

Baltimore County Department of Social Services Board Minutes

The meeting of the Advisory Board of the Baltimore County Department of Social Services was held October 17, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheri Jackson; Vice-Chair, Gregg Powell; Chair, Orrester Shaw, Maria Wetherington and Rosalyn Wiley. Karen Bethea and Donald Gabriel attended via conference phone.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Stefanie Bronson, Lisa Simon Jablon

OTHERS PRESENT: Gregory Wm. Branch; Director, Mark Millsbaugh; Deputy Director, Marsha Parham; Executive Director, Office of Housing, and Kathy Wynn; Executive Secretary to the Director.

I. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of July 18, 2016 as presented.

Motion by: Orrester Shaw
Second by: Maria Wetherington
Decision: Unanimous Approval

Motion: To approve the minutes of September 19, 2016 as presented.

Motion by: Orrester Shaw
Second by: Maria Wetherington
Decision: Unanimous Approval

II. Director's Report

Marsha Parham presented the Office of Housing's Executive Directors Report.

Financial

The new federal budget year began October 1. We are currently operating on a Continuing Resolution (CR) until Congress passes a 2017 Appropriations Bill. Projects indicate that the Appropriations Bill may be passed.

Fair Housing Training

The Office of Housing's management team participated in a training to further education efforts on this topic. Training will be available to board members interested in receiving.

HUD Listening Session – Philadelphia, PA

Ms. Parham was one of a select group of Executive Directors who participated in a HUD Listening Session in September. Participation was by invitation. Directors were asked for their feedback on upcoming policy and system changes for the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Baltimore County is signed up to be one of five agencies to be the first participants for the new inspection protocol. A total of 250 agencies will participate in the pilot. Two housing inspections will be combined; the Uniform Physical Conditions Standards (UPCS) and the Housing Quality Standards (HQS). This will be a significant change for jurisdictions not inspecting under this model; Baltimore County already uses this model for inspections.

Wait List

Ms. Parham is working with Mr. Millspaugh on how to address Housing's wait list. There are currently 35,000 families on the list which increases by 400 families a month in Baltimore County.

Housing plans to send letters in January to individuals on the wait list to verify their continued interest in remaining on the list. If a response is not received within 30 days from the date the letter was sent, they will be removed from the waiting list.

Per the HUD Conciliation Agreement, Baltimore County must locate 2,000 families into defined areas. Factors that will make this a challenge are lack of transportation and that families want to remain close to family.

To be issued a voucher in Baltimore County, you have to live and/or work in the County. Once the voucher is issued, recipients can live wherever they choose to within the country; Baltimore County retains the rights to the voucher regardless of where the voucher recipient is living.

Mr. Millspaugh provided the following updates:

Critical Staffing Needs

In past meetings it was discussed that 150 positions were pulled from local departments and the Department of Human Resources (DHR) at the request of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). Seventy-eight positions were returned back to DHR. In turn, DHR announced their decision not to give those positions back to counties that lost them in the process but to instead retain in a pool for local departments to request. Only fifty-eight of the seventy-eight were placed in this pool. Baltimore County requested ten positions via a letter to DHR's Director of Human Resources. DHR received 51 requests for positions from DSS jurisdictions. In the interim, they were notified by DBM of a budget reduction and will make no movement on these positions.

Accreditation

One of our colleagues has received funding approval from DHR for re-accreditation which will cost \$36,000. In light of this information, Baltimore County will move ahead with this process.

DHR Customer Service Excellence Award

Last week was National Customer Service Week; DHR hosted a Customer Service Excellence Award ceremony on October 4 to recognize employees that display a strong commitment to excellence in customer service. Each jurisdiction was asked to nominate an employee for this award.

Through our PQI process, Gary Sappington; a Family Investment Administration (FIA) worker was nominated and recognized. Mr. Sappington was very appreciative in receiving the award.

10th Annual In Plain Sight Domestic Violence Conference

DSS hosted the 10th Annual In Plain Sight Domestic Violence Conference on September 30. Human Relations was a sponsor this year; their expertise and assistance was appreciated in coordinating this conference.

Golden Fork Award

For the first time ever; Baltimore County received The Golden Fork Award for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This award recognizes accuracy and timeliness of food supplement benefit issuance. An event to recognize employees for this accomplishment is being planned.

Labor Management Committee Meeting

Mr. Millspaugh reported at the July Board meeting that a number of social workers had requested to establish a Labor Management Committee to discuss personnel and salary related issues.

The first meeting was held on October 7. In addition to Mr. Millspaugh and Dr. Branch, attending from management were Kevin Reed; Deputy Director, Finance and Administration and Louis LaRicci; Chief, Human Resources. Ground rules for this committee were discussed at this first meeting.

DHR Transition

Secretary Malhotra will be transitioning from Secretary of DHR to serve as the Governor's Chief of Staff effective October 26. Greg James, Deputy Secretary for Operations and Acting Deputy Secretary of Programs, will be the Acting Secretary for DHR upon Secretary Malhotra's departure.

III. Old Business

Generous Juror Fund

The Jury Commissioner who oversaw this fund retired which was the reason a response was not received. Mr. Millspaugh reached out to the individual who now oversees the fund and will speak with her next week to discuss the Board's assistance in promoting the program. Information resulting from this conversation will be provided at the next Board meeting.

IV. New Business

Holiday Message

The board sent a holiday greeting to employees via HHS News last year; it is time to prepare for this year. Ms. Wynn will forward the recent picture taken of the board to Ms. Bethea who will draft the message for this year.

V. Remarks of the Chairperson

MASSB Board Conference

Dr. Branch and Mr. Powell attend the MASSB Conference last week. The Paul Hastings Award for Innovative Programs was presented at the conference. Board members voted at last month's meeting to submit the Youth Empowered for Success Program for Baltimore County for this award. Baltimore County received second place and was awarded \$600.00. First place went to St. Mary's County for their respite care for the homeless program.

Mr. Powell suggested at next year's conference, Baltimore County provide a video presentation as opposed to providing a synopsis or Power Point presentation. Members unanimously agreed.

VI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 5:22 p.m.

Motion by: Maria Wetherington
Second by: Orrester Shaw
Decision: Unanimous Approval



Gregory Wm. Branch, M.D., MBA, CPE, FACP