



## **City of Virginia Beach Social Services Advisory Board 2023-2024 Annual Report to City Council**

**Chair:** Helena Gourdine-Thorpe, DHS Social Services Advisory Board

**Date:** August 31, 2024

### **Executive Summary**

The Social Services Advisory Board (SSAB) was established by the Virginia Beach City Council in 1978 as mandated in the Code of Virginia. The Board is composed of citizens appointed by the Virginia Beach City Council, and its members are responsible for ensuring that throughout Virginia Beach, eligible individuals receive social services, financial assistance, and other benefits.

During the fiscal year covering the period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the Social Services Advisory Board (SSAB) volunteers and liaisons met nine (9) times.

Key events are as follows:

- Board members participated in a joint meeting Retreat with the CSB in September that focused on team building and a review of the organization's Strategic Plan.
- Board members reviewed social services financial reports during each full board meeting.
- Board members participated in the Food Drive held on December 12, 2023
- Board members participated in an Elder Abuse Awareness Walk on Friday, June 14th at Mount Trashmore.
- Educational sessions were conducted to promote ongoing awareness of key programs and initiatives:

September 7, 2023, Retreat

October 6, 2023, Domestic Violence

November 2, 2023, Adoptions

January 5, 2024, Data and Statistics

February 2, 2024, Benefits Overview- New Energy Program

March 15, 2024, Joint CSB SSAB Meeting

April 5, 2024, Child Services Wellbeing Programs

May 3, 2024, Juvenile Detention Center Overview

June 7, 2024, Adult and Aging Overview

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Department of Human Services is to provide Virginia Beach citizens the opportunity to achieve the highest level of self-sufficiency, safety, and quality of life possible through an array of coordinated services delivered in a climate of dignity, respect, and accountability.

Our most significant accomplishments are detailed below, along with recommendations for your consideration.

## **Accomplishment of Goals and Objectives**

During the past fiscal year, the agency, through its appointed volunteers and its staff liaisons, worked on the following key matters in furtherance of its mission:

- Reviewed the service delivery to ensure citizens of Virginia Beach are getting timely, accurate benefits and referrals for services.
- Received monthly updates on budgets, staffing, new and changing policy and procedures.
- Reviewed monthly revenue, expenditures, and overall budget.
- Assisted in a food drive to provide for thousands of families in need.
- Monitored the progress of the organization's Strategic Plan
- Created updated Board handbooks for new and existing staff members.
- Welcomed two (2) new board members.
- Convened a Nominating Committee to create a slate of nominees for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year.
- Received program updates on the unwinding of Medicaid.
- Bid a sad farewell to our former Chair, Jalana McCasland

## Membership and Attendance

FY2024 SSAB Members & Liaisons	
Board Members	Liaison
Jalana McCasland, Chair	Aileen L. Smith
Robin Foreman-Wheeler	Charlene Collins
Helena Gourdine-Thorpe	Cynthia Buckler, recorder
David Bradley	Jeannie Coles, recorder
John Moxen	City Leadership
Joann Mancuso	Dr. Kenneth Chandler
Vivian Blaize	Al Steward Jr.
Ra Hee Jeon	Chris Haws
Carrie Waites	Yolanda Clark
City Council Members	Dayna Bandy
Michael Berlucchi	Elizabeth Batista-Boone
	Wendy Swallow
	Fay Ward
	Sherrell Porter

## Financial Report (if applicable)

N/A

## Goals and Objectives for the Coming Year

- Increase stakeholder engagement to identify additional mechanisms and pathways that will provide enhanced communication and a broader knowledge of various resources available to the citizens.
- Assist in enhancing stakeholder partnerships and increase community awareness of social services resources.
- Engage the community in strategies to improve services for low-income and vulnerable citizens to increase the safety and well-being of our youth, disabled, and senior citizens.
- Enhance participation by Board members in community-engaging endeavors.

## **Recommendations to City Council**

- Expansion of technology use in Human Services programs by supporting the use of the document imaging system (DOMA) for Social Services Programs to convert paper documents to electronic in all areas of Human Services.
- Replacement of the financial system Harmony that is used for payments to our vendors, in. The new system will take the Children's Service Act from paper to electronic case files.

## **Closing**

The Chair and staff liaison worked together to draft the report and the board will vote to approve it on 9/6/24. Should you have any questions or desire a formal City Council briefing from our agency, please contact Helena Gourdine-Thorpe, DHS SSAB Chair at [lenagt@cox.net](mailto:lenagt@cox.net) or staff liaison, Jeannie Coles at [jcoles@vbgov.com](mailto:jcoles@vbgov.com).

