

St. Mary's County Department of Social Services
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2015

Attendance: The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held on February 24, 2015. Board members in attendance were: Wanda Brown, Chairperson; Rose Frederick; Richard Buckler; Susie Fowler; Lynn Fitrell; Joan Gelrud; and Cynthia Brown. Also present Ella May Russell, Director; and Hilary Laskey, Assistant Director for Program Performance. Absent: Leisha Wood and Ella Somerville.

Quorum: A quorum was established.

Minutes: Minutes for February 24, 2015 approved.

Introduction of Joan Gelrud to the Board members.

Education: Hilary Laskey, Assistant Director for Program Performance, gave a presentation on *Poverty Awareness*. This presentation has been presented by Ms. Laskey to the National Association for Social Workers. This presentation will be given to staff at the All Staff on April 16th. Staff need to understand the challenges of customer in order to better serve them. In St. Mary's County 34% of the children receive free lunch.

Ms. Gelrud added to the presentation that assessments by mental health counselor's are available with the Health Enterprize Zone (HEZ). Psychiatrist are needed and MedStar St. Mary's Hospital is in negotiations. Ridership for the HEZ transportation bus is dropping on the 16 mile loop, any information or ideas on why that is happening is welcomed.

Chair's Report: No report at this time.

Director's Report:

Maryland is the first state to be awarded the IVE Grant which includes federal funds for services. Focus Groups will be held in the county which include Walden, Center for Children, Sheriff's Department, Health Department, and schools. The focus will be on children who enter and then re-enter—what services do we have to prevent re-entry. In the last 3 year period the agency has had 8 re-entry's which comprised two sets of three siblings. The second phase will look at a 12 month period—what can we identify in the community. This involves Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties. Trauma Performance Care – the counties have identified the three main events that trigger entry to be Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Parent Trauma and the two most significant for re-entry are mental health and child behaviors. In this time frame that is being used the agency has had one third re-entry and we opposed the court's decision for the return of the child to the parent.

Congratulations were extended to Lynn Fitrell for receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from the St. Mary's County Commission on Women and Joan Gelrud for her nomination for Woman of the Year.

The agency will be undergoing a Federal Food Stamp Audit for ABAWD's. ABAWD's are single adults receiving food stamps. The auditor's will be in the agency March 25 and 25, 2015.

Personnel

The agency has hired a new Assistant Director for Family Investment—Charles D. Wood. Presently there are two vacant Family Investment Supervisor positions.

School of Social Work and DHR will be training staff on trauma and the effect on families and children, and PTSD.

One staff member has applied for the State Buyout for early retirement. If approved the agency will lose that position.

Lexington Park Office

The Lexington Park Office is expanding into the area previously held by the Peking restaurant. Renovations should be completed by the end of July.

New Business: No new business.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

The next meeting will be on April 28, 2015.