



Minutes from the December 4, 2025 Meeting

Council Members Present (15): Rep. Terry Alexander, Frances Anderson, Tony Cantone, Jacque Curtin, Mary Lynne Diggs, Dr. James Durant, Sen. Jason Elliott, John Hayes, Jack McBride, David Lisk, Dave Morley (Chair), Dorothy Priester, Dr. Amy Williams (Vice Chair), Wes Wooten, Sue Williams

Council Members Absent (9): Dr. Robert Bank, Rep. Shannon Erickson, John Hayes, Sen. Greg Hembree, Constance Holloway, Jesica Mackey, Eunice Medina, Janie Neeley, Roger Pryor, Dr. Edward Simmer, Ellen Weaver

Others Present (26): Alisha Green, Bett Williams, Betty Gardiner, BJ Tucker, David O'Kelly, Diamond Samuel, Dr. Emika Aroh, Emily Prillaman, Gina Beebe, Jade Wright, Karen Oliver, Kate Roach, Kenna Hoover, Dr. Kerry Cordan, Laura Baker, Martha Strickland, Michele Bowers, Molly Tuck, Samantha Ingram, Sarah Crowne, Sue Williams, Tammy Graham, Teke Burrell, Van-Kim Lin

The meeting was called to order at 1:44 p.m.

Chairman Dave Morley asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. James Durant made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wes Wooten. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the September 18, 2025, minutes. Mr. Wooten made the motion, seconded by Mr. Jack McBride. The motion was unanimously approved.

Sue Williams, Children's Trust of SC, CEO, provided an overview of the study, the Economic Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect. She shared that adverse childhood experiences (ACES) costs \$74.7 billion annually in economic losses across South Carolina. The study suggests that the state could save \$2.1 billion in annual recurring impact by modest prevention and intervention efforts.

Rep. Terry Alexander asked how they are reducing debt. Ms. Williams responded that they are implementing home-visiting programs and professional development for childcare providers.

Bett Williams, Children's Trust of SC, Chief Communications Officer, shared updates on the efforts of the Communications Roundtable. The goals of this group are to align family-facing portals, share a content and events calendars, and create an almanac. First Steps will implement consumer research to inform work across the system.

Ann Vandervliet invited agency partners to share updates. Michelle Bowers, Department of Social Services Program Manager II, shared that funding was paused due to the government shutdown, but families will not lose eligibility. Mary Lynne Diggs, SC Head Start Director, shared that funding was impacted due to the shutdown, but it varied by county. She also shared there is an interim director of HSS assigned to Head Start that is working on improving the foster care system. Dr. James Durant shared his involvement with children with autism.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn. Sue Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. McBride. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.