
July	100.00%	October		January		April			
August		November		February		May			
September		December		March		June			
QTR Average	**100%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**		
								Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

NOTE: The quarterly average will be inaccurate if the data from all three months within that quarter are not recorded.

Child Support Services

1. Percentage of paternities established or acknowledged for children born out of wedlock. The county paternity establishment performance level must exceed 50% at the end of the State Fiscal Year (June 30).

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	91.23%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**91.23%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

2. Percentage of child support cases that have a court order establishing support obligations. The county support order establishment performance level must exceed 50% at the end of the State Fiscal Year (June 30).

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	93.20%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**93.20%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

3. Percentage of current child support paid. The county current collections performance level must exceed 40% at the end of the State Fiscal Year (June 30).

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	69.15%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**69.15%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

4. Percentage of cases received a payment toward arrears. The county arrearage collections performance level must exceed 40% at the end of the State Fiscal Year (June 30).

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
July	34.04%	October		January		April	
August		November		February		May	
September		December		March		June	
QTR Average	**34.04%**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**	**QTR Average**	**#DIV/0!**
						Annual Average	**#DIV/0!**

NOTE: The quarterly average will be inaccurate if the data from all three months within that quarter are not recorded.

JUVENILE COURT FILE INFO

DAYS IN CARE	CONT.
629	9
127	0
569	2
146	1
538	1
2737	17
1449	14
1449	14
1449	14
1449	14
1449	14
159	2
88	2
88	2
398	2
242	1
1325	8
1325	8
1805	8
1072	16
1854	20
1854	20
700	4
700	4
516	3
942	8
683	7

Pre-adjudication
Reunification
Other than Reunification
Post TPR

Board Report

Service Month: July 2025

Budget

	Jul-25	% of Budget	Jul-24	% of Budget
Total Revenues (YTD)	$51,676.87	1.2%	$585,065.62	12.4%
Total Expenses (YTD)	$499,924.43	7.6%	$3,262,697.04	30.3%
	Expenses without settlement 2024		$334,125.61	3.9%

Services

Child Welfare	**Jul-25**	**Current -YTD**	**Jul-24**	**Current -YTD**
			Calendar Year	
# of Child Abuse Reports Received	31	246	34	255
# of Screened In Reports	17	129	25	158
# of Screened out Reports	14	117	9	85
# of Other County Assists	3		2	
# of Open Assessments on last day of month	30		29	
# of Open In-Home (Case Mgmt.) Services Cases	4		6	
# of Children Entered Into Legal Custody	0	18	4	12
# of Children Left Custody	0	27	0	18
# of Children In Legal Custody	30		40	
# of Children Placed With Relatives	7		10	
# of Children Placed in Foster Homes/Other Placements	21		25	
# of Foster Care 18-21	2		5	
# of Licensed Foster Homes	12		11	
# of Agency Adoptions Completed	0	16	0	12
# of Non-Agency Adoptions Completed	0	3	1	2
# of Infants Affected by Substance Abuse	0	10	0	8
# of Child Family Team Meetings	14		5	

Adult Services	**Jul-25**	**Current CY-YTD**	**Jul-24**	**Current CY-YTD**
# of Adult Protective Services Reports	19	131	14	121
# of APS Reports Accepted for Evaluation	10	65	9	56
# of Representative Payees	18		18	
# of Current Guardianship Cases	23		21	
# of Adult Care Homes	3		3	
# of Medicaid Transportation Clients	118		121	
# of Transit, L&N and Client reimbursed Trips	125	609	275	988

Child Support Enforcement		**Jul-25**	**Current-YTD**	**Jul-24**	**Current-YTD**
				Fiscal Year	
# of Active Cases		561	561	580	580
# of Paternity		1	1	5	5
CS Orders Established		8	8	6	6
# of Modifications Completed		10	10	0	0
# of Enforcement Actions Completed		33	33	61	61
Amount of Collections		$102,151.16	$102,151.16	$113,938.49	$113,938.49
Arrears	**Total Outstanding**	**$2,864,922.21**	**Collected FY-YTD Arrears**		**$29,372.84**
Inherited Arrears		**$757,757.52**			
Outstanding Purge Amounts		**$236,329.54**			

