

**HARFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**Citizen Advisory Board**  
**Minutes of June 26th, 2025**  
**In Person**

**Members Present:** Andrée Mountain, Alicia Hamilton, Kourtney Cluster, Daniel Rusin, Cynthia Phillips (“C”), Christine Gerhardt, Pat Weaver, Debbie Button (Aide to Nolanda Robert), Angela Mangione

**Members Absent:** Jim Kuterbach, Dea Galloway, Pamela Smith, Vicki Jones

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

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

**1. Approval of Minutes**

- The minutes from the May 15th, 2025, meeting were reviewed.
- The May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved as presented upon the motion of Christine Gerhardt with a second from CC Phillips.

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

- Andrée announced that it would be the final meeting for Pat Weaver, Pam Smith, and Alicia Hamilton.
- Andrée also took a moment to express gratitude for their dedicated service to the board.

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

- The annual Resource Parent/Kinship Parent appreciation event was held on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Equestrian Center and was a great success.
- Cora thanked Andrée and Alicia for attending the Foster Care graduation celebration at Mountain Branch.
- The Sun Bucks program is back for its second year. This initiative provides additional funds for children who are already receiving free and reduced lunches throughout the summer months.
- The Department is working with LASOS (Linking All So Others Succeed) on the Enough Act to get funding and programs out to customers.
- The Governor has announced a hiring freeze effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
- In addition, there will be voluntary separation packages offered. We will have more details in the coming weeks.
- We currently have 14 vacancies. The majority of which are administrative positions.
- If passed, House Bill 1 will have significant program cuts that will affect SNAP, Energy Assistance and Medicare nationwide.
- Cora will meet with the County Executive in the coming months as we begin to know more about the effects of the budget cuts.

- Christine requested statistical updates in the Fall that will show the impact of the cuts to these programs.
- Data will be updated for the board on a quarterly basis.
- The Youth Advisory Board has requested to attend another meeting. Members discuss having them return in the Fall.

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

- **Interviews**
  - There are 3 vacancies.
  - There may be additional vacancies soon.
  - Interviews were held on June 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Recommendations were sent to the County Executive for review.
  - Appointments will be made in the fall when County Council reconvenes after its summer break.
  - Members discuss the process of selecting new board members.
  - Alicia reminded board administration of the tracking sheet on the google drive and the importance of keeping the information up to date.
  - Members discuss sending an acknowledgement letter to applicants advising the application was received and they will be notified of an interview as vacancies occur.
  - The letter of acknowledgement can also include a reminder that the meetings are open to the public so they can feel free to attend a meeting in the meantime. It is important to note to call ahead if someone plans to attend to attend as building security needs to be notified.
  - Members agree with the acknowledgement letter going out to new board applicants.

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

- **Nominating Committee Report-Elections**
  - The committee made their recommendations for chair and vice chair of the board.
  - Andrée inquired if there are any other nominations.
  - CC nominated Kourtney as the chair of the board. Kourtney accepted the nomination.
  - Members present cast their vote for the chair. Andrée will reach out to the remaining members to cast their vote.
  - Christine has been selected as the Vice Chair.
- **CQI Liaison**
  - With Pam's term expiring this month the board will need to select a new liaison for the CQI committee.
  - Kristy gave a brief description of what CQI does and the time requirements for the board members.

- Kristy will check the by-laws regarding co-liaisons and follow up.

## **6. Old Business**

- **By-laws and handbook Updates**

- The By-laws were sent to members for review.
- Christine mentioned that the changes to the document were not substantive. She focused on grammatical corrections, simplifying the language, and removing some repetitive phrasing.
- Previous by-laws stated members had 10 days to review the document. This has been changed to 30 days.
- Motion to accept the By-laws with 3 minor grammatical changes unanimously approved upon the motion of Christine Gerhardt with a second from Alicia Hamilton.
- Christine will move on to revise the Handbook.

## **7. Committee Reports**

- **CQI**

- The next CQI meeting is scheduled for July 22.
- The committee did not meet in June.
- Members are still in the planning process of the staff event scheduled for September.
- The board had graciously agreed to donate baskets and additional items towards baskets.
- We thank the board for their generous donations.

- **Finance**

- No updates currently.
- We do not know the status of the Torch technologies grant yet.
- Alicia moved to release \$500.00 to restock the food pantries.
- Christine seconds the motion with the remaining members voting all in favor.
- The board will notify the Finance department to release the funds.
- Members are working on the placement of the donation boxes as well.

- **Events and Fundraising**

- The committee met on May 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Alicia forwarded the committee reports to the board.
- The board discussed what the greatest needs are for funding currently so they can prepare campaign letters.
- Members suggested school supplies and assistance for elderly clients.
- Kourtney advised there is still a need for foster parent training. She contacted MASSB to verify the board can raise funds toward this initiative.
- Cora will touch base with the APS administrator to assess the current needs and follow up with the board.

- Staff from Adult Protective Services will attend a meeting in the fall.
  - Alicia compiled a list of grants that is housed on the google drive.
  - Alicia created a flyer for the donation boxes. That document is on the drive as well.
- Public Relations
  - Not currently active.
  - Angela needs to be added to the Facebook admin group.
- Board Administration
  - N/A.
- Legislative
  - N/A.

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

- Keep the google drive up to date.
- Directors' evaluation is due in September.

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

- The September meeting will be moved to September 25<sup>th</sup> due to the MASSD conference being held on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.

The next meeting will be **Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 2. S. Bond Street, Suite 300, Bel Air, MD 21014**

Respectfully submitted by: Kristy Louvado