

Macon County Social Services Board

March 17, 2021

Minutes

Call to Order

Patrick Betancourt called the regular meeting of the Macon County Social Services Board to order. Member attending via Zoom was: Anne Hyder. Meeting in person were Lisa Leatherman, 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 Anne Hyder and second by Lisa Leatherman.

Crawford Senior Center Update

Agenda was revised to allow Jennifer Hollifield to present update to the Board on recent successes of the Crawford Center. Senior Services is currently in the midst of the S.C.O.P.E. certification which takes place every five years. Kim Crawford oversees this area and has been compiling the five years of data that will be reviewed. Jennifer reported approximately 100 meals/day are distributed in the drive-thru, however today 125 meals were scheduled. Jennifer recently presented to the County Commissioners that over 22,000 meals were distributed out of the center in 2020, with an additional 16,000 hot meals and 4,000 frozen meals for home-delivered, bringing the total to over 40,000 meals serving our community. There was only one cancellation over the year due to anticipated snow. Meal bids were opened today for the three year period beginning July 1, 2021-June 30, 2024. Staff along with the Community Paramedic Program were able to administer Covid vaccines to homebound individuals. It has been challenging but rewarding and the staff have enjoyed being a part of this initiative. Senior Services has received several Covid related grants for additional meal purchases and related equipment including Families First, Cares Act, SECU, BCBS and Dogwood. Tai-Chi for Veterans is fully functioning and staff are working with the local veteran's services for referrals. Zoom classes are on-going with at least 16 active clients. Zoom has allowed people from all over the country to participate in classes as they are on-line. Open enrollment for SHIPP was October-December and was more challenging assisting seniors via the phone instead of in person appointments. Two volunteers counseled 400 clients. The CRC has been active with many phone calls on Governor Executive Order questions and how it may impact them. ADC remains closed but staff daily reach out to these clients by phone to make sure they are well. Crawford Center had 120 individuals who came through the Christmas drive-thru. For the caregiver dinner, the Center provided 17 caregiving families with a meal for a family of four. Jennifer explained to the Board, the challenges they are facing in congregate vs. drive-thru funding as the current state requirement is mandatory sit-down meals. More to come on the possibility of hybrid and how meals are presented, sealed vs. open plate. The Board expressed their appreciation for all the work being accomplished through the Senior Center.

Financials/Budget Highlights

Business Officer, Cathy Makinson, presented the budget for FY 21-22 for approval. The overall budget is an increase of approximately \$300,000 county dollars due to a decrease in Indirect Cost Plan and IV-E Admin. revenues, an increase in the projected county expense for foster and adopted children, a required retirement contribution increase for all employees, decrease in Senior Services revenues and three anticipated retirements of 30 year employees. Cathy reported there is no anticipated increase in county health insurance to the county or employees. Proposed budget totals \$6,355,777 including \$2,230,930 county funds. Budget approved on motion by Evelyn Southard and second by Lisa Leatherman.

Gallagher Compensation Study Update

Patrick informed the Board on the weekly meetings with Gallagher regarding uploaded data. Gallagher now has over 200 plus named positions, some may be duplicated under different titles. These positions are being compared across 34 comparable organizations across the state. They will select 80 similar positions with 80% of

job duties. Gallagher is in the process of sending out survey questions on these positions including salary, benefits, longevity, etc. They hope to get 70% response and Patrick mentioned that several of the western counties are undergoing similar compensation studies. Part of the ongoing challenge is how do we stay marketable. Gallagher has confirmed it will be able to put the information together in time to present for budget preparation.

COVID Update

Page updated the Board on Covid 19 vaccinations. As of two weeks ago, with Group 3 opening, all employees that desired the vaccine were able to receive it. Page reported we have had zero positive cases in staff since the last Board meeting in February. With vaccines available to all, Patrick is asking all teleworkers to return to the office no later than March 29th and to stagger return dates so that IT is not overwhelmed. DSS currently still has seven staff teleworking and one of Senior Services. We hope to have a soft opening of the lobby soon following the decrease in cases and the availability of vaccine. Clients have adapted well to how services have been provided without needing to see a worker in person and they are able to access information they need in alternative ways.

Cherokee County CVA Update

Patrick reminded the Board of the large class action suit against Cherokee County of parents constitutional rights being violated through agreements that were not legal in child welfare. Macon County has been required to assist in conflict cases where any of the family is part of a new referral. Patrick informed the Board that Macon DSS is currently down four social workers and needs to be able to handle our own cases with the staff that are present. The State and the defending attorney opinion is that Cherokee County cannot litigate any extended cases and when these cases are reported to Cherokee, it falls to neighboring counties to manage. Patrick requested and received the Board's support to use our limited resources locally as he anticipates this issue coming to a head. Page mentioned even if we hired today, it takes several weeks to fully train new social workers. The State Division is saying counties have until April 15th to come up with a solution.

Board Member Selection Discussion

Patrick advised the Board on his conversation with Dale West and stated he will reach out to answer additional questions she has.

Closed Session

Lisa Leatherman made a motion to go into Closed Session to discuss case information as allowed under G.S. 143-318.11. Evelyn Southard seconded, and motion carried.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, April 21, 2021, at 8:30am in the Administrative Conference Room at the Human Services Building.

APPROVED BY:

Chairman | Date

Secretary | Date