

**Kent County Department of Social Services**  
**Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**  
**October 19, 2020**

**Present:** Kevin Karpowicz, Beverly Birkmire, Olythea Hunley, Shelly Neal-Edwards, Charlotte Potts, William Washington, Tracey Williams and Jen Cole

**Absent:** Bob Jacobs, Caitlan Garland and David May

**Presentation: KCDSS Local Budget Presentation** - Joyce Dalto provided a powerpoint presentation for the agency operating budget. She compared the budget for FY 2021 to the two previous years. Jen to send to the Board the links in the presentation that is additional information that reviews grants and other funding.

**Chairperson's Report:**

- Approval of minutes from September 21, 2020. Motion to approve was made by William Washington and 2nd by Charlotte Potts. All were in favor.

□ **Kent County CARES Foundation**

- Website Development - Dr. Karpowicz contacted United Way and MASSB for website design solutions. He also looked into a grant for non profit organizations, which we did not qualify. We currently have an account through GoDaddy website development. He will get quotes for contracting someone to help with development and bring to the next meeting.
- MASSB Conference - the MASSB annual conference is October 29, 2020 from 1pm to 3 pm. This years' conference will be virtual. Currently Shelly, Dr. Karpowicz, Beverly and Jen are attending. Shelly will send out the login information. All members are welcome to attend. Topics will be State initiatives, Legislative initiatives, and creative fundraising ideas for the Board.

□ **Director's Report:**

- **Divisional Performance Report** – September was reviewed by attending members. Child Support has met their collection goals. FIA SNAP applications decreased however the amount distributed to recipients increased due to the SNAP maximum allotment. That ended September 30, 2020. FIA Workers continue to process cases statewide, only 20% of their cases are Kent County residence and the rest are throughout the state. The number of cases for OHEP are expected to increase once the moratorium is lifted September 30th. Customers will have 45 to 90 days to apply for assistance with utilities, housing and other services. FIA is a pilot for a new processing system, Eligibility and Enrollment (E&E). Kent, Frederick and Washington counties will Go-Live on November 16, 2020. This should make processing a bit easier and help staff follow up with Kent County customers. Child Welfare Services has 5 children in placement and 5 adult guardians. One foster child turned 19 and has chosen to move to North Carolina to live with his mother.
- **Updates for KCDSS**– Shelly provided written updates to the Board Members. KCDSS staff continue to telework since March 13, 2020. Staff, especially FIA Staff are in the office on a rotation basis to answer the telephones, get mail, etc.
  - On September 22, 2020 the House approved a continuing resolution, House Resolution 8337 or, in other words, a short term budget bill to avert a government shutdown. On September 30, 2020 the Senate approved the continuing resolution. The President signed the bill on October 1, 2020 and became Public Law 116-159. This ensures utility companies give customers an opportunity to make payments.
  - In FIA, the waivers for face to face requirements for certain programs ended at the end of September. The state has implemented a new scanning software for sensitive information to continue processing applications over the telephone that allows customers to provide documentation. All workers are processing cases from all over the State of Maryland. Kent County DSS will be participating as a pilot for the Eligibility and Enrollment (E&E)

system. Kick Off conference call was held on November 16th. Summer SNAP- has been approved and all eligible families received their benefits in one lump sum for June, July, August and extended through September. Due to COVID-19 related school closures, children who were eligible for free or reduced-price meals were issued up to \$370.50 in food supplement benefits for the remaining 2019-2020 school year. The benefits, Pandemic-EBT, or P-EBT are intended to help families in Maryland purchase food while schools are closed. DHS and MSDE are working together on a plan for P-EBT from October- December 2020. In the Services Division, the START program had its virtual site visit on 9/24/2020. Everything went well. They also went “Live” with their new system called CJAMS at the end of July. Staff have begun face to face visits for out of home and in home services. In the Administrative Division, KC have upgraded the phone system, VOIP. There are still issues with the phones when the network is out. We are currently working with the contractor to rectify the problem. The goal is to make staff available to answer their phone line while teleworking from home.

- CWLA Virtual Summit
  - Shelly attended the CWLA Virtual Summit from October 6-8th. Advancing Racial Justice, Equity and Inclusion for Children and Families. Her takeaway from this summit was to encourage DSS Supervisors to educate workers to put the needs of the family first.
  - Kinship Navigator
    - CDSS will be piloting the “Kinship Navigator” program. This program is intended to build upon and enhance Maryland’s existing framework of practice by adopting components from other states’ models and implementing a standardized approach that includes: a single point of access; standardized and comprehensive assessment that informs intervention options; warm hand-offs to referrals; utilization of peer navigators with lived experience; and time-limited case management for qualifying families. We hope to be piloting this program with Cecil County beginning in January 2021.
  - Enhanced Youth Transitional Planning
    - A brief video was provided and an overview of the program on the Mid Shore through the Thrive @25 initiative.

➤ **Other**

- Motion to Adjourn: With no additional business at hand, a motion to adjourn at 4:55 pm. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

□ The next meeting will be held Monday, November 16, 2020 at 3:30pm via Google Meet.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jen Cole  
Executive Assistant