PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
MEETING MINUTES
February 21, 2012
Sudley North Government Center – Jean McCoy Conference Room

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
George Orr
Hilda Barg
Margaret Covington
Hammad Khan
Scott Weible

MEMBERS ABSENT:
None.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:
Janine Sewell
Kay Taylor
Charles Toothman
Lisa Tatum
Victor Evans
Phyllis Jennings-Holt
Debbie Carter
Shelby Holley

The meeting was convened at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman George Orr.

MINUTES:
MOTION by Mrs. Barg and seconded by Mrs. Covington to accept the minutes of February 7, 2012 as presented. Motion passed.

CITIZENS’ TIME:
No citizens present.

PRESENTATIONS:
Shelby Holley, Human Services Supervisor

Mr. Holley chair’s the agency’s Emergency Management Team and is responsible for coordinating the Agency’s response to community disasters. He briefed the BOSS on the Agency’s recent response to emergencies in the community. DSS has primary responsibility for responding with Shelter Operations in the event of an ESF-6. (Emergency Support Functions) DSS’s main responsibility is shelter registration and inquiry. The partners are schools, the Health Department and the Red Cross.

Mr. Orr inquired if there were any proposed updates to our agency plans after the recent floods. Ms. Sewell responded that updates are made periodically, but that certain “lessons learned” will be incorporated into future plans including defining obligations, such as what “registration” means, and utilizing technology for registration.
Mrs. Barg inquired if Mr. Holley is aware that there are stores of supplies at various places throughout the county. Also, do the sheltering schools keep supplies in case of emergency (e.g. food) for shelter residents? Do we have coordinating meetings with military bases in the area with regard to disasters? Mr. Holley and Ms. Sewell stated they would seek answers to her questions.

CONSENT AGENDA:
C-1 BECC Appreciation Month

Lisa Tatum reported on the BECC Appreciation Month to acknowledge Benefit Workers. A commendation was discussed by BOSS in order to acknowledge the value of the work done by staff and the value to the community. Ms. Weible asked questions and ultimately recommended some changes. Ms. Sewell will make the changes and send an updated commendation for BOSS to approve.

ACTION ITEMS:
A-1 Appoint Board of Social Services Member as Housing Board Representative for 2012

Ms. Barg represents the BOSS on the Housing Board. She reported there is much discussion at the meetings about issues such as housing vouchers. She is seeking another BOSS member who can replace her. The Housing Board meets once per month beginning from 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Mr. Khan agreed to serve as the alternate representative with the possibility of assuming the full responsibility in the future.

MOTION was made by Mrs. Covington and seconded by Mr. Weible to appoint Mrs. Barg as the primary representative and Mr. Khan as an alternate representative on the Housing Board. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION:
MOTION was made by Mrs. Barg and seconded by Mrs. Covington to add Item D-2: Budget Presentation to tonight’s agenda. Motion carried.

D-1 FOIA – Janine Sewell

Ms. Sewell reported that she did not yet have a full response to the question of whether sending an e-mail to the entire group constitutes a meeting. Mr. Orr suggested it would be useful to have the County Attorney attend a BOSS meeting at least once per year to review issues about communications.

Mr. Weible reported that there is some case precedent for considering a meeting to be any form of communication – even one-on-one or e-mail announcements about meeting time/locations.

Ms. Barg asked for interpretation about how the BOSS should be notified about events and other issues that might arise in which sensitive information must be communicated. She would like to know how to balance privacy and FOIA concerns vs. a need to keep BOSS informed.

Mr. Khan suggested that Ms. Sewell limit her communications to the Chair and Co-Chair when informing the BOSS about a sensitive issue.
D-2 Budget Presentation- Charles Toothman and Janine Sewell

Mr. Charles Toothman, Administrative Manager gave a presentation on the local budget process. We are a local DSS which means that Prince William County pays for all expenses and is then reimbursed by the State. Only the BOCS can budget and appropriate funds for the Department to spend.

Mr. Weible asked if we are the agency that distributes food stamps. Ms. Sewell responded that, yes, we are the agency that distributes food stamps in this community.

DIRECTOR'S TIME:
DT-1 Director’s Report Part 2 – Benefits, Employment and Child Care; Adult and Children’s Services

Ms. Tatum reviewed data on the accomplishments within the BECC Division. She pointed out that growth in new cases has leveled off, but the numbers are still very high. People are not moving off assistance as quickly as they had been in the past and the ongoing caseload is growing. We are seeing better outcomes in our employment programs; however, income levels are not significantly higher. The wage rate is comparable to surrounding counties. (The VIEW participation rate of 51% is one of the highest in the region.) The number of walk-in customers has increased significantly.

Ms. Jennings-Holt reviewed data on the accomplishments within the Adult and Children's Services Divisions. She reported increases in many categories of Adult and Children’s Services. Adult Protective Services (APS) reports have almost doubled this year. There has been an increase in founded cases. Family assessments are down, but that can be attributed to the type of assessment being conducted. This is also true for the number of treatment cases.

Mr. Khan inquired about reason for the increase in APS cases. Ms. Jennings-Holt responded that there was a change in the manner of screening for APS in November 2010. APS and CPS are now screened by the same team which has streamlined the process. The team has also done a lot of outreach to educate the community about the reporting process. Also, there has been an increase in awareness about hoarding (because of TV shows). There are generational issues because of families who are sandwiched between caring for the elderly and children. Finally, the elderly population is growing. Mr. Khan noted that it is an alarming increase.

Mr. Weible asked if any of the increases are a result of generalized awareness of services in the community. Ms. Jennings-Holt responded that we evaluate all calls with structured criteria to screen out those that are not abuse. She reported that the screening process uses scripts so the workers collect information in a uniform manner and evaluate it using the same criteria. This has been a helpful process.

Mr. Khan asked if there is a way to identify if calls/complaints are coming from a connected group (such as a specific nursing home) that would raise a concern about the treatment that is occurring at that facility. Ms. Jennings-Holt responded that those calls are reported to other agencies for tracking and analysis. Individuals can get information from the state about complaints and investigations into nursing homes.
Ms. Jennings Holt also reported that all calls received by the agency receive a “second eyes” review to make sure that appropriate judgments are made. This also has the benefit of allowing someone to identify any patterns that may emerge from a series of calls.

Ms. Taylor reminded the BOSS that APS cases can be more complicated than CPS because of the issue of adult capacity. The Services Division works closely with police when they conduct investigations.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Ms. Sewell announced that Steve Luteran declined position and will not be starting as the Residential Services Division Chief. She will be pursuing another candidate.

**BOARD MEMBER’S TIME**
Mr. Orr reported that Gregory White was appointed by Mr. Principi to the BOSS. His nomination was approved by BOCS today. He will be at the next meeting. Mr. Nche has not yet made an appointment.

Mr. Weible inquired about benefits that might be available to a citizen he knows who might either be incapacitated or in need of mental health assistance.

Ms. Covington remarked on the article in the Washington Post about the VB case and asked if the case got straightened out. Ms. Sewell reported that the jury has recommended a sentence and is waiting for the Judge to validate.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**
None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**
**MOTION** by Mrs. Barg and seconded by Mrs. Covington to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

---

George H. Orr, Chairman
Prince William County
Board of Social Services

Janine M. Sewell, Director
Prince William County
Department of Social Services