

**The Blair County Department of Social Services
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, February 6, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.
The Arc, 431 Jackson Avenue, Altoona, PA**

Board Members Present: James Stratton, Rick Petroski, Michael Stubler, John Allender, Steve Martynuska, Cindy Barton, Donna Gority, T. Grant Phillips, Sue Tomlinson and Amber Hatfield

Board Members Absent: Robert Smith, Chris Cohn and Commissioner Bruce Erb

Others Present: Jim Hudack, Melissa Gillin, Theresa Rudy, Lorrie Hetager, Jennifer Kensinger, Melissa Gordon, Kelly Popich and Sara McConnell

MINUTES

Welcome and Call to Order

Steve Martynuska, Chairperson, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Self-Introductions were given.

1. Approval of December 5, 2019 Minutes

- *Motion by John Allender to accept the December 5, 2019 minutes. Donna Gority seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.*

2. Board Operations – Jim Hudack, Executive Director Blair County Dept. Social Services

- Jim reported that an updated 2020 version of the Social Services Advisory Board Orientation Manual was given out to the two newest board members. Contact Jim for an electronic version of the manual.

3. Mental Health Committee Report – Theresa Rudy

- A copy of the MH Committee meeting minutes was attached to the Agenda packet.
- Theresa stated that no motions were brought forth to the MH Committee.

4. Developmental Programs Committee Report – John Allender

- A copy of the Developmental Program Committee meeting minutes was attached to the Agenda packet.
- John discussed highlights of the Developmental Program Committee meeting which included Emily Raymond's presentation on Skills behavioral support services.

5. County Reports

Executive Director – Jim Hudack

- Jim reported that the 2020/2021 Governor's budget proposal was released on February 4, 2020. Programs are essentially flat-funded.
- Jim mentioned some proposed budget highlights:
 - 45.2 million increase in mental health (MH) (replacement of lost federal revenue)
 - 20 Community Hospital Integration Projects Programs (CHIPP) lots
 - Increase Intellectual Disabilities (ID) consolidated waiver
 - 4 million to assist Counties with risk management activities
 - Early Intervention (EI) 17% increase for combined state and federal
 - 3% increase for county administration
- Jim stated that the #1 priority for the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) was getting an increase in MH funding at the county level.
- FY 2020/2021 Human Services Block Grant (HSBG) Annual Plan should be released by the Department of Human Services (DHS) on March 1, 2020.
- The Leadership Coalition is planning a Legislative Breakfast for elected and newly elected officials, as well as, the county's new Chief Clerk/County Administrator. An April 2020 breakfast date has not yet been determined.

- Jim announced that the county was selected for the first cohort for the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant. Jim distributed information, at the meeting, in regards to the grant.

MH/COD –Theresa Rudy

- Theresa mentioned that the Community Support Program (CSP) Committee and the H.O.P.E. Drop-In received the I'm the Evidence (ITE) Community Award from the PA Mental Health Consumers Association at the January 13, 2020 meeting.
- Preparation of the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant has begun.
- Theresa stated that information will be gathered and reviewed to update and rewrite sections of the FY 20/21 HSBG Annual plan.

Mental Health – Ken Dean

- A report was included in the Agenda packet.

Intellectual Disabilities – Melissa Gordon

- A report was included with the Agenda packet.
- Melissa reported that SASMG is still trying to find providers for clients with medical and/or complex needs. Currently, there are no agencies in Blair County willing to take on those cases or any agencies willing to move into Blair County.
- Blair County is one of six counties involved in the Life Experience Appraisal Process (LEAP). Blair County has ten reviews, in which, they are looking at requests to determine if there is enough justification for increased budgets for folks in other counties. Determinations are to be made by the end of March 2020.
- Office of Development Programs (ODP) continues to roll out new regulations, as well as, provide training to staff as they get rolled out.
- Employee Initiative will be opening up in March 2020.

