

**Kent County Department of Social Services
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2022**

Present: Beverly Birkmire, Charlotte Potts, Catherine Sterling-Boyer, Shelly Neal-Edwards and Jen Cole
Absent: Caitlan Gartland, David May, Dr. Angela Holocker, Sara Cunningham, and Bob Jacobs

CARES Funding Request: \$575 requested by the Services Division for Child Abuse Awareness Month in April. The request was approved by the attending board members. Jen will send an email out for approval to make a quorum.

Chairperson's Report:

- Approval of minutes from January 18, 2021.
- Motion to approve was made by Beverly and 2nd by Charlotte. Jen will send an email to Board Members for approval to make a quorum.
- It was agreed to purchase a gift card for Mr. Washington to Lusias Cafe in appreciation for everything he has done for the Board.

➤ **Kent County DSS Strategic Plan Presentation**

Shelly reviewed the 2022 - 2024 Strategic Plan. Beverly suggested reviewing the Advisory Board Strategic Plan to reflect similar goals and objectives. The board is scheduled to review their Advisory Board Strategic Plan in April. The current plan will be sent out in March for review.

➤ **Kent County CARES Foundation**

- MASSB Winter Conference was attended by Beverly, Shelly and Dr. Karpowiz.
 - Kent County received 2nd place for the Innovative Program Award - ALICE Families.
 - Beverly reported the following bills presented to Legislation
 - HB25- (REAP): DHS to work with the department of safety and corrections to replicate an IT solution that DSS uses. This will be used to track the progress of inmates in rehabilitation programs. MDTHINK estimates the cost to be around \$400K.
 - Hospital overstay- \$5M allocated to dept of health to work with providers to expand bed capacity. The current bill doesn't carry fiscal note, but to solve the problem would take additional funding.
 - SB 214- abuse and neglect, is this part of hiring/screening or if an employee comes to the attention of the department?
 - Data sharing does happen for abuse, if it comes to the attention of the dept., but does not provide the same for neglect. This bill corrects that discrepancy.
- Recruitment - Members brainstormed for ideas to promote membership. Catherine, Beverly, and Charlotte have a few people in mind and will attempt to recruit.
- Standing Committee - Reports/Recommendations Other - No report

➤ **Director's Report:**

- **The Divisional Performance Report** – Child Support is right on target for collections. Emergency Assistance has increased for FIA/OHEP customers. The Service division has 39 active Adult cases which is up by 10 from last month. There is a fraud hotline available to report fraudulent use of food stamps for investigation.
- **DSS Action Plan for Community Emergency Response** - 9 families were impacted by the apartment fire in Worton. DSS jumped in with several other community partners to find placements for 7 of them at the local hotel; 2 families were able to relocate with family members. Gift cards to ACME were purchased, and Hope House in Rock Hall opened their donation center for clothing. Families also were able to meet with staff individually to assess their needs and find resources.
- **Homeless Resource Day** - Attended by several vendors who gave clothing, food and other items needed for the homeless population.
- The next meeting will be held on Monday, March 21, 2022 at 3:30pm. The committee will be meeting in person but also have virtual as an option.

Respectfully submitted,
Jen Cole, Executive Assistant