

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street for their workshop session. All commissioners was present.

1. Chairman Eller called the workshop session to order.
2. Chairman Eller asks Patrice Roesler with the NCACC to speak. Ms. Roesler introduced Dr. Linda Millsaps, Research Director and David Nicolson, Outreach Associate. Ms. Roelser stated that they were there to discuss the Consolidations of Social Services and Public Health in North Carolina Counties. Ms. Roelser asks Dr. Linda Millsaps to give the slide presentation.
3. Dr. Millsaps thanked the board for allowing them to come and discuss this issue and stated that the questions from a Commissioners perspective should be:
  - a. What are your legal responsibilities as commissioners as it relates to public health and social services?
  - b. What are your options as you address those responsibilities?
  - c. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each model?
  - d. What can we learn from other counties experiences?
  - e. How does this relate to Graham County?
4. Dr. Millsaps stated that you must assure that public health services are available according to G.S. 130A-1.1 “to ensure that all citizens in the State have equal access to essential public health services”
  - a. Health support services
  - b. Environmental health services
  - c. Personal health services
  - d. Public health preparedness
5. Dr. Millsaps stated that the County Responsibility for Social Services is to:
  - a. Determine the type of organization that will provide social services in the county.
  - b. Determine the type of governing board for the organization.
  - c. Determine the number of people on the social services board (3 or 5) and appoint a portion of them (if you have a social services board)
  - d. Approve fees
  - e. Approve the director’s salary
  - f. Appoint a social services attorney
  - g. Determine level of financial assistance for certain disabled persons under the State-County Special Assistance program.
6. Dr. Millsaps stated that the County Responsibilities Social Services Board (or Commission serving in the role) are:
  - a. Recruit and select a director.
  - b. Discipline or dismiss, subject to State Personnel Rules.
  - c. Evaluate performance.
  - d. Note: If consolidated this falls to the county manager with “advice and consent” of the board of commissioners, or similar body.
  - e. Advising county and municipal authorities regarding “policies and plans to improve the community’s social conditions”
  - f. Consult with the director about problems relating to the director’s office
  - g. Assisting the director in planning department budgets
  - h. Establishing policies for programs established by G.S. 108A
  - i. Providing services for a fee (example: home studies for the court system)
  - j. Other duties as required by state officials: Reviewing cases involving suspected public assistance fraud.
7. SB 594 Family and Child Protection and Accountability Act
  - a. 2015: State failed all 16 federal criteria, including basic safety of children in the system.
  - b. Concerns: 100 different systems, limited resources, limited sharing of best practices.
  - c. Move from county based system to a regional system.
  - d. Note: While the discussion focuses on Child Welfare, the bill regionalizes all Social Service Systems.
  - e. \$3.1 million to hire a consultant.
  - f. Bill will pass the Senate shortly.
  - g. NCACC is engaged in the discussion.
8. Primary Options for Organization
  - a. Host a County Health Department
  - b. Join a Multi-County District Health Department

- c. Participate in Public Health Authority
  - d. Form a Consolidation Human Services Agency.
  - e. Note: 2012 legislation both expanded the types of counties that can have a consolidated system and gave greater flexibility in what agencies include in a consolidation.
9. What is a Consolidated Human Services Agency
- a. Combines some or all of a county's human services functions into a single agency.
  - b. "Carry out the functions of any combination of commissions, boards, or agencies appointed by the board of commissioners or acting under and pursuant to the authority of the board".
  - c. Typically governed by a consolidated human services board.
10. Discussed Major Legal Differences.
11. Other Key Differences with Consolidation.
- a. The county manager appoints the director, with the advice and consent of the board.
  - b. That person must either meet public health qualifications or appoint someone who does.
  - c. The person with public health qualifications must also be approved by the county manager.
  - d. The extent of the director's authority to appoint staff is determined by the county manager.
  - e. Employees are subject to county personnel policies unless the board decides otherwise (county public health employees are under State personnel laws).
  - f. NOTE: With consolidation the County Commissioners can:
    - i. Abolish the board of health
    - ii. Have all the powers and duties of the local board of health.
12. School of Government Study Findings of 2013 for Consolidated Human Services Agency
- a. May be able to save money by combining administrative functions
  - b. No hard evidence of cost savings
  - c. Can cross-train staff and leadership can work together to prioritize use of resources
  - d. Requires a leader with training in multiple disciplines
  - e. Opportunity to coordinate services and eliminate duplication of services
  - f. Challenge to coordinate services because of differences in clients, mission and funding
  - g. Has lines of authority that are similar to other county departments
  - h. Protection against political hiring (provided by State Personnel Act) is lost in CHSA Model
  - i. Concern about ability of consolidated board or BOCC to make effective decisions given the need to know the rules and regulations of public health, social services and mental health.
13. The board had questions concerning the appointments of an advisory board and their role and the ability to find people willing to serve in that capacity.
14. The board thanked the NCACC Representatives for coming and educating them on the laws governing a consolidation.

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Keith Eller, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

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Connie Orr, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

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Jacob Nelms, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Dale E. Wiggins, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Raymond Williams, Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board