Early Intervention – Kelly Popich

- A report was included with the Agenda packet.
- EI provider monitoring is currently taking place. Six out of ten have been completed with no corrective action plans.
- Kelly stated she shares examples of really good sections of provider documentation, with their permission, to other providers for the sole purpose of learning from one another.
- Kelly reported the local EI Program Determination results for FY 2018-19 have been received. One area was identified as needing assistance.
- Kelly learned at their Leadership meeting last week that any areas not meeting 100% need an improvement plan written.
- An annual Family Survey is sent out to EI families. Local programs send out the survey electronically.
- Kelly shared last year's family survey results. Areas identified as needing improvement by families included: helping families get to know each other, helping families access other programs or services like food stamps and presenting opportunities for the surveyed families' children to get to know other children.
- At Steve's request, Kelly talked about torticollis, a condition where a muscle is so tight in a child's neck that their head may be tilted causing issues with their development. More detailed information is in the Developmental Programs report in the Agenda packet.

Quality Assurance & Housing Coordinator – Missy Gillin

- Missy included a report in the Annual Board report.
- Missy reported that Jim and Sergio attended the NACo RICC (Rural Impact County Challenge) Cohort on-site meeting in Missouri in January. Jim stated that 12 other rural counties across the United States attended. Discussion revolved around housing challenges, developing strategic planning and needs assessment. The Cohort goes through July 2020.

- Missy reported that efforts are still being made to get 811 rental assistance vouchers. The vouchers would stay with the “unit” not the person. Steve mentioned Waupalani Apartments (Altoona) was once an 811 voucher housing unit. Missy noted to check into Waupalani Apts.
- The Shelter project is moving forward. In December, the project was awarded a \$750,000 Federal Home Loan Bank. The new shelter will accommodate 32 beds, as well as, 6 apartment units.
- Jim added that the Point in Time (PIT) count took place January 22, 2020. This event consists of teams going out into Blair County looking for homeless individuals. Jim informed the attendees that 15 people were identified as homeless, doubling the number from the previous year’s count.
- Upcoming Events listed in the Agenda packet include:
 - *Dining with Diabetes ~ Dates: March 10, 17, 24, & 31, 2020 from 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM*
Location: Altoona Public Library
 - *Making Parenting a Pleasure Classes ~ Dates: February to April 11, 2020 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM*
Location: Family Resource Center (United Way)
 - *Goodwill ReSTART program ~ Visit www.GoGoodwill.org to learn more*

6. Ex-Officio Reports

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) – Sara McConnell

- Sara included a list of upcoming events and trainings in the Agenda packet.
- Nami’s Annual Conference “Mapping a Vision” is April 16, 2020 at the Altoona Grand Hotel. Registration information will be coming out the week of February 10th.

CONTACT Altoona – Nicole Germaux

- No updates

The Arc – Maria Brandt

- No updates

ID Providers – Lorrie Hetager

- Lori reported that 6400 regulations, pertaining to residential providers, are out. Training will be offered for providers February 19, 2020.
- As per new Risk Screening Process, providers will be required to submit the following to the Administrative Entity (Southern Alleghenies Service Management Group):
 1. Quarterly Incident Management Data
 2. Quality Management Plan Quarterly Reports
 3. Complaint Records
 4. Employee Retention Records
 5. Agency Administrative and Management information
- ACEL has had Penn State Nursing students on-site for a one day internship. It has been a positive experience for the nursing students to work with people who have developmental disabilities.

Blair HealthChoices/Community Cares – Amy Marten-Shanafelt

- No updates.

Open Forum:

- Donna Gority shared that Things Unseen Theatre will be presenting a two actress play “Night, Mother” February 6-9, 2020 at the Church in the Middle of the Block Cultural Center, 217 5th Avenue, Altoona. The subject of the play is suicide.
- Donna informed the group that Charles Sutton, Jackie Sutton’s husband, passed away February 5, 2020.
- Donna reported that the organization “Arts Altoona” is in the process of acquiring two “gifted buildings” located at 2212 6th Avenue, PA. The buildings are the Simpson Temple United Parish Church Sanctuary and Education building. Donna described how the building will be used. Donna suggested that the

education building could possibly be used, in the future, for Social Services public hearings and/or meetings. Non-profit groups can use the building up to six times yearly with no costs.

- Amber reported that H.O.P.E. Drop-In has moved into their new location 711 9th Avenue, Altoona.

Steve closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

The next Social Services Advisory Board meeting will be held on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 11:30a.m. at SASMG training room, 157 Lakemont Park Blvd., Altoona (Note: Location Change)

The next Mental Health Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 9:00a.m. at CONTACT Altoona.

The next Developmental Programs Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 11:30a.m. at SASMG training room, 157 Lakemont Park Blvd.