## **SSAB Attendance Report**

- Calendar Year 2023 (see attached)
- Calendar Year 2024 (see attached)

## FY 2023 SSAB Volunteer Hours Report

Board Member	Services Dates	Merit Hours
Vivian Blaize	09-01-2023 01-05-2024 02-02-2024 03-15-2024 04-05-2024	6.03
David Bradley	09-01-2023 10-06-2023 01-05-2024 03-15-2024 04-05-2024 05-03-2024 06-07-2024	7.51
Robin Foreman-Wheeler	10-06-2023 01-05-2024 02-02-2024 03-15-2024 04-05-2024 05-03-2024 06-07-2024	6.58
Helena Gourdine-Thorpe	09-01-2023 01-05-2024 02-02-2024 03-15-2024 04-05-2024 05-03-2024 06-07-2024	7.45
Ra Hee Jeon	10-06-2023 01-05-2024 02-02-2024 03-15-2024 04-05-2024 05-03-2024 06-07-2024	6.55
Joann Mancuso	09-01-2023 10-06-2023 01-05-2024 02-02-2024 03-15-2024 05-03-2024	7.04

Jalana McCasland	09-01-2023	<b>12.41</b>
	10-06-2023	
	12-12-2023	
	01-05-2024	
	02-02-2024	
	03-15-2024	
	04-05-2024	
	05-03-2024	
	06-07-2024	
John Moxen	09-01-2023	<b>11.19</b>
	10-06-2023	
	12-12-2023	
	01-05-2024	
	02-02-2024	
	03-15-2024	
Carrie Waites	10-06-2023	<b>2.19</b>
	01-05-2024	
<b>Total</b>		<b>68.55</b>

**City of Virginia Beach  
Social Services Advisory Board  
2023 Attendance Record**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Term Expires on:</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Total</i>
David Bradley	6/30/2026	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P		9/9
Robin Foreman-Wheeler	6/30/2025	P	P	P	P	P	P			E	P	E		7/9
Helena Gourdine-Thorpe, Vice-Chair	6/30/2028	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	E	P		8/9
Joann Mancuso	6/30/2026	P	P	PV	P	E	P			P	P	P		8/9
Jalana McCasland, Chair	6/30/2025	P	P	P	P	P	E			P	P	P		8/9
Carrie Waites	6/30/2025	PV	PV	PV	PV	PV	PV			E	PV	PV		8/9
John Moxen	6/30/2026	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	PV		9/9
Vivian Blaize	2/28/2027				P	P	P			P	E	P		5/6
Ra Hee Jeon	2/28/2027				P	P	P			E	PV	P		5/6
This row indicates if there was a quorum; total number of members in person/total number of appointed members		7/7	6/7	5/7	9/9	8/9	8/9			6/9	7/9	8/9		9/9
<i>City Council Liaisons/Department Staff/Guests</i>														
Michael Berlucchi, City Council Liaison			P				P			P				3/9
Aileen L. Smith, Director, DHS		P	P	P	P	P	P			E	E	P		7/9
Charlene Collins, Deputy Director DSS		P	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P		9/9

Key: Present (P) Present/Virtually (P/V) Absent (**A**) Resigned (R) Excused Absence (**E**) Cancelled (C) City Council and Staff Liaisons should be marked either P or P/V, if not in attendance, the block should be blank If Commissioners participate P/V, it must be annotated in the Minutes where they remotely participated from and the reason – does not apply to City Council or Staff Liaisons. Meetings lacking a quorum of Members attending in-person should be designated with an asterisk (★)

**City of Virginia Beach  
Social Services Advisory Board  
2024 Attendance Record**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Term Expires on:</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Total</i>
David Bradley	6/30/2026	P	A	P	PV	P	P							
Robin Foreman-Wheeler	6/30/2025	P	P	P	PV	P	P							
Helena Gourdine-Thorpe, Vice-Chair	6/30/2024	P	P	P	PV	P	P							
Joann Mancuso	6/30/2026	P	PV	P	E	P	A							
Jalana McCasland, Chair	6/30/2025	P	P	P	PV	P	P							
Carrie Waites	6/30/2025	PV	A											
John Moxen	6/30/2026	PV	PV	P	E	E	E							
Vivian Blaize	2/28/2027	P	P	P	PV	A	A							
Ra Hee Jeon	2/28/2027	P	P	P	PV	P	P							
Meeting length		1.23	.47	1.5	.58	.46	.57							
This row indicates if there was a quorum; total number of members in person/total number of appointed members		7/9	5/9	8/8	6/8	6/8	5/8							
<b>City Council Liaisons/Department Staff/Guests</b>														
Michael Berlucchi, City Council Liaison				P										
Aileen L. Smith, Director, DHS		P	P	P	PV		P							
Charlene Collins, Deputy Director DSS		PV	PV	P	PV	P	P							

Key: Present (P) Present/Virtually (P/V) Absent (A) Resigned (R) Excused Absence (E) Cancelled (C) City Council and Staff Liaisons should be marked either P or P/V, if not in attendance, the block should be blank. If Commissioners participate P/V, it must be annotated in the Minutes where they remotely participated from and the reason – does not apply to City Council or Staff Liaisons. Meetings lacking a quorum of Members attending in-person should be designated with an asterisk (\*)