

Macon County Social Services Board

October 17, 2018

Minutes

Call to Order

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

Minutes

Evelyn Southard made motion to approve September minutes, second by Darlene Green, minutes approved.

Financials

Business Officer, Cathy Makinson presented the year-end financial analysis for FY 17-18 and provided copies to the Board. Overall county cost savings of \$492,837, which includes \$27,501 in foster care and \$117,888 in special assistance, copies provided in Board books. Foster care savings have dramatically been reduced by demand. Senior Services showed an increase in county savings. Medicaid Transportation has reduced county expense from \$36,141 in FY 15-16 to \$1,972 in FY 17-18. Patrick and Board commended staff on their effort to reduce county expense.

Program Reports

Budget Analysis reported under Financials.

Old Business

Patrick updated the Board on the cancelled child welfare listening session in Jackson County. Meeting has been rescheduled to November 13th and Patrick invited the Board if interested. He stated the Division has asked him to be present and David Moore, attorney, will also attend.

Patrick reported on the complaint letter in regards to the breach of confidentiality of a foster child by a foster parent who is a licensed clinical social worker. Letter was sent to the social work licensure board and is still in process. Macon DSS was unable to file a civil action as our attorney felt it needed to come from the GAL attorney advocate, Mary Holliday in this case. Since Mary is an attorney she referred the case to another attorney and filed a civil suit on behalf of our foster child. The allegations are similar to those in the complaint letter to the licensing board. Patrick will update the Board as it moves through the court process. Patrick reminded the Board that this is the second breach of confidentiality within the year. He updated the Board on that case saying the GAL office handled it as a personnel issue and that they would not share the outcome with Macon DSS.

Patrick also updated the Board on the Cherokee County CVA issue. Macon DSS did file a juvenile petition. The Board had recommended that Patrick and DSS Attorney meet with county attorney, Chester Jones, to make county aware of the case and all concerns. At this meeting, Chester was most concerned about our involvement in Cherokee County moving forward. He suggested DSS consider notifying our legislative delegation as this could become a financial burden, not only on Macon, but the other 5 counties surrounding Cherokee. At the end of this meeting, the next action was for Patrick to speak with the DSS Board and get their perspective on whether this is something they want to pursue.

Discussion was held and Board was informed it is only administrative costs that are already reimbursed by the county. However, the time commitment and effort, that it takes our social worker to go to Cherokee weekly affects the time available to spend on local cases and is not cost effective. Patrick agreed to meet in a closed session with county commissioners if requested. DSS Board did not feel the current situation required legislative involvement at this time. Patrick stated he would be discussing this possibility with other directors this Friday.

New Business

Patrick reported that year before last year, Macon DSS was selected to undergo an OSRI, On-Site Review Instrument, a tool used to review child welfare records. It is supposed to be a random selection in choosing counties. Macon, a Tier I county, one of the smallest in the state was selected twice. Patrick questioned the random selection at the time and now Macon has been selected a third time in less than two years. We were notified the day a state child welfare representative had asked if we had undergone one of these reviews because he could not find any info on it. Child Welfare used to undergo an additional process review every two years but that had been suspended. Now, this secondary review has been scheduled for November as well. Patrick has requested information as to how the data measurements in the new MOUs signed by counties will be part of this review. Currently there is no public information on any OSRI outcomes.

Patrick mentioned at the August county commissioners meeting, the county manager gave an update on the capital improvement plan and space analysis. This week, the county reported to have selected the architect firm through an RFQ process. This firm will interview department heads to capture staffing, services, and space assigned. The Crawford Center is still a priority in the plan and the kiosks used to capture traffic through that building should provide good data.

Sheila Conley explained to the board, changes to the energy programs this season. In the past, the onset of the program was based on 3 consecutive days of 32 degrees or below. State removed that condition and we chose to change to a November 1st start date in recent years and then added target groups of households containing one person 60 years and older, 5 years and below or someone receiving services through the Department of Aging and Adult Services. Since we usually expend all allocated funds before the cool weather ends, Sheila touched base with a few counties surrounding Macon to compare processes and information. It was determined to emphasize it has to be a life-threatening situation along with the other criteria and that applications will be evaluated on a case by case basis. The application will be screened, then transferred to a processor in the back on rotation and the client will be notified if approved. DSS has to be able to alleviate the crisis to use crisis funds. LIEAP on the other hand is a credit and those who meet the eligibility and age requirements can begin applying December 1, 2018.

Closed Session

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

Next Meeting

Next meeting is rescheduled from Wednesday, November 21st to Wednesday, November 14th, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. in the DSS Administrative Conference Room. Board was informed the employee Thanksgiving lunch is scheduled that day.

APPROVED BY:

Chairman | Date

Secretary | Date