

HARFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Citizen Advisory Board
Minutes of May 15, 2025
In Person

Members Present: Alicia Hamilton, Kourtney Cluster, Daniel Rusin, Cynthia Phillips ("C"), Christine Gerhardt, Pat Weaver, Debbie Button (Aide to Nolanda Robert), Vicki Jones, Pamela Smith, Angela Mangione

Members Absent: Andrée Mountain, Jim Kuterbach, Dea Galloway

Staff Present: Kristy Louvado

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

- The minutes from the April 17th, 2025, meeting were reviewed.
- Two corrections were made.
- The April 17th, 2025, minutes were unanimously approved upon the motion of Christine Gerhardt with a second from Pamela Smith.

2. Board Chair Report (Alicia Hamilton on behalf of Andrée Mountain)

- Andrée is unable to attend this evening.
- As we look ahead, three vacancies are set to open in June.
- Board Administration will conduct interviews in June to fill the vacancies.
- Members will convene at the end of May to review applications.

3. Director's Report (Kristy Louvado on behalf of Cora Grishkot)

- The Family & Trauma Institute held its inaugural conference on April 25th, 2025, at Mountain Christian Church. We had over 300 participants. The positive feedback received through evaluations reflects the impact and relevance of the conference.

4. General Discussion Topics

- Donations
 - Congratulations are in order, and a heartfelt thank you goes out to CC for the remarkable achievement of securing a generous \$3,000 donation from Journey of Life.
 - We also received a donation of \$120.00 from Catholic Charities.
 - Members expressed their gratitude to Journey of Life and Catholic Charities for their generous contributions.
 - Funds will be deposited into the MASSB account.

5. New Business

- **Bylaws**
 - Christine is diligently focused on refining the bylaws, ensuring that they are as clear and effective as possible. While the changes are not substantial, her focus is to simplify the language and take out redundancies.
 - Corrections were made to an incomplete citation.
 - Christine has a draft ready for members to review and discuss at the June meeting.
 - Alicia will distribute the draft to members asap so that members will be prepared to vote on the changes in June.
 - Once the review of the bylaws is complete the committee will move on to updating the handbook.
 - Members will determine at an upcoming meeting which documents should house the matrix and strategic plan.
- **Nominating Committee**
 - Alicia's term expires in June.
 - Members of the nominating committee have selected Christine as the new vice chair of the board.
 - Christine will make an informed decision regarding her acceptance once she receives further details about the time commitments involved.
 - Members have elected to continue with Andrée as chair of the board.

6. Old Business

- Kourtney requests the agency update the matrix as the old matrix will be fully funded with the donations received from Journey of Life.
- Kourtney proposes the board consider funding Foster Parent College to help with the recruitment and retention of resource homes as the state is no longer funding this initiative.
- Members discuss looking into how other counties are financing their training initiatives and what other resources could be available.
- Kourtney suggests a request be made to the county to supplement the funding for the training.

7. Committee Reports

- CQI
 - The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 20th to continue discussions around the upcoming Staff Celebration to be held in September.
 - We are asking for board support as we seek donations from local businesses for items that we can raffle to raise funds for additional staff events.
 - Angela has graciously agreed to donate two baskets to CQI for the event.

- The group graciously agreed to donate a basket as well.
- Pam's term expires in June so there will be a need for a new board representative on CQI.
- Finance
 - The donations of \$3000 and \$120 will be deposited into the MASSB account.
- Events and Fundraising
 - The committee did not meet this month.
 - Donations boxes will be placed with the goal of collecting food items in the Spring and homeless care packages in the Fall.
 - Members discussed different locations where the boxes can be placed.
 - Pamela suggested exploring a Safeway grant that would allot gift cards to customers in need.
- Public Relations
 - N/A
- Board Administration
 - New applications will be reviewed, and interviews will be conducted in June.
 - Recommendations will be sent to the county soon after.
- Legislative
 - N/A

8. Action Items

- Mini-golf fundraiser is on hold until September 2025.
- The June meeting will be moved to the 26th as June 19th is a state holiday.
- Dan asked for an update on the support the board is offering to the youth advisory board.
- Pat distributed flyers for Reading Camp Harford, a free weeklong full day camp for children entering second through fifth grade. The camp will be held at the community center at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Abingdon. Members will post the flyer on social media.

9. Next Meetings

- June 26th, 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 pm.

The next meeting will be **Thursday, May 26th, 2025, at 2. S. Bond Street, Suite 300, Bel Air, MD 21014**

Respectfully submitted by: Kristy Louvado