

ALBEMARLE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
VIRTUAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 15, 2022

Chair: Jennie More

Vice Chair: Mary McIntyre

Present: Jennie More, Mary McIntyre, Natalie Detert, Amy Laufer, Emily Dodson, Kaki Dimock, Mary Stebbins

Absent: Samuel Miller position vacant

BOS Members: Jim Andrews

Guests: Tamara Ryan, Tammy Critzer, Alice Micklem and Wanda Hoerman

Jennie More as Chair called the meeting to order at 3:31 P.M.

Jennie planned to handle the approval of minutes and the addition of the election of Chair and Vice Chair. Then she would step aside for the new Chair to continue the meeting.

Introductions were made as there were new faces present today. Welcome to Natalie Detert our newest member.

Agenda Item: Approval of the January 2022 Minutes

Discussion: The Advisory Board has the January 2021 minutes that were sent out by email. Jennie More asked if members had reviewed the minutes and had any changes or corrections. There was a crossed-out sentence that should be deleted.

Action: Mary M made a motion to approve the January minutes with the cross out correction. Amy Laufer seconded. January minutes approved.

Item not on the agenda-Election of Chair and Vice Chair for Calendar year 2022

Discussion: Jennie asked if the Advisory Board members are ok to have the Chair and Vice Chair election. Mary M current Vice Chair is willing to serve as Chair. Many members agreed. Jennie asked for a motion to nominate Mary M for the Chair. Amy Laufer volunteered to serve as vice chair. Jennie asked for a motion to nominate Amy for the Vice Chair position.

Action: Amy Laufer made a motion to nominate Mary M for the Chair position. Emily seconded. All in favor. Mary M. made a motion to nominate Amy for the Vice Chair. Emily seconded. All in favor. Both motions passed. Mary M is now the official chair and Amy is Vice Chair.

Agenda Item: Business from the Director – Information Items

Discussion: Kaki mentioned the equity and inclusion goal around cultural development. We had our first all staff training around the ABCs of DEI. This signifies a commitment from the Leadership team to look for changes around behaviors. Mary M. asked if there were any questions or comments about the information items. Emily wanted to comment she is super excited to hear about all the new housing news and is very interested in seeing what happens. Amy wanted to say great job during the winter storm (Adult Services) she does wish there was a way to get more neighborhoods involved. She does have a question about the Breeze Premier. Kaki clarified that this is a client software management tool created for HUD. This will allow the Albemarle County Office of Housing to produce reports to HUD directly. It has been a long time coming. This new software is going to be a big learning curve for Housing staff but once they have been trained it will significantly change the way they do their work. Regarding the neighborhood involvement mentioned there are going to be operating guidelines around emergencies/disasters and helping neighborhoods. Albemarle County wants to improve our neighborhood involvement, develop contacts, and get information shared house by house. It should change the way we respond to emergencies countywide. ACDSS can contribute to the County response but should not be the main coverage for shelters. Amy said it was amazing work. Nicole Jones who is hiding in the background monitoring this zoom meeting is actually the person who delivered the computers (mentioned in the Family Support information item). Mary M. had a question about the need to find local foster care placements for LGBT kids. She wonders if we have worked with Side-by-Side Virginia. They work with the Public-School side, and she was thinking if that organization could be used as a resource or perhaps, they could refer us to someone to help with that. Kaki said Foster Family Support program (CAFF) has trained with Side by Side. Alice said in her time with the County we (ACDSS) have not worked directly with Side by Side. Alice agrees it is an enormous community need. Some children need a placement while some need a higher level of care placement. Mary M. asked if it was appropriate to reach out to Side by Side. Kaki said since we contract for service perhaps, we could reach out and ask for staff training by Side by Side. Mary M. had another question about the pillars of high performance. How often does ACDSS have a big meeting with all staff and departments present? Mary S. confirmed that we have a monthly all staff meeting. We also have special trainings or wellness days (1/2-day events) but really the month staff meeting is the time we are all together. Alice said that Child Welfare also has a monthly meeting for all Child Welfare Staff. Mary M. asked about an Internal recognition where the Advisory Board could send a message or a hand -written note regarding the computer delivery made by Nicole Jones. Nicole is an IT employee. Mary M. asked about the housing information about 80% AMI are we helping these clients get financing? Kaki said that we (DSS and global community) have clients that find their own financing. However, there are many navigation services available to help people identify the kinds of barriers they have getting a traditional loan, identifying available grants, support in purchasing affordable housing. The County is working on supplementing developers' incentives to encourage the building of affordable housing units in different income levels.

