

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

465 W 15th Street, Suite 100, Front Royal, Virginia 22630

September 15th, 2022

The Advisory Board met in the Training Room of the Warren County Department of Social Services on September 15, 2022, with the meeting called to order at 4:02 PM by Mr. Jerome.

Members in Attendance: Lorraine Brandon, Stephen Jerome, Robert Cullers, Hayden Ashworth

Absent Member: Brenda Wells

Present for the Department: : Jon Martz, Director; Christie Lawson, Assistant Director; Michelle Smeltzer, Community Liaison; Mikki Ewanish, Administrative Services Manager; Lisa Look, Fiscal Assistant; Amanda Jenkins, Administrative Secretary; Lucy Riffey, APS/AS Supervisor; Renee Pearson, Support Supervisor; Desiree Minter, Benefit Supervisor; and Katie Colton, Benefit Supervisor

County Officials: No County Officials present

Guests: Linda Selover, Community Member

Approval of Minutes

Having no revisions to be made, a motion was made by Mr. Cullers to approve July 21, 2022 minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comments

Ms. Selover welcomed Mr. Ashworth as the Advisory Board's newest member.

Advisory Board Comments

No Board comments.

Unit Reports

Community Liaison

Prepared and presented by Michelle Smeltzer, Community Liaison, reflective of August 2022.

Community Development Block Grant (Housing)

Funds have been exhausted

Ministerial Fund Spending

August spent - \$1,145.32

August received - \$1,594.20

Food Distribution

August - 63 clients served (13 served in June)

Job Developer

New clients/referrals for the month of August: 9

Total clients to date: 97

Total Businesses contacted to date: 74

Notes of Interest

Mr. Ashworth wanted to know if Mrs. Smeltzer corresponded with soup kitchens in the area. Mrs. Smeltzer replied that First Baptist is the main church that distributes hot meals. Mr. Ashworth questioned if the ministerial funds are restricted. Mrs. Smeltzer stated that the churches have a generic list of what the funds should be used for along with a cap of how much can be spent. The president of the Ministerial Association is called for final approval before any money is spent. Mrs. Selover complimented Mrs. Smeltzer and how well the program is doing. Mr. Ashworth asked how residents are receiving the necessary skills to match the needs of the work force. Mrs. Smeltzer expressed that Laurel Ridge Community College and Aire Serv both have programs in place to provide training for different types of jobs. Mr. Martz stated that the agency was looking into space to be able provide a Job Readiness Program. Mr. Martz discussed how the agency was looking to expand the Community Liaison team by hiring a Housing Specialist. Mr. Martz informed the Board that a new program called Low Income Housing Water Assistance will be taking place in October. This program will help people who have had their water cut off or are at risk of their water being cut off.

Services

Prepared by April White, Shelissa Lewis, and Lucy Riffey, Family Services Supervisors, reflective of August 2022. Presented by Lucy Riffey.

Permanency

Foster Care Cases	13 cases with 15 children total
Fostering Futures	1
Adoption Cases	9 children available for adoption (4 have identified families.)
KinGap Cases	0
ICPC Requests	0
Resource Families in Approval Process	3
Resource Families Completed Approval	1
Resource Families in Re-Approval Process	0

Child Welfare

Referrals Received	75 referrals/30 accepted (45 received in June)
Family Assessments	37 open as of 8/31/22
Investigations	11 open as of 8/31/22
In Home Cases (Prevention)	21(10 cases were open in June)

Adult Services

Guardianship Cases	100
Adult Service Cases	11
Adult Protective Services Reports	31
Adult Protective Services Reports Accepted	26

Notes of Interest

Mr. Martz explained that a resource family is a foster parent and expressed how beneficial it has been having that one resource family in the County. The agency used to have to transport kids entering foster care to neighboring localities. The increase in CPS referrals is due to children returning to school. Mr. Martz stated that once a CPS case is coming to an end the family is offered In Home Services. The In Home Services program allows the agency to provide additional resources to prevent future CPS cases.

Eligibility

Prepared and presented by Desiree Minter, Benefit Programs Supervisor, reflective of August 2022.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Applications</u>
SNAP	175 (117 in June)
Medicaid (F&C)	132 (91 in June)
TANF	39 (22 in June)
Child Care	33 (15 in June)
Fraud Referrals	44 (1 in June)
Auxiliary Grant (AG)	0
Fuel	19
IV-E	0

Notes of Interest

Mr. Martz introduced Katie Colton as the agency's new Benefit Programs Supervisor. Mr. Cullers asked what IV-E is, and Mr. Martz explained that when a child comes into foster care, if they are income eligible, benefits such as Medicaid and SNAP will be paid for by the federal government.

Administration and Support

Prepared by and presented by Renee Pearson, Administrative Office Manager, reflective of August 2022.

	<u>August</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Phone Calls	1,671	11,566
Lobby Visits	1,381	8,703
EBT Cards Disbursed	122	775

Notes of Interest

Assistant Director's Report

Ms. Lawson reported that the Department has hired a new Receptionist in Support. The Department is hiring an In Home Worker, a HSA, and in Benefits there are currently five openings. Mr. Martz reported that the Department's current In Home Worker has decided to step down to part-time to continue their educational goals. Ms. Lawson informed the Board that the Department is hosting its second annual Jack-o-Lantern Jubilee on Thursday, October 27th

beginning at 6:00 PM. On the track at the Human and Health Services Complex; an inflatable costume race will take place once again.

Director's Report

Mr. Martz reported that the agency was determined to have a T1 bundled line and is no longer considered first priority on fixing the internet issue. Mr. Martz informed the Board that the agency has started a new program for staff called Lunch and Learn, which will be held on the first Wednesday of every month. Ms. Smeltzer reported that this month, the Women's Resource Center was the agency's guest speaker. Mr. Martz reported that the agency will have future speakers to go over topics such as employee benefits and the history of Warren County. Mr. Martz reported that other surrounding agencies are sending their staff over to this agency to see how things are done here. Mr. Martz reported that a study was done when he first became a Director and around 50-60 employees left here and went elsewhere. The Department conducted the same study again recently and found the numbers have dropped to approximately 15-20. Mr. Martz reported both he and Ms. Lawson conduct one-on-one meetings with all employees once a year. The feedback from those interviews is that the agency has become a place where people want to work. Mr. Martz invited the Board members to be judges for the annual Chili Cook-off on September 28th. Mr. Jerome wanted to know if the public health emergency was over. Mr. Martz stated that it keeps getting pushed back and there is no specific date when the emergency will be deemed over. Ms. Selover asked about the caretaker support group, and Mr. Martz stated the agency is working on that. Mr. Cullers asked if there is a way to get a list of caregivers in the area. Ms. Riffey replied there is a website www.care.com which is a good place to look. There is a list of private paid caregivers, and consumer direct agencies have a list of independent individuals who are caregivers. Mr. Cullers stated Shenandoah has an excellent support group for caregivers. Mr. Martz stated that he would reach out to the director there and see if she could share that information.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business for discussion, Mr. Jerome motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM. The next meeting will be held on November 17, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

X

Jon Martz- Director of Social Services

X

Stephen Jerome -Chair of the Board