

## **HARFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **Citizen Advisory Board**

**Minutes of February 20th, 2025**

#### **In Person**

**Members Present:** Andrée Mountain, Pamela Smith, Kourtney Cluster, Vicki Jones, Daniel Rusin, Cynthia Phillips (“C”), Christine Gerhardt, Angela Mangione

**Members Absent:** Alicia Hamilton, Dea Galloway, Jim Kuterbach, Pat Weaver, Debbie Button (Aide to Nolanda Robert)

**Staff Present:** Cora Grishkot, Jill Latteri, Kristy Louvado, Shelly Heller, Lisa A. Miller

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

### **1. Youth Advisory Board**

- The initial segment of the meeting was focused on fostering connections with the Youth Advisory Board. This gathering served as an important platform for board members to introduce themselves, share their backgrounds, and discuss their aspirations for the board. Members engaged in meaningful conversations about the objectives and goals that the board aims to achieve. Much insight was gained during this meeting will undoubtedly guide our efforts as we move forward in our mission to support and empower the youth in our community.

### **1. Approval of Minutes**

- The minutes from the January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, meeting were reviewed.
- The January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, minutes were unanimously approved upon the motion of Kourtney Cluster with a second from Pamela Smith.

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

- Welcome new member
  - The board welcomes Angela Mangione.
  - New member orientation will be held soon.
- Review of annual confidentiality/disclosure documents
  - Members will sign annual disclosure and confidentiality documents this evening.
  - Andrée provided an overview of the documents and emphasized the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

### **3. Director’s Report (Cora Grishkot)**

- Donations
  - Cora expressed gratitude to board member Vicki Jones for the generous donation of food items collected.
- Matrix

- In May of last year, the board approved \$3000 in funds designated to Kinship Care.
  - The department has conducted a thorough assessment to identify the most essential items required and compiled a comprehensive list. Formal request is being made to release the allocated funds for disbursement.
- Services (Jill Latteri)
  - The Department is moving along in our Kinship journey
  - Staff are actively engaged in various trainings and work groups focused on the newly implemented policies and procedures that took effect in December.
  - We meet bi-weekly with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to engage in comprehensive debriefing sessions. We reflect on the lessons learned and ways we can improve.
  - The state is also conducting Kinship roundtable discussions.
- FIA
  - The benefits office is still seeing an uptick in applications. We received 1300 applications in January of 2024. In January of 2025 we received 1600 applications.
  - Two-year food stamp evaluation begins in March.
- Child Support
  - Child Support AD is settling into her new role.
  - She will attend a meeting in the future.
- LGA
  - Just completed our quarter two budget.
  - Funding for the next fiscal year remains level.
- Vacancies
  - Each office currently has vacancies we are working to fill.
  - Currently have several staff members out on extended leave.
- Dress Code
  - Beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, we will return to business professional dress code.

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

- N/A

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

- CY 2025 Focus
  - Events and fundraising committee met to determine next steps.
  - Committee proposes we move forward with the mini golf event to be held in late September.
  - The goal is to start small and grow the event each year.
  - Members researching locations and restaurants to find the best fit.
  - Proposal for Mini golf fundraiser was unanimously approved upon the motion of Kourtney Cluster with a second from Pamela Smith.

## 6. Old Business

- Central Document Archive
  - N/A
- HC DSS Statistics/Demographics
  - Stats will be prepared for the March meeting and updated quarterly.

## 7. Committee Reports

- CQI
  - Meeting was held today.
  - Members are working on updating the Health & Safety Manual and implementing proposal for Health and Wellness awareness.
  - We are in the early stages of planning the 2025 staff appreciation event.
- Finance
  - Members discuss considering a professional fundraiser.
- Events and Fundraising
  - See above.
- Public Relations
  - Angela and CC will join the public relations committee.
- Board Administration
  - There are no current vacancies.
- Legislative
  - Committee will meet to update the by-laws and handbook.

## 8. Action Items

- N/A

## 9. Next Meetings

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

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

Respectfully submitted by: Kristy Louvado.