

Town of Greenwich
Board of Social Services Regular Meeting
March 24, 2009- Hayton Room - Town Hall - 6:45pm

MINUTES

Present: Kimberly Terrenoire, *Chair*; Steve Maxwell, *Vice-Chair*; Victoria deBary, *Secretary*; Diane Fox, Stephen Francis, Mary Huyck, Elizabeth Menten; *Also Present:* Victoria Anyikwa, Commissioner; Adina Goldstein, Rick Weiner, Bob LaMarche, Nestor Nana, DSS; Maryann Ramos, Gerry Isaacson, RTM Health and Human Service Committee; Lori Jackson, Commission on Ageing; Coline Jenkins, Alexis Vulgaris, RTM; Sara Poirier, Greenwich Post, Leslie Tarkington, BET

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

The minutes of the February 17, 2009 meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

Board Business: Nominating Committee: Diane Fox presented the Nominating Committee's slate for Board officers: Kimberly Terrenoire, Chair, Stephen Francis, Vice-Chair, Victoria deBary, Secretary. The slate was approved by unanimous vote. The Chair thanked Mary Huyck and Diane Fox for their dedicated service to the BSS. **DSS Program Policy Reviews:** Policy statements for the Homemaking, Financial Assistance and Relocation were reviewed and discussed. Menten and deBary will coordinate comments on the policies and present them for a Board vote at the April 28th meeting. DSS time and money spent on Relocation services will be added to the monthly Board Report. The Chair requested a description of the policy on escorted transportation service. The Commissioner will email this to the Board.

Homemaker Update: Dr. Anyikwa presented a report describing the DSS Homemaker program and her research on how that function is filled in other towns. The report also presented data collected on the costs and procedures of for-profit and not-for-profit homemaking agencies. The Board discussed the current efforts by the Town Administrator, John Crary, to explore out-sourcing the Homemaker service to reduce the cost of the service to the TOG. The Chair will talk with Mr. Crary to determine how he is defining cost to the Town. The Board discussed strategies for determining out-sourced costs and how to maintain the quality of the program and most importantly, the caseworker oversight. Dr. Anyikwa met with Carol Burns of GADC to discuss the Homemaking Program and how GADC might offer such services. The Commissioner is also gathering information on other possible outsourcing avenues.

Evolv Update: Nana is working on the Action Item from last month's Board meeting to develop a way of keeping track of client wait times. Goldstein assured the Board that she reads all intake forms and that any health or housing emergency is taken care of immediately.

Commissioner's Report: The FY 2009-10 budget was passed by the BET without changes. External Entities were funded as passed by the Board including SWRMHB. The DSS lost two part-time homemaker positions and one administrative assistant position. Two MSW interns have joined the Department. Menten suggested that LaMarche might find an accounting intern to help with the work previously done by the part-time Accounts Clerk position that was eliminated. The Commissioner discussed the community resource event, *Managing in an Adverse Economy*, to be held on March 26th. She reported that the idea for the event came from her staff who were worried about recent requests for help from people who were having significant financial issues, but who retained too many assets to qualify for service from the DSS. The Commissioner reported that the Evolv data were showing that the majority of reapplications for service were for energy assistance. She also noted that while the numbers of new clients has increased slightly, the number of staff hours needed for each client has increased greatly (Fig.3-duplicated clients). Caseload is up 299 clients from last February due primarily to need for increased level of service for many clients preventing cases from being closed. *100th Anniversary:* the Commissioner is organizing a committee to work on the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the DSS. Diane Fox volunteered to serve on the Committee. Anyikwa would like to make a video with interviews of current and former people involved

with the Department. Coline Jenkins suggested that Anyikwa contact Jim Thompson who works with Channel 79. The Commissioner would like to recognize the GYCP Board members and Chair for their great work fund raising for and supporting the program.

Action Item 1: Terrenoire will discuss the Homemaker Program with John Crary.

Action Item 2: Anyikwa will forward Escorted Transportation Policy to the Board

Action Item 3: Anyikwa will contact the Greenwich Police Department Safety Officer personally to reschedule his visit to the Department.

Action Item 4: Nestor Nana will reformat Figure 5 (Services Provided in Hours) for all future Board reports so that the x axis (services) shows the services ranging from that with the highest incidence to lowest, rather than in alphabetical order.

Action Item 5: Menten and deBary will organize Board comments on the Homemaker, Emergency Assistance and External Entities policies to present to the Board for a vote.

Action Item 6: Anyikwa will add information to the DSS page of the Town's website to provide information to residents who wish to contribute to DSS programs.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 8:45pm

April 28 Agenda Items:

Quarterly Matrix

Vote on BSS Policy: Homemaker, Emergency Assistance, External Entities

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria deBary