

Macon County Social Services Board

December 20, 2017

Minutes

Call to Order

Patrick Betancourt called meeting to order. Members in attendance were: Lisa Leatherman, Darlene Green, Patrick Betancourt, Secretary to the Board and Cathy Makinson Business Officer designated to record minutes. Evelyn Southard sent regrets due to illness.

Minutes

Darlene Green made motion to approve November minutes, second by Lisa Leatherman, minutes approved.

Financials

Business Officer, Cathy Makinson updated the Board on the Energy Program. Both CIP and LIEAP allocations were \$123,230. As of today, \$91,377.33 has been obligated in Crisis and \$37,300 obligated in LIEAP. There continue to be challenges with the Energy Program in NC FAST. Cathy proposed delaying using TANF funds for Emergency Assistance the beginning of January in order to evaluate expenditures after December 1571 uploaded in January. Financials were provided in Board books.

Program Reports

Jennifer Alexander gave program reports in the areas of FNS, Child Support and Program Integrity. There were 2,410 households with 4,784 individuals receiving FNS benefits which is a continued decrease from prior year. Factors influencing this decrease are the changes in ABAWD households being limited to only 3 months of benefits if they are not working and an increase in employment in this county. FNS staff continue to meet timeliness requirements and North Carolina, as a state, has made a dramatic turnaround in this program and is now in the top 10 of 50 states and US territories.

Jennifer reported that Chrissy Wallace, the Program Integrity worker has been able to attend more training in this area. FNS has more fraud cases than Medicaid due to different program reporting requirements. Clients continue to pay on outstanding balances. Patrick stated there is one large Medicaid case that DSS is working with the District Attorney's office and learning how to best prosecute these type cases. The Board had already established \$4,000 as the minimal amount to consider prosecuting.

Child Support workers continue to meet and regularly exceed Federal and State benchmarks in this program. Macon is currently ranked 12th out of 100 counties in performance. Jennifer stated there has been some turnover in this program but in January we should be fully staffed. Additionally, our agency has contracted with a retired Child Support Supervisor to help train over a 3 month period beginning in January.

Old Business

Patrick informed the Board that in December the County Commissioners voted to approve the Work First Plan for FY 19-22 and the Plan was then submitted to the State Division.

Patrick reminded the Board that in October, Macon County had been asked by the State Division to join the first phase of the child welfare rollout in NC FAST rather than the later phase assigned. This caused a compressed timeline for child welfare staff to be trained in the NC FAST system. The pilot counties are experiencing many challenges and last week the Directors' Association voted not to endorse the rollout to other counties until NC FAST is ready. Internally, the decision was made to continue training as if we were to begin 1/22/18.

New Business

Patrick presented a copy of the audit findings summary which reflected a couple areas of material weakness. Medicaid needs to pay more attention to SSI recipients when they receive notices and evaluate the eligibility recertification. In the area of childcare subsidy, there is a need to establish second party eligibility reviews. Staff developed the correction plan and will include second party reviews and asked that SWCDC assist. There are no paybacks required in either of these areas.

Patrick notified the Board that there was an Intensive Fatality Review last week and that it went very well. The committee recognized five recommendations:

- 1) The lack of oversight and structured treatment plans at methadone clinics.
- 2) In regards to drug screens, that DSS explore reports that include the level of drugs found in the screen.
- 3) Expansion of infant childcare providers and slots serving rural counties.
- 4) The need for a uniform standard of screening in hospitals of newborns and mothers as to drug exposure.
- 5) The need for legislative change at the federal level allowing child welfare staff to access treatment records.

Patrick presented a draft memorandum to be sent to the staff and DSS Board notifying them that there is to be a review of random local child welfare cases and documentation over the past 10 years due to the concern of a document used in a neighboring county that could potentially violate parent and child rights. After speaking with the two social work supervisors, Patrick does not believe Macon DSS has ever used this practice but wanted to be prepared in the case the State requested a formal review. Board gave several suggested changes. The revised copy of the letter is attached to the minutes.

Closed Session

Darlene Green made motion to go into Closed Session to discuss personnel and confidential case information. Lisa Leatherman seconded, and motion carried.

Next Meeting

Next Board meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, January 17, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. in the DSS Administrative Conference Room.

APPROVED BY:

Chairman | Date

Secretary | Date