

**MINUTES OF THE BUCHANAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD MEETING OF
DECEMBER 15, 2009**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Randall Deel. All Board members were present: Mrs. Hale, Mr. Thornsby, Ms Viers (formerly Cole), Mr. Farmer, Mr. Neo, Mrs. Elswick, and Mr. Deel. Also present were some staff and a representative of the press.

The discussion of the minutes of the November Board meeting had a request for two corrections by Mr. Neo. After discussion of his requested corrections, Mrs. Hale motioned and Mr. Thornsby seconded that the minutes be approved as written. There was additional discussion and then a roll call vote was taken, which resulted in a 5-2 vote, with the motion to approve passing.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Hale	Aye
Mr. Thonsbury	Aye
Ms Viers (Cole)	No
Mr. Farmer	Aye
Mr. Neo	No
Mrs. Elswick	Aye
Mr. Deel	Aye

Mr. Thornsby motioned and Ms Viers (Cole) seconded approval of the agency bills. There was no discussion and a roll call vote was taken with all ayes recorded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Hale	Aye
Mr. Thornsby	Aye
Ms Viers	Aye
Mr. Farmer	Aye
Mr. Neo	Aye
Mrs. Elswick	Aye
Mr. Deel	Aye

The next item of business was approval of the agenda. Ms Viers made a motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Holland asked the Chair to add telephones under Old Business.

Mr. Neo asked the chair to put a point of order under New Business related to public comment. The chairman agreed and Mr. Neo noted that he had three sub-issues, a,b, c; Mr. Neo stated that sub-issue a. was related to purchasing, issue b was input from counsel and c is just an opportunity for board member comments and should probably be moved down to item 9 and items 9 and 10 be moved down accordingly. Sub-issue c is related to grievance issues with new considerations regarding DSS policy surrounding grievances.

The Chairman called for a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Motion was made by Ms Viers and seconded by Mr. Thornsbury. Mr. Deel called for a voice vote and no objections were recorded.

Under Director's items, Mrs. Holland informed the board that a staff meeting was scheduled for tomorrow and that she would be off ½ day on December 23. She also pointed out that the agency would close at noon on the 23rd and would be closed all day on December 31 and January 1.

Mrs. Holland also reported on the many donations made to the Christmas and Special Needs fund as well as gifts which were donated. She acknowledged the work of Americorps Volunteer, Leaiana Hughes, who carried the bulk of the organization of the Christmas program. Mrs. Holland also pointed out that our staff would be celebrating Christmas together and various units might be seen at our local resataurants.

The Director also offered a brief report on fuel assistance. Over \$1million in fuel assistance was provided to residents in Buchanan County, serving 2,190 households. In addition Crisis Assistance will begin in November and end in March. To date \$128,000 has been encumbered by that program. Further, the Food Stamps report indicates that \$516,906 was distributed to Buchanan County residents in October to 2,261 households.

Mr. Neo asked if there was some indication of where those dollars were being spent. Mrs. Holland deferred to Mrs. Ashby, Fraud Investigator, who was present at the meeting. Mrs. Ashby offered to pull together a report.

The Director invited all Board members to Ms Patty Whited's retirement luncheon on December 30th at 12 o'clock.

The budget papers were discussed and Mr. Neo asked for signed copies of the minutes for the year.

The next item on the agenda was Old Business. A telephone system quote from BVU was presented and Mrs. Holland reminded the board of the previous quote received from Verizon. Mr. Neo voiced concern about using BVU. Mr. Presley, board attorney, asked how the quotes were obtained. It is his opinion that five quotes are required under the county procurement policy. It was suggested that further discussion with the County Attorney take place before any decision is made. The item was tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Deel introduced New Business as the next item on the agenda. Mr. Neo's (a) procedural issue related to purchasing a copy of Robert's Rules of Order and bringing it to each meeting by the Board's secretary. Mr. Preley pointed out that he carries this version to each meeting. Mrs. Holland also reminded the Chair that all Board members received the short card summary of the most common motions in Parliamentary Procedure. Mrs. Holland stated she would go the Amazon and present the Board with several choices to select from at the next meeting. Mr. Neo motioned and Mrs. Hale seconded that a copy of the Robert's Rules of Order that both Mr. Neo and Mr. Presley have be purchased and be brought to each meeting. On roll call vote, all ayes were recorded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Hale	Aye
Mr. Thornsby	Aye
Ms Viers	Aye
Mr. Farmer	Aye
Mr. Neo	Aye
Mrs. Elswick	Aye
Mr. Deel	Aye

The next New Business item was sub-issue (c) presented by Mr. Neo. In prefacing his remarks, he referenced the appearance of Shea Cook, an attorney who was present at the November meeting and who requested payment of attorney fees in a grievance matter. Mr. Neo noted that we have no reimbursement policy and acknowledged Mr. Presley's point that a grievant is not required to have an attorney. Mr. Neo suggested that some sort of flat fee should be offered that we could include in our policy if the grievant was successful in the grievance. Mr. Presley was asked to address this and cited the Human Resource Manual which elected to leave out a provision for attorney's fees. Discussion continued on the topic. Upon further clarification by Mr. Presley, Mr. Neo rescinded any motion along those lines. Since no motion had yet been made, the Board moved on to the next item under New Business.

Mr. Neo presented item (b). He questioned counsel as to Human Resources Manual, Chapter 7, section E6, paragraph b, related to personal involvement with a grievance. Mr. Presely noted that based on the provision Mr. Neo cited, it is the board's sole discretion to determine whether the findings are consistent with law and policy and this board determined that there were certain aspects of the panel's decision that were inconsistent with law and policy. Mr. Presley also noted that personal involvement would mean that some member of this board had a conflict in making a decision as to whether or not to implement the panel's decision.

Discussion continued and ultimately, Mr. Neo requested Board counsel to draft some sort of memorandum of law as to where counsel's assessment was based. Discussion then reverted to role of counsel to the Board. Mr. Neo motioned for a job description for counsel. There being no second, the motion died. After continued discussion about a job discussion, Chairman Deel suggested the Board move on to the next item.

The next item was a presentation to Mrs. Emogene Elswick who was completing her term of service on the Administrative Board. Mr. Deel presented her with a plaque and thanked her for her service on the Board. Mr. Neo rose and began a round of applause to which all responded. Mrs. Elswick thanked the Board for the plaque and comments and stated that she felt she had worked with a good group.

In item 9, Board comments, Mr. Neo thanked the Board and staff and wished all a Merry Christmas.

Mr. Deel announced the next meeting for January 19th and called for a motion to adjourn. On motion by Mr. Thornsby and second by Mr. Neo and there being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.