

Board Minutes

September 23, 2008

Board Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held on September 23, 2008. Board members in attendance were: Judy Gilman; Richard Buckler; and Clair Kollar, Chairperson. Also present was Ella May Russell, Director and Jeanne Schmitt, Assistant Director for Services. Not in attendance James Farrell.

Minutes

The minutes from the June 17, 2008, meeting were approved with the addition of Clair Kollar's name as attending.

Education Session

Jeanne Schmitt, Assistant Director for Services, gave an overview of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC). The CAC is a family friendly environment in which support and services can be provided to children who have been sexually abused or severely physically abused. There is a memorandum of understanding between the St. Mary's Sheriff's Department, Child Care Administration, Maryland State Police, State's Attorney's for St. Mary's County, St. Mary's County of Department of Human Services, Walden/Sierra, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, and the Department of Social Services.

The CAC will provide a non-threatening, supportive setting that facilitates professionals coming to together to have one interview of the victim that can meet all the legal requirements. This will be less traumatizing to the child. Two Child Protective Services Investigators, two detectives, and the Child Protective Services Supervisor have attended intensive forensic five day protocol training. This training teaches the skill of establishing a child's creditability.

Statistics show prosecution rates increased dramatically with the establishment of a CAC.

The Local Management Board has provided funding. They have applied for and received several grants—Maryland Children's Alliance, Governor's Office on Crime and Prevention. The University of Maryland will provide medical support and equipment through a grant.

The building is located in Lexington Park and renovations are almost complete. There will be audio visual equipment and a medical exam room.

Chairperson's Report

No Report

Director's report

Personnel

Still in a three year freeze. The agency has filled two Family Investment (FI) positions with three FI vacancies left. The following position have also been approved for hiring and filled—2 child support; 1 foster care recruitment/foster homes; 1 foster care intake; 1 child protective services; 1 front desk receptionist; 1 administrative aide; 1 jobs specialist (contract); 1 team leader to report 11/17/08.

The Foster Care Supervisor—Maritza Juarbe and the Child Protective Services Supervisor—Holly Kees, have reported to work.

The Staff Retreat will again be held at Camp Maria on September 25th.

Accreditation

Hilary Laskey is coordinating the mandatory trainings for staff that are necessary for accreditation. The trainings are American with Disabilities Act, Universal Precaution & Harassment or Domestic Violence, Ethics, and Critical Intervention Training.

Family Investment

In an effort to ease some of the burden of the Family Investment workers, the agency will be moving towards group interviews and reconsideration interviews by phone.

New Business

No new business.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15

The next meeting will be October 28, 2008.