

# **HARFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

## **Citizen Advisory Board**

**Minutes of September 25th, 2025**

### **In Person**

**Members Present:** Andrée Mountain, Kourtney Cluster, Cynthia Phillips (“C”), Debbie Button (Aide to Nolanda Robert), Angela Mangione, Jim Kuterbach

**Members Absent:** Dan Rusin, Christine Gerhardt

**Staff Present:** Kristy Louvado

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

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

- The minutes from June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, meeting were reviewed.
- June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, minutes were unanimously approved as presented upon the motion of Kourtney Cluster with a second from Angela Mangione.

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

- Andrée and members offer a warm welcome back to Jim as he returns from hiatus.
- Andrée recently celebrated her retirement with a ceremony and received a certificate from the County Executive’s office.
- Andrée advised it has been a busy summer filled with various challenges and encourages members to be mindful of this as we move forward.
- We are awaiting confirmation from the County Executive’s office regarding the four new member-appointments that have been requested.
- Chrstine and Andrée attended the 2025 staff picnic held September 12<sup>th</sup> at Harford Glen.
- Andrée commented on how the picnic was a success. She noted DSS Baskets that were donated were beautiful, the weather was perfect, and the staff thoroughly enjoyed the day.

### **3. Director’s Report (Kristy Louvado on behalf of Cora Grishkot)**

- **Staff Picnic**
  - We extend our sincerest gratitude for the generous contributions from our board members toward staff picnic baskets.
  - Your contributions helped us to raise \$611.00, which will directly support future staff events.
  - We are thankful to Andrée and Chrstine for attending the event and to Christine for delivering an encouraging message on behalf of the board.
- **VSP (Voluntary Separation Package)**
  - Two employees from Harford County DSS were approved for VSP. They will retire as of 9/30/2025.

- We will lose the positions and pins due to this statewide process.
- **Partner Meetings**
  - Cora met with the new Health Officer Lauren Levy to discuss implementing a more streamlined approach for collaboration between our agencies.
  - Cora and her team of Assistant Directors are scheduled to meet with the County Executive on November 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the upcoming impacts from program cuts.
- **Adoption Ceremony**
  - A Save the Date for November 6, 2025, has gone out for the Adoption Ceremony. Stay tuned for more details.
  - Angela and Kourtney requested more information regarding the details of the ceremony.
- **Homeless Bags**
  - We are requesting to use some of the funding that was released for the food pantry to purchase items for homeless bags.
  - Andrée advised she will work with one of her organizations to acquire homeless bags.
- **Torch Technologies Grant**
  - We have not heard back regarding the Torch Technologies grant.
  - We will follow up with Tony.

#### 4. General Discussion Topics

- **Board Vacancies**
  - There are 5 vacancies.
  - 4 names have been submitted to the County Executive's office.
  - All the prospective candidates' names submitted have an impressive skill set and will bring a lot to the board.
- **Committee Assignments**
  - Jim will move to chair of the finance committee.
  - Additional updates will be made as new members join.
  - We will investigate ways to collaborate with the Youth Advisory Board.
  - Going forward we need to focus on improving our time management during meetings and ensuring our conversations are as productive as possible.
  - As a reminder to committee chairs, please commit to planning and being prepared with solutions.
- **Staff Picnic**
  - Members discussed the donations that were given and the positive impact on the picnic.

#### 5. New Business

- **Sun Bucks**

- Members reported some concerns with The Sun Bucks program and challenges with the application process.
  - This will be reported to the Director.
- **Audits**
  - Members requested the latest audit results for Harford County to review.
- **Kinship**
  - Kourtney advised there are some concerns regarding the new state kinship procedures and will discuss them further with the Director.
  - Kristy will assist in arranging a time to meet.

## 6. Old Business

- **Handbook Update**
  - Christine is currently working on the updates to the Handbook.
  - She will follow up at the next meeting.

## 7. Committee Reports

- CQI
  - CQI expressed gratitude for the donations received from the board toward the staff picnic.
  - Members received a letter of thanks from the CQI chair and co-chair.
  - CQI will meet next in early October.
- Finance
  - No updates currently.
- Events and Fundraising
  - Kourtney has completed solicitation letters.
- Public Relations
  - N/A
- Board Administration
  - N/A
- Legislative
  - N/A

## 8. Action Items

- Members will revisit the minigolf fundraiser in October.

## 9. Next Meetings

- The October meeting will be moved to October 23, 2025, due to the MASSB conference being held on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm.

The next meeting will be **Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 2. S. Bond Street, Suite 300, Bel Air, MD 21014**

Respectfully submitted by: Kristy Louvado