

**The Blair County Department of Social Services
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.
The Arc Altoona, 431 Jackson Ave, Altoona**

Board Members Present: James Stratton, Steve Martynuska, Rick Petroski, Commissioner Erb, Donna Gority, Sue Tomlinson, Dave Hollern, John Allender and Mike Stubler

Board Members Absent: Chris Cohn, Cassie Grassmyer, Robert Smith and Cindy Barton

Others Present: Melissa Gillin, Jim Hudack, Jamie Henry, Melissa Gordon, Kelly Popich, Maria Brandt, Theresa Rudy, Amy Marten-Shanfelft and Lorrie Hetager

MINUTES

Welcome and Call to Order

Rick Petroski, Chairperson, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Self-introductions were made. .

1. Approval of December 7, 2017 & February 8, 2018 Minutes

- *Motion by Susan Tomlinson to accept the December 7, 2017 minutes. Mike Stubler seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.*
- *Motion by Dave Hollern to accept the February 8, 2018 minutes. Donna Gority seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed.*

2. Board Operations – Jim Hudack, Executive Director Blair County Dept. Social Services

- The August Board meeting will include staff from the Social Services Office and SASMG. A location will be determined.
- Jim has a few extra tickets for the NAMI Conference on April 19 at the Casino.

3. Mental Health Committee Report – Donna Gority

- A copy of the meeting minutes was distributed with the agenda packet. Donna reported that there were several action items that need approval by the Board.

4. Developmental Programs Committee Report – John Allender

- A copy of the meeting minutes was distributed with the agenda packet. John reported that the Committee had a motion requesting a letter of support.
 - Skills of Central PA requested a letter of support to open a Respite Home.
Motion made by Mike Stubler for the Board to provide a letter of support. Motion was seconded by Dave Hollern. All were in favor. Motion passed. Donna Gority abstained from voting being that she is a Board Member of Skills of Central PA.
 - The request for the Transition Council to be facilitated by SASMG is still being worked on. The Developmental Programs Committee approved the request however, a request for a letter of support from the Board was not presented to the Board at this time.

5. County Reports

Executive Director – Jim Hudack

- 2nd HSBG Public Hearing is scheduled for Friday, May 11 at 1:00pm at the Altoona Water Authority.
- The HSBG Annual Plan is due May 31.
- The HSBG budget allocation will remain the same as the past 5 years.
- Cathy Crum officially retired.
- Cathy's position has been approved by the Commissioners but will entail contract monitoring & compliance and a focus on housing development.
- Affordable housing is becoming even more of an issue and is going to become a part of the County Comprehensive Plan.

- Jim is working on funding for housing for handicapped veterans.
- Family Services is in the process of acquiring a building for the homeless shelter. It is approximately \$2.2 - \$2.4 million investment. It will have approx. 30 – 40 beds and also 6 apartments on the 2nd floor.

MH/COD –Theresa Rudy

- Theresa asked for letters of support for both Home Nursing Agency (HNA) & Blair Family Solutions (BFS) to submit to the Department of Human Services/Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DHS/OMHSAS) requesting to waive the group therapy definition requiring a one hour group session. HNA is requesting to provide group therapy sessions of thirty minute increments in the Outpatient Psychiatric school based satellite sites and BFS is requesting to provide group therapy sessions in thirty to forty-five minute increments.

A motion was made by Donna Gority to provide the letters of support as presented. John Allender seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- Evolution Counseling Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is requesting a letter of support to submit to DHS/OMHSAS renewing the request to waive the BHRS provider qualifications effective May 2018.

A motion was made by Donna Gority to provide the letter of support as presented. Mike Stubler seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- Alternative Community Resource Program (ACRP) requested a letter of support to establish a satellite outpatient site at Kimmel School building next school year.

A motion was made by Mike Stubler to provide the letter of support. Steve Martynuska seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Mental Health – Ken Dean

- Ken included a report with the meeting Agenda packet. Donna suggested including the names with the titles of the positions being reported.

Intellectual Disabilities – Melissa Gordon

- A report was included with the Agenda packet.
- ODP (Office of Developmental Programs) granted ID with 2 new grant opportunities. It will allow them to identify at least 2 individuals who could use it before they graduate.

Early Intervention – Kelly Popich

- A report was included with the Agenda packet.
- Kelly is seeking guidance from the State regarding providers that come to Blair County & want to provide EI services. EI has the responsibility to contract with providers as long as they are qualified and meet certain requirements. The question is what happens with initial evaluators that are currently doing the evals. As for capacity EI isn't in need of additional evaluators but Kelly is asking the State if she is required to contract with them.
- April is Child Abuse Prevention month. There is a flag raising ceremony at the Courthouse on April 18 at noon.
- April 21 is the Week of the Young Child event.

6. Ex-Officio Reports

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) – Sara McConnell

- A report was included with the Agenda packet.
- April 19, 2018 NAMI Conference at The Casino.

The Arc – Maria Brandt

- Maria thanked SASMG for their support in the Community. She stated that they have been making their presence known.
- PwD Preparedness Training on April 12 for professionals only at the Arc.
- Financial & Legal Training regarding guardianships, power of attorney and their rights. It is being combined with the ABLE Act and the Dept. of Treasury.
- Parent to Parent night to help educate on Special Education services. Adults & Parents only.

ID Providers – Lorrie Hetager

- Lorrie reported there is an issue with providers trying to recruit & staff open positions. Advertising in the paper is expensive. Paid \$800 for the ad and did not receive any applicants. Providers are using Facebook and Indeed web site. Had numerous new interviews scheduled but individuals no showed or quit after a short period of time. It was suggested contacting Blair Senior Services for retirees & using Career Link.
- John Seeley from Empowering Lives Foundation, 2 people have secured employment in area restaurants
- April 20 Volunteer Appreciation day
- There is a Quality Assurance and Risk Management committee helping people to get registered on Smart 911 and the PennDot Yellow Dot program

Blair HealthChoices/Community Cares – Amy Marten-Shanafelt

- The Reinvestment Plan was submitted for \$247,000 & will be partnering with the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to renovate apartment above the Family Services Teen Shelter for transitional age youth through the Journey Program. Also, HNA is proposing renovating a 3 bedroom house to establish a single room occupancy location for those leaving hospital, rehabs or prison for temporary housing while working with services to get more permanent housing. Another project is purchasing a 3 apartment efficiency home for permanent housing in which Blair Community Action would manage the properties.
- Will be presenting at the Inter Agency Conference in State College on May 1 regarding the BHRS (Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services) initiative.
- Stepping Up Initiative May 16 – planning some things in the County – Amy looking for stories to share whether personal, printed, etc. on: My mental illness lead me down this path and this is how I got on the right path – journey to recovery experiences
- HOPE Drop In Amtran Adventurous Race scheduled for June 28

Open Forum:

- United Way is moving to Hollidaysburg Plaza.

The next Social Services Advisory Board meeting will be held on Thursday, June 7, 2018 at 11:30a.m. at the Arc, 431 Jackson Ave, Altoona

The next Mental Health Committee meetings will be held on Thursday, May 3, 2018 at 9:00a.m. at CONTACT Altoona.

The next Developmental Programs Committee meetings will be held on Thursday, May 3, 2018 at 11:30a.m. at SASMG training room, 157 Lakemont Park Blvd.