

**HARFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**Citizen Advisory Board**  
**Minutes of January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**Virtual**

**Members Present:** Andrée Mountain, Alicia Hamilton, Pamela Smith, Kourtney Cluster, Pat Weaver, Vicki Jones, Daniel Rusin, Samantha Harris (Aide to Patrick Vincenti), Cynthia Phillips,

**Members Absent:** Dea Galloway, Jim Kuterbach, Christine Gerhardt

**Staff Present:** Cora Grishkot, Kristy Louvado

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p. m.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

- The minutes from the December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting were reviewed.
- The December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, minutes were unanimously approved upon the motion of Pamela Smith with a second from Alicia Hamilton.

**2. Board Chair Report (Andrée Mountain)**

- Welcome
  - Welcome and introductions with new member Cynthia Phillips.
  - New member orientation was held January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
  - New members have requested a stat sheet to familiarize the needs currently.
  - Information requested is, number of staff, current vacancies, and current caseloads.
  - Leadership will prepare this information for the March board meeting and update quarterly.
  - Other requested information is for adult aids, project home, Comar regulations, and Kinship training.

**3. Director's Report (Cora Grishkot)**

- Cookies with Cora
  - As a result of the employee survey, we began a new initiative called 'Cookies with Cora'.
  - The goal is to create an atmosphere where staff can spend time with the Director voicing concerns, sharing innovative ideas and or having a conversation.
  - Each office will have a designated time for staff to participate.
  - Two sessions have been held this week with the last one scheduled for next week at Swan Creek.
  - The event will be updated quarterly.

- **Kinfirst**
  - We are working to start a Kinfirst support group as well as training.
  - As a result of the new policy, Kin are now able to receive support from the agency.
  - We are implementing a Kinfirst closet that will house items that Kin may be in immediate need of such as pack & plays and mattresses.
  - We are researching programs that provide smoke detectors.
  - Alicia suggested SIAB and the Knott Foundation as avenues to research possible grants.
  - Kourtney suggested Foster the Family for clothing and shoes.
- **Youth Advisory Board**
  - The Director met with the youth advisory board this week.
  - They along with our aging out coordinator and services AD will attend February's meeting to seek guidance or possible mentorship.

#### **4. General Discussion Topics**

- N/A

#### **5. New Business**

- **AD Hoc Committee - Governance**
  - There are some conflicts with the Handbook and the By Laws.
  - Andr  e is requesting the board to establish a new committee to review documents and resolve discrepancies.
  - Dan, Christine, Cynthia and Alica will make up this committee.

#### **6. Old Business**

- **Central Document Archive**
  - Alicia added a fundraising tracker spreadsheet to the drive.

#### **7. Committee Reports**

- **CQI**
  - Meeting was held yesterday to plan spring staff activities.
  - Staff will participate in "Gardens of Gratitude" and a St. Patrick's Day activity in March.
  - Next months meeting will begin to plan the 2025 staff appreciation event.
- **Finance**
  - N/A
- **Events and Fundraising**
  - Committee report was shared with members detailing the possible fundraising events for the year.

- The goal is to focus on one signature event the board can grow each year.
  - Members discussed logistics and possibilities for the suggested events.
  - Members suggest more opportunities for the board to attend outreach events to get people familiar with the board and the purpose of the fundraising.
  - Events & fundraising committee will reconvene to discuss further.
- Public Relations
  - N/A
- Board Administration
  - There are currently two vacancies.
  - The committee will meet in early February to work on filling the spots.
- Legislative
  - Kourtney advised of upcoming senate bills that could affect Child Support, family law regarding CINA (Child in need of assistance) and APS reporting.

#### **8. Action Items**

- N/A

#### **9. Next Meetings**

- February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 pm.

The next meeting will be **Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 2. S. Bond Street, Suite 300, Bel Air, MD 21014**

Respectfully submitted by: Kristy Louvado.