

St. Mary's County  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
February 28, 2017

Attendance: The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held February 28, 2017.

Board Members in attendance: Michael Blackwell, Susan Fowler, Ella Somerville, Annette Wood and Wanda Brown.

Also present: Ella May Russell, Cynthia Brown and Dawn Dent (SMC DSS Finance Officer)

Quorum: A quorum was established

Minutes: January 24, 2017 minutes were approved

Education Session:

The education session was presented by Dawn Dent, Finance Officer. Mrs. Dent presented the preliminary County budget to be approved by the County Commissioners by the end of March 2017. Mrs. Dent explained to the board the positions being presented for funding approval as well as a description of each of the positions along with their duties including three (3) child support positions (1 child support specialist, 1 fiscal position and 1 clerical support position), 1 (one) Adult Coordinator position, 1 (one) Foster Care Transportation Aide and 1 (one) Paralegal. Assistance for County Burial funds for single adult residents who do not qualify for emergency assistance through DSS was explained. The local funeral homes work with customers who cannot afford burial services providing \$650 for cremation assistance.

There was a motion approve the County budget – Approved

Chair Report: No Chair report

Director's Report:

The agency has hired a new Assistant Director for Services, Lisa Ford. Mrs. Ford begins March 1, 2017 and is coming from Pittsburgh, PA. Mrs. Ford has extensive knowledge working in the child welfare system and is looking forward to her new position. Recruitment for the Assistant Director for Quality Assurance as well as a Social Work Supervisor.

Director Russell was invited to meet with Delegate Sally Jameson to discuss homelessness in the tri-county area. Presenting information about St. Mary's County was Dennis Nicholson and Lanny Lancaster. Charles County and Calvert County representatives were present as well. Lack of affordable housing continues to be an issue for St. Mary's County. Calvert County claims not to have a homeless population.

The Child Support staff will hold an award ceremony to celebrate several accomplishments. The award will be presented by Acting Executive Director for Child Support Enforcement, Leyla

Layman. The SMC Sheriff's office, State's Attorney's office and several others have been invited to attend.

The Mission continues their planning to include several community partnerships.

All 24 local DSS Directors attending the hearing in opposition of HB 697 which would potentially begin a 2-1-1 centralized calling center for reports of suspected child / adult protective services. This would send all calls through to a reporting number which would eliminate the calls coming directly to the DSS office where there is highly trained employees who currently take these reports. All local jurisdictions as well as their boards submitted letters of opposition as well as other community partners opposing this bill.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 28, 2017.

N. Sacks