

Board Minutes June 27, 2006

The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held on Wednesday, June 27, 2006. Board members in attendance were: Maureen Johnson; Clair Kollar; Melvin McClintock; and Erika Patregnani. Also present was Ella May Russell, Director and Patricia Osborne, Program Specialist for Medical Assistance. Also in attendance Dianna Price, Resource Coordinator and Arnita Gerlitz-Jones, Resources Coordinator.

Melvin McClintock, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order.

Minutes

Minutes from the May 23, 2006 meeting were approved with a correction to meeting date.

Education Session

Resource Coordinator Contract with Housing

New legislation passed this year requires all temporary cash assistance (TCA) customers to have 40 hours of work participation. In order to meet this new requirement the agency has contracted with the St. Mary's County Housing Authority to supplement the Jobs program. Four resource coordinators have been hired to do intensive case management with families in identifying barriers to employment such as child care, transportation, housing, job skills, etc., and working with the families to overcome the barriers. At present 78 households are engaged with this program. Diana Price, Resource Coordinator Leonardtown Office and Arnita Gerlitz-Jones, Resource Coordinator Lexington Park Office presented an overview of the program and case scenarios.

The agency also has a contract with the Community Development Corporation for non-custodial parents and temporary cash assistance (TCA) customers to help develop job leads, job placement and retention. The agency also has a contract with the College of Southern Maryland for job readiness training. Job readiness training is a three-week program, which covers communication, resumes, interview skills, dress, and work experience through job shadowing. Other resources are money management day seminars and Coach Me NOW! which focuses on systems barriers to getting jobs. Coach Me NOW! is a partnership between social services, social security, Department of Rehabilitative Services (DORS) and Kennedy Kriger Institute.

Current TCA caseload is 249 families; of these families 89 need to comply with the 40-hour work participation requirement. The other families are in categories that are not counted for work participation--90 are child only, 40-42 are disabled, and 8-9 have a child under one-year.

All two-parent families have to be assessed. The agency is in the process of assessing all families on TCA.

Chairperson's Report

No Report

Director's Report

CHESSIE – (Child Welfare Automated Systems)

The agency goes “live” on July 12, 2006. Data clean up has been completed and staff have successfully completed training. The agency prepared staff by assessing the computer skills of each staff member and providing computer skill training as well as pre-training on CHESSE.

Child Support

The Maryland House Appropriations Committee will be visiting the agency on July 12, 2006, to discuss child support audit issues.

Personnel

The agency hired two MSW’s and is presently recruiting for a Family Investment caseworker and continued recruitment for a Child Protective Services supervisor—there is a potential candidate that we hope to hear from by August. Interviews are being held for the Fiscal Clerk position in Finance next week.

St. Mary’s Transit System

The agency successfully negotiated with the County government to expand the present STS bus service to Sundays on the Wildewood to LP route.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

The next meeting to be announced.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie S.Abell