

Baltimore County Department of Social Services Board Minutes

The meeting of the Advisory Board of the Baltimore County Department of Social Services was held January 09, 2017 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 and Orrester Shaw.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Millspaugh; Deputy Director, and Kathy Wynn; Executive Secretary to the Director.

I. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of November 21, 2016 as presented.

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

II. Director's Report

Housing

Waiting List Purge –Postcards have been sent to all persons on the Housing Choice Voucher waiting list requesting they respond by the end of February if they are interested in remaining on list. If a response is not received, a second written communication will be sent, followed by a phone call. Our goal is to have persons on this list that are living and working in Baltimore County and interested in the program. Baltimore County is the only jurisdiction that has an open list.

Mr. Gabriel inquired if cuts are anticipated with the new administration? Baltimore County received 98% of last year's funding for the first quarter. HUD is holding back some funding anticipating cuts. At this time, it is not known what the new administration will do. Baltimore County is not leasing up to the full numbers, there are 5,748 housing choice vouchers but only 4,944 are filled. There is a lot of forecasting that goes into this program; HUD provides the forecasting tool.

FIA

The end of the calendar year ended on a high note, FIA ended the year for the month of December with a 99% compliance rate in timely processing of benefits, outperforming all other metro jurisdictions.

A vital signs monitoring process is in place that allows leadership to be aware of any issues much sooner. A half hour conversation is held with the district offices so leadership knows by Tuesday of each week if there was a problem the prior week and make whatever corrections are needed.

One issue moving forward is tied to the budget. Food stamp caseloads have started to decline. Due to this decline, the State is saying we don't need much overtime. For the first quarter which started in January, Baltimore County took a 10% cut in overtime funding.

Partnering for Success IV-E Waiver Program

One hundred twenty community based mental health therapists in Baltimore County have been trained in CBT+. An equivalent number of our own DSS workers have also been trained. There has been more interest in this program and it is growing. As the State starts to determine which evidence based practices are sustainable and successful, Mr. Millspaugh is confident they will continue to support Baltimore County and move us to the state model. The number of children we have directly referred is relatively small, under 100 in CBT+ treatment but the number of children in the Baltimore County community will be in the thousands as more partners are on board and using CBT+.

Drumcastle Updates

Progress continues on the building of the new garage. Anticipated completion date is this time next year.

Leadership is in the process of renovation planning of this building which includes all three floors. OIT and Property Management brought in space planners to see how most efficiently and effectively we can serve clients in a secure and safe environment. DSS and Department of Health (DOH) teams will also be integrated where it makes sense to do so. All direct face to face client services will be located on the first floor, Children's Services, Family Services and legal on the second floor and administrative services on the third floor. In addition to multipurpose rooms, there will be rooms for FTDM meetings and group evening meetings.

The Chair asked if staff would remain at the Owings Mills campus. At this time, half from DSS and the DOH will remain at Owings Mills, but that is subject to change.

The planning of this will happen within the next few months, we want to be prepared for staff to move back as soon as the garage is finished.

DHR Secretary

Departments were informed this morning we have a new Secretary, Lourdes R. Padilla. Ms. Padilla comes from Pennsylvania, having been the Deputy Secretary of Income Maintenance.

Legislative Session

The 2017 legislative session opens tomorrow. The board member role regarding legislation can be as large or small as they want it to be.

Generous Juror Fund

Mr. Millspaugh has not heard from the new Jury Commissioner, Rachel Christopher. He hopes to have something to report at the next meeting. Ms. Wynn has not heard from board members regarding sub-committee interest in working with the court on this initiative.

III. New Business

Resignation

Ms. Wetherington has resigned from the Board. Due to her new job, she is unable to attend board meetings. She is sorry to leave but just could not fulfill her commitment to the board. She did have some board member recommendations. We are also looking for other resumes if members have someone they want to recommend.

IV. Remarks of the Chairperson

Board members are anxious to assist the department. Mr. Millspaugh had some thoughts for Mr. Powell – connecting with older foster youth, Ms. Bronson from a resource parent's perspective and Ms. Wiley – IEPs for foster children or Infants & Toddlers social work services. Mr. Millspaugh will bring a list to the next meeting of additional programs/events for board member participation.

Mr. Gabriel inquired if there were any other funds coming in from individuals involved with the Fund for Social Welfare. DSS does not solicit donations but will accept donations (not monetary) and services with County Council approval; e.g., backpacks for school, stuffed animals for foster children and Hair Cuttery for back to school. Santa Claus Anonymous donates gift certificates during the holiday season. At the Young Parent Support Center, a gentleman comes in on a specific month and leaves an envelope with \$500. He does not wish to tell us who he is. There is a process in place to accept this.

V. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Motion by: Rosalyn Wiley
Second by: Gregg Powell
Decision: Unanimous Approval



Mark Millspaugh