

Kent County Department of Social Services
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2021

Present: Kevin Karpowicz, Beverly Birkmire, Olythea Hunley, Shelly Neal-Edwards, Charlotte Potts, Washington, Tracey Williams, Caitlan Garland and Jen Cole

Absent: William Washington, Bob Jacobs and David May

Presentation: KCDSS FIA Services and Response - Julie Handzo

Julie gave an overview of improved changes to her programs for customer service and how FIA is working with customers affected by the pandemic. If any committee members know of someone who may need assistance and could use help through the CARES foundation please let Julie know so that she can go through the proper channels.

Chairperson's Report:

- Approval of minutes from November 16, 2020. Motion to approve was made by Beverly Birkmire and 2nd by Tracey Williams. All were in favor.

➤ **Kent County CARES Foundation**

- United Way Grant Opportunity - Bank of American is offering a \$25,000 grant for Maryland counties. Kent has applied for a portion of the grant.
- Website - Dr. Karpowicz reports it is up and functioning. He is also hoping to establish a Facebook page for notifications. .
- MASSB Conference Call - Attendees discussed clever ways to fund raise. Hoping for Kent to be able to try some new fundraising ideas in the fall. MASSB has a new handbook for recruitment and committee members. Jen will send the draft out for review and to discuss at next month's meeting.

➤ **Director's Report:**

- **Divisional Performance Report** – November and December was reviewed by attending members. Child Support income has decreased. The second stimulus checks were not eligible for off set. The FIA report is difficult to collect due to statewide processing. The division may have to revisit how to report local numbers. Child Welfare Services has 4 children and 1 voluntary in placement and 5 adult guardians.
- **Updates for KCDSS**– The Governor's budget consist of strict spending and hiring freezes. The Governor allowed 90 vacant FIA positions to be filled, however, Kent did not qualify even with 2 vacancies. The HR administrator has agreed to be acting Finance Officer however DBM denied the request for her reclass. The agency will continue to pursue her reclass. Currently recruiting for a Social Work Supervisor. We are hoping to make a selection soon.
- **E&E Pilot Program** - This program was postponed due to system complications. Washington County will move forward with testing this program and work with the developer. Once that has been completed, Kent and Frederick counties will begin piloting the system, as we had planned.
- **CPS/APS Hotline** - New statewide software will be launched in the near future to direct phone calls to the county in which they pertain to. Currently calls are being filtered to the DSS office during office hours and to the State Police during after hours.
- **Staff Appreciation** - Shelly expressed staff gratitude for the kind words of appreciation from the committee and the Christmas cookies. Also the recognition of Curtis Olsen for staff appreciation and the donation to the Human Society in his name. Curtis was highlighted in the Fall Newsletter, Facebook and the Agency Weekly Update.
- **Strategic Plan** - The agency is in the process of reviewing our Strategic Plan.
- **Martin Luther King Celebration** - This year's celebration was live on youtube and was fantastic and uplifting. Caitlan suggested committee members log in and watch the celebration.
- **COVID19 Vaccine for KCPS Teachers** - Tracey reports the school system will receive only 50% of the vaccine. The school systems priority will be teachers and instructional assistance for the first round.

- Motion to Adjourn: With no additional business at hand, a motion to adjourn at 4:30 pm. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
- The next meeting will be held Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 3:30pm via Google Meet.

Respectfully submitted,
Jen Cole
Executive Assistant