

**Kent County Department of Social Services
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2022**

Present: Beverly Birkmire, Mary Adda Moore, Portia Turner, Catherine Boyer-Sterling, Sara England Cunningham, Vienna Walker, Shelly Neal-Edwards and Jen Cole
Absent: David May and Bob Jacobs

Child Advocacy Center Presentation - Mattie Meehan & Margaret Allen

- Funding Request - CAC staff request \$3500 from United Way funds. (\$1,100 - forensic interview peer review, \$1,500 PCIT training, \$900 observation TV for interviews) Request was approved by the board.
- Facility Tour and Information Session - Mattie and Margaret reviewed the process the staff follows for the coordination and partnership with community partners. CAC has served 32 abused individuals since January. The CAC continues to improve their center, equipment and facility as new items and techniques become available. They also partner with Talbot County to conduct Medical exams as they have the proper equipment. Members were given a tour of the building.

Chairperson's Report:

- Approval of minutes from July 18, 2022.
- KC CARES Fundraiser/Doncella Wilson - Shelly spoke with Doncella, she would like to work with the board if we decided to hold a fundraiser at Minary's Dream, however, the board would have to make a donation. Sara has offered to work with Portia in the planning of a Spring event, preferably in March. They will also reach out to Red Acres as an alternative venue. Topics to consider: pricing, set up, food, and entertainment.
- CARES Foundation Budget - Beverly reviewed the available funds todate.
- New Board of Education Member - Vienna Walker
- Standing Committee - Reports/Recommendations - No report
- Strategic Planning - No report

Director's Report:

- **The Divisional Performance Report** - July and August data is available. Child Support has continued to be a challenge for obtaining accurate numbers. Clients are reporting suspended drivers licensing, suspended passports, delay in payment all due to system challenges. FIA numbers will increase in the next few months after Emergency Assistance through the American Rescue Act is discontinued September 30th. Services has 12 foster children including 3 in voluntary placement and working towards reunification. The agency currently works with 6 foster homes within the county.
- **MD Think** - The system went live today across the state. There are still a few deficiencies to be tackled by the state.
- **Outreach Events**- Kent Goes Purple Color Run - DSS Staff participated in Kent Goes Purple on Sept 11th.
- **MACo** - Md Association of Counties - The conference was in August, mostly focusing on technology, COVID recovery, workforce development, networking with the Commissioners, Delegates and Senators.
- **MASSB Conference** - Shelly and Beverly will be attending the conference October 6th and October 7th.
- **Conference on Homeless** - Shelly and Julie attended the County Homeless Conference on September 8th. Homeless shelters currently operate January, February and March rotating each month to 3 local churches. Currently 18 individuals were relocated for placement. The committee is working on a plan to add November and December to the shelter months and eventually have a year round shelter. Proposals for new locations are being studied with intentions to keep the homeless at one location. Preparations to bring back faith based members volunteering to cook meals and volunteer. They would also like DSS to be the entry point for shelters by screening for services.

- **Staffing Update** - The Child Support Supervisor Elizabeth Bankhead transferred to Cecil. In house recruitment for a Supervisor and Lead will take place along with recruitment for a worker on the States recruitment page.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 17, 2022 at 3:00pm. The committee will be meeting in person in the Child Support Conference Room but also have virtual as an option. Administration presenting. .

Respectfully submitted,
Jen Cole, Executive Assistant