

Baltimore County Department of Social Services Board Minutes

The meeting of the Advisory Board of the Baltimore County Department of Social Services was held November 21, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Stefanie Bronson, Gregg Powell, Chair; and Rosalyn Wiley. Donald Gabriel attended via conference phone.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Bethea, Lisa Simon Jablon, Sheri Jackson, Orrester Shaw, Maria Wetherington.

OTHERS PRESENT: Gregory Wm. Branch, Director; Mark Millspaugh, Deputy Director; Marcia 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 October 17, 2016 as presented.

Motion by: Stefanie Bronson
Second by: Rosalyn Wiley
Decision: Unanimous Approval

II. Director's Report

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

VASH Voucher

The Office of Housing was notified their request for Project Based VASH vouchers was denied. Baltimore County has a number of VASH vouchers where other jurisdictions have none was one of the reasons for the denial. The opportunity to appeal the decision was offered; an application will be resubmitted within the next ten business days.

Project Based Voucher – Dunfield Apartments

The project based voucher with Dunfield apartments, located in Nottingham, will start January 1, 2017. They will provide 78 project based voucher units.

Financial

Housing will overspend an estimated one million dollars, which had been anticipated. An estimated 5.2 million will be spent. Baltimore County is in a position where if we have to scale the program down, it can be done without moving anyone off the program. Housing is funded on what is spent the prior year.

Mr. Gabriel asked how frequently County audit reports occur. Financial reports are sent to HUD on a monthly basis. HUD has the option to perform audits on an annual basis.

Housing is audited independently on an annual basis in conjunction with the county budget. This audit report is sent to HUD. Housing has passed this audit every year.

State programs get audited every three years and annual reviews are done on corrective actions. Most of the DSS programs go through this every three year process.

The next item of discussion will be the waiting list which is twelve years with an estimated 500 applications being received each month.

Mr. Millspaugh provided the following updates:

Golden Fork Award Employee Recognition

Mr. Millspaugh and Felecia Billingsley, Assistant Director of the Family Investment Administration (FIA), have visited the Catonsville, Dundalk and Reisterstown district offices to recognize employees for receiving the Golden Fork Award mentioned at last month's meeting. Within the next two weeks they will visit the Towson and Dundalk offices.

VOCA Grant

The department was successful in securing two new grants from the same funding source, The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP).

Domestic Violence – Funds were awarded to hire a full-time advocate who will service children and their families who have been affected by a domestic violence fatality or near fatality, providing up to eight sessions of immediate direct therapy.

Child Abuse – Domestic violence has been seen in about 20 to 25 percent of Baltimore County child protective services cases. An expert on domestic violence will provide consultation to families throughout the life of a case to ensure the victim is receiving the services/assistance they need. In many cases, the abuser and victim remain together.

The second part of this grant is in line with our partnering for success model. The concept of this partnership is training our CPS staff in communicating effectively with other practitioners.

The other grant awarded from GOCCP for \$138,635 is to expand physician hours in the Child Advocacy Center (CAC). Only one application per organization was permitted, a telephone call to the GOCCP was made asking if DSS could submit two; GOCCP allowed both applications to be submitted.

The CAC physician's expertise will be utilized to develop a training curriculum for community based pediatricians. Some hospitals have a child protection team but some do not, nor do urgent care centers. We are excited about these grants which are for two years.

Dr. Wiley asked if educators have a checklist to use for reporting signs of abuse. In Baltimore County, every school has a liaison the department trains. These liaisons are the go to person the teacher would contact to file a report.

FIA Caseloads

Baltimore County is not the traditional welfare office, Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) pales in comparison to individuals who receive food stamps. An important note is that cases are trending downward; we are on our consecutive year of decline. An estimated 70,000 cases were closed due to the Able-bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) requirements.

Accreditation

DHR central has agreed to move forward with twelve jurisdictions that want to pursue accreditation and will cover the \$36,000 cost.

The department is systematically going through and updating every policy and procedure document to insure they are in line with the standards. We are currently working on Human Resources policies. Once completed, Mr. Millspaugh will invite Laura Culbertson to attend the January meeting to discuss next steps to prepare for accreditation.

III. Old Business

Generous Juror Fund

Mr. Millspaugh spoke with Rachel Christopher who now oversees this program. Ms. Christopher seemed open to the Board's assistance in promoting this program to increase revenue but wanted to see how this would be accomplished. Would a sub-committee of the Board be interested in working with the Court on this initiative? Members can email Ms. Wynn if interested.

IV. New Business

None.

V. Remarks of the Chairperson

Congratulations on the awards, the Board continues to be impressed with services provided to Baltimore County. Thank you for what you do. There are positive programs in Baltimore County the community needs to know about and the Board wants to assist in that effort. Keep in mind the video presentation for the MASSB conference mentioned at last month's meeting in preparation for when it is time to present at next year's conference.

Mr. Powell wished everyone a happy holiday season.

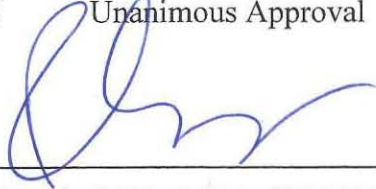
VI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

Motion by: Stefanie Bronson

Second by: Gregg Powell

Decision: Unanimous Approval



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