

Board Minutes

June 17, 2008

Board Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held on June 17, 2008. Board members in attendance were: Judy Gilman; Richard Buckler; James Farrell; Clair Kollar; and Erika Patregnani, Chairperson. Also present was Ella May Russell, Director and Hilary Laskey, Team Leader Leonardtown.

Minutes

The minutes from the May 27, 2008, meeting were approved.

Education Session

Hilary Laskey, Team Leader Leonardtown, was introduced to the Board by Ella May Russell. Ms. Laskey gave an overview of the Staff Development Committee in correlation to the accreditation process the agency has undertaken. As a committee member Ms. Laskey will assure that staff will complete all mandatory trainings required by the Council on Accreditation (COA). These trainings include: Crisis Intervention, Ethics, Americans with Disabilities, Universal Precautions, Harassment, and Domestic Violence. The committee is also updating the existing desk guides for line staff and has started a monthly newspaper.

Chairperson's Report

The Maryland Association of Social Services Board (MASSB) Fall Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn in Solomon's. The conference is open to all Board members. The MASSB meets every 3-4 months at different locations.

Board Membership—Erika Patregnani and Melvin McClintock's term expires this month and are ineligible for reappointment. Darlene Johnson's term expires and she declined reappointment. Clair Kollar's term also expires, and she has agreed to reappointment.

Clair Kollar was nominated by Richard Buckler for Chairperson and the nomination was seconded by Judy Gilman. Ms. Kollar was elected by a unanimous vote.

Director's report

Foster Care Event—Sunday in the Park—The DHR bus for the Place Matters initiative, was scheduled to come to Southern Maryland at Greenwell State Park to promote foster parenting. There was a very good turn out and eleven people expressed an interest in becoming foster parents. There were activities for the children and food.

Court Summit—In August, Judge Stamm; Jeanne Schmitt, Assistant Director for Services; Dan Armitage, agency attorney; and twelve others from the court system,

developed a plan for the Court, Legal Aid, Department of Juvenile Services, and St. Mary's County Public Schools to ensure all understand what goes into a family plan and that the plans are consistent. This way each department knows what is expected of the family and each department as the family works towards the goal.

Child Advocacy Center—A sight for the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) has been chosen in Lexington Park and is under renovation. The CAC will be a place where law enforcement, social workers, mental health workers, and health workers come together to interview children who have been physically/sexually abused. A doctor from the University of Maryland will train local doctors on physical and sexual abuse. Other partners including all Child Protective Service Investigator's will be trained in *Finding Words*, a very effective way to communicate with victims of abuse.

Two grants have been obtained and the Local Management Board will pay the rent on the building.

Results from existing CAC's show that better investigations, prosecution, and treatment for the entire family are evident. We anticipate approximately 130 cases per year for the CAC with 75 being sexual abuse cases.

Child Support Demonstration Site—As of July 1, 2008, St. Mary's County has been designated as a Child Support Demonstration site. The Sheriff's Office, States' Attorney Office, Circuit Court, and Clerk of the Court must meet specific goals. Incentive money will be paid to staff as a result of meeting the goals.

Services—The agency will exceed its' adoption goal. Presently there are 114 children in foster care.

Accreditation—The agency will finish the Maryland Children and Family Service Review in August. The Accreditation council will do their site visit in December.

Catholic University—The agency has teamed with the Catholic University of America and the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center to bring a Masters in Social Work degree program to St. Mary's County. The first class will start in September. Classes are designed to be held on Saturday's only and will take four years to achieve the degree. DHR committed to 15 work study sponsorships.

New Business

No new business.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15

The next meeting will be September 23, 2008.