

St. Mary's County
Department of Social Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

The regular scheduled meeting of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services Advisory Board was held Tuesday June 22, 2021 in the Russell Conference room located in the Joseph D. Carter building and also via teleconference.

Member's Present:

Michael Blackwell, Chair
Annette Wood
Richard Buckler
Cynthia Brown
Terry Prochnow

Also, Present:

Alexis Zoss, Director

- I. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting was called to order 5:31pm
- II. Establish Quorum
 - a. A quorum was established
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - a. A motion was made to accept the May 25, 2021 meeting minutes. Second motion.
Minutes approved

Director Report

Return to Office Planning

The agency has been operating remotely for close to 16 months. We are entering a great management challenge as we move into a hybrid telework model. There are several concerns from staff regarding return to office. Decisions have been made over the last several months regarding return to office. This includes the creation of a Hoteling and a Customer Service committee. Staff from every division will have a presence in the office daily.

Staff will refer to the current dress code policy which includes no jeans. A power point will be presented during the next all staff meeting taking place June 23rd which will include expectations. The new model of telework is not a substitute for childcare. Staff will be expected to have full time care for children while working from home.

We will be introducing a series of luncheons to reconnect staff as well as a reconnection to the agency. Feedback will be provided to the board.

Michael Blackwell – The Governor announced a grace period on some items, will this include evictions? Are caseloads expected to increase?

Alexis – We will confirm the eviction moratorium date. ERAP went live last Monday. There were 60 applications submitted within 4 days.

The Lexington Park lobby is open by appointment. We are hearing that other locals are seeing a high number of customers. We do not want to revert to a full lobby and feel that an appointment-based system is respectful of our customer's time.

Chair Report

The draft board member manual is complete. Please review it for changes. It will hopefully give new members a good overview of the board as well as DSS.

Election of Officers

Nicki will remain as board secretary

Treasurer will remain at the MASSB level

Nominations are open for Chair and Vice Chair

Michael Blackwell is nominated and voted to continue as Chair
Annette Wood is nominated and voted to continue as Vice Chair

Other Items

We have lost one board member based on attendance

The board will need to decide on how to continue with social media

There is one new member awaiting appointment

We will discuss the need to continue with the meeting call in option during next month's meeting.

Motion to adjourn – 2nd

Meeting adjourned at 6pm

N. Sacks