

## Baltimore County Department of Social Services Board Minutes

The meeting of the Advisory Board of the Baltimore County Department of Social Services (DSS) was held March 20, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. via WebEx.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Stefanie Bronson, Dr. Jasmine Leigh Morse, Timothy Butka, Dr. Donald Gabriel, Melanie Gordon-Newell, Morgan Phillips and Elder Joseph Saunders.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lisa Simon Jablon and Dr. Roslyn Wiley

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Gregory Wm. Branch; Director, Aimee Bollinger Smith; Assistant Director, Community Services, Juanita Ignacio; Director, Center for Family Success and Kathy Wynn, Executive Secretary to the Director

### I. Reading and Approval of the Minutes:

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of October 17, 2022, January 9, 2023 and February 13, 2023.

*Minutes to be approved at the April meeting.*

### II. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- We are working to determine summer Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) numbers which seem to be much lower than last year. The County Executive has committed to participate where school age children will receive SNAP benefits.
- No additional information on the lawsuit regarding foster youth and use of psychotropic medications. Additional information will be received over the next few weeks. When information becomes available, it will be shared with the Board.
- March is Social Worker Appreciation month. Multiple activities are planned for the month, e.g.; movie with a social work theme with discussion afterward, represent your school shirt day and an 80's themed dress up day. The County Executive issued a citation recognizing Social Worker Appreciation month.
- Jane Gehring, LCSW-C, Assistant Director for Family Services has been selected by the University of Maryland School of Social Work (UMSSW) Alumni Association Board of Directors to receive the 2023 Alumni of the Year Award. The award highlights UMSSW graduates who are making an outstanding professional contribution to the field of social work.

#### Facility Updates

We have recently experienced a number of automobile break-ins at Drumcastle. Staff are reminded to always lock their vehicles, store items out of site, and alert on-site Security if they see suspicious activity.

Mr. Butka inquired about the freezing weather shelter. Operations are going well. A location is being sought where homeless individuals can go if it's too cold or hot. A "do drop in" center where individuals can drop in to warm up or cool off with showers and washing/drying machines available for use. There are different issues as to why individuals are homeless. Much stems

around mental health and substance abuse issues. We are looking at different options of what is happening in other jurisdictions and around the country. The Department of Health has a mobile van that could provide vaccines and harm reduction services to the "do drop in" locations. The goal of these centers and providing services is to help homeless individuals want to get off the street.

#### Center for Family Success

Ms. Ignacio presented on the Lullaby Project at the Center for Family Success. The Center is a comprehensive family support and development center that strives to strengthen families, and promote the healthy development of children. It is a two-generation program that encourages a strong parent-child bond.

The Lullaby Project is coordinated and led in Baltimore by the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society, in partnership with Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute. The Baltimore Classical Guitar Society pairs new and expecting parents and caregivers with professional artists to write personal lullabies for their babies. The Center has two Grammy award winning artists working with the parents. Ms. Ignacio works with the parents a week before the artists come in. Lullabies are recorded and a CD with original artwork is provided to the families. This project supports maternal health, aids childhood development, and strengthens the bond between parent and child.

On June 11 from 11:00-1PM at the Center for Family Success, parents will present the lullabies created for their child. Board members are invited to attend.

#### Potty Proud

This is a six month program held one day per week from 9:30 to 11AM. Children receive a book and potty chair with graduation to cotton underwear in six months.

Dr. Bronson inquired as to how families are referred to the Center. Anyone can refer families. Individuals interested in programs offered can contact the Center via email to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are also accepted.

Ms. Ignacio to forward information to Ms. Wynn regarding these programs and the June 11 event.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

A reminder to submit your ethics disclosure. Ms. Wynn to follow up on status of board member filings.

We have received applications from individuals who have expressed an interest in being a board member. Mr. Millsbaugh to review and will provide additional information at the next meeting.

### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

### **V. REMARKS OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for April 18.

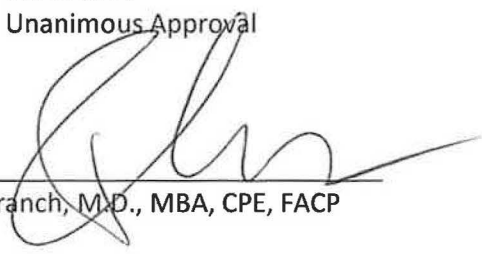
**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 4:40PM

**Motion by:** Dr. Bronson

**Second by:** Dr. Gabriel

**Decision:** Unanimous Approval



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Gregory Wm. Branch, M.D., MBA, CPE, FACP