

BEAUFORT COUNTY DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS ADVISORY BOARD  
100 Clear Water Way  
Beaufort, SC 29906  
January 20, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Wendy Bukowski, Lea Cifranick-McFadden, Frankie Middleton, Mary Ann Radke, Galen Sturup Comeau, Lynn Russo, Andy Thacker

MEMBERS ABSENT: Faye Alston, Audra Antonacci (Ex-officio)

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Love, Janice Beach, Beth Cody, Terry Geitner, Cherie Scoggins, Joyce McBride, Darnell Hazard

GUESTS PRESENT: Justin Palmer

I. CALL TO ORDER – Galen Sturup Comeau, Chairman

Mr. Comeau called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. WELCOMING GUESTS

Mr. Galen Sturup Comeau welcomed Mr. Palmer.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21, 2025, BOARD MEETING

A VOTE WAS TAKEN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 21, 2025 MEETING. A MOTION WAS MADE BY LYNN RUSSO AND SECONDED BY MARY ANN RADKE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. ADOPTION OF JANUARY 20, 2026, AGENDA

A VOTE WAS TAKEN TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 20, 2026. A MOTION WAS MADE BY GALEN STURUP COMEAU AND SECONDED BY WENDY BUKOWSKI TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Galen Sturup Comeau, Chairman

Mr. Sturup Comeau reminded everyone that March is Disabilities Awareness Month, and we will need volunteers to attend council meetings in March to accept proclamations. He asked if it would be more beneficial for a client and staff to attend with a board member. Everyone agreed that it would be a great idea. Ms. Beach will reach out to the residential department to see which clients and staff would be able to go to each meeting and let board members know so they can sign up to go to the meetings. Once names are confirmed she will send out the schedule again of who will be going to each meeting.

Mr. Comeau turned the meeting over to Mary Ann Radke to discuss the reports on DSP turnover and the Joseph Clinton Smith case. Ms. Radke was concerned that in South Carolina DSP turnover affects clients negatively. Some of the other board members did not agree that was the case with the report. Mr. Geitner said that the clients depend on stability. When new staff come in, it is like having to start over with the clients.

Ms. Radke talked about the Joseph Clinton Smith case. He was convicted of capital murder for killing someone with a hammer, stealing his shoes and \$140. He was sentenced to death in Alabama. His attorneys argued that his low IQ scores should be taken into consideration. They ranged from 72 to 78. The state of Alabama says he should be considered for execution since his scores were consistently over 70. His attorneys have appealed against his case to higher courts. The outcome keeps changing, but he has been on death row since 1997.

Ms. Lynn Russo said she has been doing community reviews of the Bluffton houses for years. When they make a recommendation of things that need to be taken care of, they never know what was done to correct the issues. She asked if the reports of the corrections they recommend could be sent to them with status updates.

## VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Bill Love

A. Department Updates – Nursing – Ava White – Ms. White had an appointment and could not be here. Mr. Love reported that everything is pretty much going well. She documented the falls. We have had 5 - 8 falls a month. They have been monitoring that very carefully. There are two main concerns. W. R.'s hospitalization frequency is increasing due to recurrent falls, chronic pneumonia, malnourishment, and bowel/bladder dysfunction. His PCP has recommended a transition to a skilled nursing facility. V. B. was recommended for higher level of care due to worsening dementia and poorly controlled hypertension.

EI/Case Management – Cherie Scoggins – Prior to this month, if somebody became eligible for services they would automatically get placed on the waiting list for the Medicaid Waivers. That is no longer how the state is going to be transitioning. It will be on the Early Interventionist and Case Manager to work with the families to place them on the waiting list for waivers.

Day Program – Terry Geitner – Mr. Geitner said everything is going well. They are very active – outings, field trips, internal projects going on, still host Vietnam Veterans meetings, just started back with dog therapy. We are getting ready to go through licensing and standards, so preliminary things are being done.

Budget – Beth Cody – Ms. Cody said we are a little over halfway through this year. Revenue is 43% but does not include December. Expenses are 46%.

B. Audra's Survey – Mr. Love said that Audra is a Deputy County Administrator. They sent out 80 surveys and 47 responded. Out of that they came up with certain recommendations and evaluations. It is a typical survey, but like most surveys it captures what people say at the moment. The next day it may change. There are a couple of things I have an issue with, but I won't talk about that. Basically, they say they welcome the opportunities to work at DSN. They feel that things in the homes work really well. Most of the 47 responses say there seems to be a problem with communication. Communication is a problem everywhere. For some reason they feel they are not getting enough information. They feel there is favoritism – an in group and an out group. Now we have to come up with a way to respond to their issues.

- C. Goals for New Year – Item not discussed
- D. Removing a Client – Item not discussed
- E. Laura Fanelli Email – Item not discussed
- F. New Board Members – If you know of anyone who would like to be a member of our board please ask them to apply.

VII. DEPUTY DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Wanda Mayse

Ms. Mayse was not present. Darnell Hazard and Joyce McBride reported that the residential department has 8 vacancies, 4 are onboarding, and they have 3 interviews lined up (one was today). We had licensing at some of the homes and they all did well. We continue to update residential plans. We had one client at Waddell who moved to Bostick. Her sister felt she needed more monitoring than what she was getting at Waddell which is a high functioning home. We do have a potential person who can move into Waddell. We do have another client at Center who will be leaving. We are looking for placement for him. We have done everything we can do for him, but he needs more than we can provide.

VIII. POLICY/DIRECTIVES COMMITTEE – Frankie Middleton, Chair, Wendy Bukowski, Co-Chair

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Hospitality Committee, Wendy Bukowski, Chair – N/A
- Personnel Committee, Lynn Russo, Chair – N/A
- Public Relations/Legislative Committee, Galen Sturup Comeau, Chair – N/A

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

XI. The next board meeting will be held on **April 21, 2026, at 4:00 PM:**

**100 Clear Water Way  
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XII. ADJOURNMENT

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 5:00 PM.

  
Galen Sturup Comeau, Chairman

  
Lynn Russo, Vice-Chairman

4/21/2026  
Date

4/21/2026  
Date