

Macon County Social Services Board

October 21, 2021

Minutes

Call to Order

Patrick Betancourt called the regular meeting of the Macon County Social Services Board to order. Members attending via Zoom were: Dale West and Anne Hyder. Meeting in person were Evelyn Southard, Patrick Betancourt, Secretary to the Board, Page McCurry, HR Planner/Evaluator and Cathy Makinson, Business Officer designated to record minutes, connecting with Board members through the Zoom virtual platform.

Minutes

Minutes were approved on motion of Dale West and second by Anne Hyder.

Financials/Contracts

Business Officer, Cathy Makinson, reported that DSS has contracted with former employee, Karen Carnes again to assist with the Energy programs. In addition to energy, Karen will assist with Medicaid casework. Patrick explained the energy assistance process to new member, Dale West. Cathy informed the Board that we are still waiting on the State to pass the budget and send Funding Authorizations to confirm revenues. We anticipate the LIEAP program will function the same as last year with the client information and assistance being assigned by DHHS and then processed locally. Cathy notified the Board that she had completed a budget payroll spreadsheet for County Finance to know the overall increase in DSS and the impact to the budget in regards to the new pay study which Patrick will elaborate on.

Revised County Pay Grades & Premium Pay Policy (attached)

County Commissioners approved the revised pay plan and restructure of grades along with a premium pay policy. All employees will receive a positive pay adjustment and most had grade decreases. Some of the increases were substantial, particularly for those with longevity in a position. There were a few positions that are currently above the market value for their position and they would at least receive an increase of \$1/hour for a total of \$2,080 annually. The second part approved is a premium pay plan which is on top of the salary increase and will use American Recovery Act funds for essential employees. After checking with the Institute of Government, it was determined that all Macon County employees, full and part-time, who have and are working during this pandemic, are defined as essential. This plan provides \$2/hour for every hour over the next 3 ½ years, retro to the six months of April 24th through October 24th and does not pay annual leave, sick leave, comp time, FMLA or holidays. This plan will continue with a six month payout over 7 periods with a maximum of \$14,000 per employee. It is a one-time lump sum paid at the end of each of the six months as long as the employee is still active through the last day of the six month period. Premium pay will have the same deductions as regular pay. Board discussed the cost of the pay plan including the need to have some type of annual adjustment otherwise, compression will become an issue again. Page stated she felt the increase in beginning salaries will assist in recruiting and retaining employees.

TANF (Work First) Electing County Plan

Patrick informed the Board he had just emailed them a draft copy of the Plan prior to today's meeting. The Plan allows Macon County to continue as an "electing" county which Macon has been since 1998. As an electing county, we are able to be innovative in how we support Work First applicants in employment. Along with our base allocation, the Plan gives us over \$183,000 in federal funds to fund any cash assistance, emergency assistance and support Child Welfare. As one of seven electing counties, Macon has benefited more than \$5 million since 1998. As part of the process, we have to submit a Plan to the state every 2-3 years. At this time, the Plan for FY 23-26 is due. County Commissioners had to

vote to continue as an “electing” county, which they did at their October meeting. Then the DSS Board has to vote to move forward with the Plan, then back to the County Commissioners to approve the plan before submitting to the state. Motion to approve moving forward was made by Dale West, second by Anne Hyder. Currently Macon has 10 households, all child only cases, and no participants in the Work First Cash Assistance. Our Work First Plan is a pay-after-performance program and applicants have to work first before they can receive a check.

Intensive Child Fatality Review

Patrick mentioned the upcoming State Child Fatality Review scheduled on November 16-17, 2021. Patrick explained aspects of this review and confirmed it’s differences from the County Quarterly Child Fatality Review based on a question by Anne Hyder.

Personnel Updates/Turnover Rate

Page reported that the turnover rate is holding with no new resignations. She will be onboarding a new IMC worker next week and has interviews scheduled for social work and an IMC worker. DSS still has four vacancies and Senior Services has two.

Closed Session

No closed session this month.

Next Meeting

Discussion to change meeting date in November as Dale will be out of town. Decision was made to reschedule to Friday, November 12, 2021, at 9am in the Admin Conference Room. Motion to adjourn made by Evelyn Southard, second by Anne Hyder.

APPROVED BY:

Chairman/Date

Secretary/Date