Economic Services	**Jul-25**	**YTD**	**Jul-24**	**YTD**
		Calendar Year		**Calendar Year**
# of Medicaid/Special Assistance Appl Taken	224	1427	244	1616
# of Medicaid/SA Recerts completed	520	2851	586	4288
# of Medicaid Participants	11,235		11,213	
# of Special Assistance Participants	60		59	
# of TANF Participants	7		11	
# of FNS Applications (applications denied)	179 (48)	1083 (298)	134 (62)	1293 (359)
# of FNS Recerts completed	201	1248	199	1311
# of FNS Benefits Paid	$ 711,102.00	$ 4,611,254.00	$729,494.00	$5,263,914.00
# of FNS Households	2264		2,325	16851.00
Fraud Collections	$287.00	$3,196.00	$0.00	$0.00
# of Day Care Recipients	187		185	
# on Day Care Waiting List	0		0	
Energy Assistance (Heating/Cooling)				
LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) Appl Taken	0	175	0	203
LIEAP Benefits Paid	$0.00	$29,700.00	0	$58,900.00
CRISIS Applications Taken	7	146	18	135
CRISIS Benefits Paid	$1,041.44	$34,554.23	$4,305.82	$28,684.09

Personnel

Vacancies/Hires/Terminations for July 2025

		Vacancies
New Hires	1	(7) as of July 31, 2025
New Hire Orientations Completed	0	
Interagency Transfers	0	
Separations	1	
Promotion or Work/Against	0	
Reason for Separation:-	( ) Retirement; ( ) Relocation; ( ) Dismissal (X) Resignation	
Length of Service:	(X) Less than 2 yrs.; ( ) 2-5 years; ( ) 5-10 years; ( ) over 10 years	

CHEROKEE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD CODE OF ETHICS RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Cherokee County Social Services Board finds it necessary and proper to adopt a code of ethics to guide the actions of governing board members in the performance of their official duties as members of the governing board.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Cherokee County Social Services Board does hereby adopt the following code of ethics to be observed by all members taking the oath of office as Commissioners:

1. **Faithful Execution of Duties:** Members of the Board shall faithfully execute the duties of their office and shall faithfully attend meetings of the Board.

2. **Observance of Law:** Members of the Board shall observe all federal, state, and local laws to the best of their knowledge and ability in the execution of their duties as Board members and shall honor the spirit as well as the letter of the law. Members shall consult with legal counsel if matters of law or ethics shall come into question.

3. **Integrity and Independence of the Board:** Board members shall make decisions that are based on the public good and not on their desires or considerations of special interests.

4. **Prohibition of Emoluments:** The Board shall observe and adhere to Article 1, Section 32 of the North Carolina Constitution which states: "No person or set of persons is entitled to exclusive or separate emoluments or privileges from the community but in consideration of public services."

5. **Avoidance of Impropriety:** Board members shall *avoid impropriety* in the exercise of their official duties. Board members are to act as "especially responsible citizens", who are to honor the public trust as they carry out their duties. Their official actions should be above reproach. Board members and employees shall be honest, fair, and caring, and shall honor the public trust.

6. **Transparency:** Board members shall conduct the business of the Cherokee County Department of Social Services in accordance with open meetings and public records laws.

7. **Conflicts of interest:** Members shall in every way avoid conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest. Board members shall not knowingly use or solicit their public position to receive personal financial gain. Members shall not engage in any action that will result in financial benefit to the member's extended family, or business with which the member is associated. Members shall recuse themselves from voting, deliberations or discussion of any matter in which a conflict is identified.

8. **Confidential Information:** Members shall not use or disclose nonpublic information gained in the course of, or by reason of, the member's official responsibilities in a way that would affect a personal financial interest of the member, a member of the member's extended family, or a person or governmental unit with whom or business with which the member is associated. A member shall not improperly use or improperly disclose any confidential information.

9. **Conduct:** In any situation, Members of the Cherokee County Social Services Board shall conduct themselves in a respectful and dignified manner towards members of the public and to each other. Members shall refrain from personal attacks and defamatory remarks in the conduct of the business of the Social Services Board. Members shall refrain from speech or conduct unbecoming to the Department of Social Services and speech or conduct that would bring the Department of Social Services or its employees into disrepute. Courtesy and mutual respect shall be observed in all matters of the Board.

10. **Training & Education:** Members shall faithfully attend such ethics training as may be required by statute or the NC Department of Health and Human Services. Members shall educate themselves as to matters and issues pertinent to their service on the Board.

11. **Social Media:** Members who elect to use social media in their capacity as Social Services Board members shall either refrain from receiving comments on their posts or disclosed content, or, if allowing comments, shall not delete comments nor block anyone from access to the social media account or page.

12. **Reporting Requirements**: At the DSS Board of Directors Annual Planning Meeting of the Board of Department of Social Services, members shall disclose to the Clerk to the Board any non-profit organizations in which the member serves as a director, officer or governing board member or in any way receives a direct financial benefit therefrom.

Effective on and adopted on this the 19th day of August 2025.

Bo Phillips
Chairman of the Social Services Board

ATTEST:

Clerk to the Board