Action:
informational

Agenda Item: Business from the Director- “Advisory Board Annual Report to the BOS”

Discussion: Kaki would like to divide this discussion into three sections. First is review of the report. We do have time to make changes. The second section is to review the letter from the Advisory Board. Third is the opportunity to look through the draft power point slide deck presentation for the BOS. Emily will be presenting to the BOS with Kaki. Tammy and Tamara have done a lot of data clean up this year. Mary asked about FS children. (Family Support) Mary M is asking if we can spell that out rather than use FS. Amy said she didn't look at the letter from the advisory board very closely. Mary asked about language assistance. number of language events. Is this money spent in interpretations in person or over the phone? Tamara clarified it is a mixture. Almost 50/50 when she does the breakdown monthly. Mary M asked if a sentence could be added to say that? It might be helpful comparing data going forward. Mary S. asked if this was all spoken language. Translation is written language and Interpretation is spoken. To make it clear could we change to reflect that? Amy asked about the Fatherhood Group section on page 10. This section does not refer to number of people participating in in the program. How many people are participating in that program? Kaki said that is easy to find out. Amy also asked on page 11 regarding foster care, could we add a footnote about the difficulties because of covid. Settings don't have emergency plans and its difficult for staff to deal with. Alice said there are currently four dads in the Fatherhood group program. Amy asked how many kids do those participating dads represent? Jennie asked is there is a full printed version of the Annual Report and how is the report given to the BOS. Kaki said the BOS will get an electronic version. Kaki recommends a slide deck for presentations like this showing the highlights. In discussing the work that ACDSS is doing, Kaki said we struggle to maintain the pace that we are known to keep. We do good work, and the State expects us to do good work. The state of our economy and world seems like the work will continue in the direction it is currently going. Alice said we had asked the BOS for positions (16), and this underscores how broadly we have needs. Kaki said we have focused on requesting positions because in the past we have often had pockets of suffering but over the last three years there has been a steady erosion that has affected the whole agency. Amy said she notices the percentage of founded cases is much higher than normal and it is really important to highlight that change. Kaki shared that we face the service cases having cases with higher needs and eligibility is facing higher caseload numbers. To meet the State and the County expectations takes time and effort. Our CPS unit is fully staffed. We have recruited one person for the three positions the BOS gave us in December. CPS has taken back the bulk of their duties that other units had been helping with. Amy mentioned VIEW, Fostering Futures and Family Preservation are areas that she would highlight. Mary asked if the Adult Services chart is included in the slide deck. Kaki said there is not a chart but there is an identification. Amy also said its important to mention the amount of federal and state match rates she thinks those numbers are important. (Kaki agrees and it is in the slide deck). Kaki is using the new power point template created by the “Communications & Public Engagement” group. Kaki went over each page. (See attached for details) taking out the word over-hire and renaming it flexible hire on the last page. Jennie likes this presentation format. Jennie felt in the past she was just reading information that was already available to the BOS. She likes this much better as it will be easier to draw attention to key important issues. Kaki said she and Emily have not had the conversation yet. They will discuss and decide before March 16th. Kaki is thinking that Emily will take the lead in the presentation. Natalie asked about adding projections of where the numbers will be going forward to show that even as the pandemic eases up, we are going to still see these needs rise. Kaki said we are tracking stressors that would provide good information.

Mary M. asked if we could speak to the BOS more than just the yearly annual report? Kaki said that the leveraging of money is her main message she wants to send to the BOS. Without ACDSS in our role the big money doesn't come in. This is critical information to deliver at this meeting. She said she knows this will be new information for the BOS and is excited about that punch of information. The Fire and Police Department have worked out five- year budget plans they have identified with the current stressors, they have looked ahead at what they will need. There are some things we can do some predicting around. We will continue to have additional needs this year and other years going forward. The yearly annual report is the only time we collectively present before the BOS. Additionally, Kaki does have an opportunity for robust discussions with County Executives during the budget process. Kaki said the Advisory Board members can talk to their BOS members to suggest workshops or action items on specific subjects as well as continuing the more informal check ins to share what they talked about at the monthly Advisory Board meetings.

Action: Changes will be made to the Annual Report. The presentation to the BOS is March 16th which is the day after our March 15th Advisory Board meeting. Copies of the Annual Report will be provided to the Advisory Board prior to that meeting (TBD if those copies will be paper or electronic)

Agenda Item: Business from the Board-Open Discussion

Discussion: Mary M. noticed on a lot of online community meeting lists that our Advisory Board isn't listed as a public/community meeting. Mary M. wants to make sure the community is aware of these meetings. She is wondering what the public information laws are regarding how early information has to be posted. Jennie believes it is a week. We do have a standard notice that says the Advisory Board meeting takes place on the 3rd Tuesday of the month 330-5:00 currently by zoom.

Action: Kaki will ask for guidance from County Attorney and public engagement group. Kaki said we can reach out to internal experts to see what we can and should do.

Message Out:

Discussion was primarily about the annual report that will be presented to the BOS in March.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM

The next Advisory Board virtual meeting will be the third Tuesday of the month, March 15, 2022, at 3:30 PM using Zoom.

Mary McIntyre -Chair
Secretary

Lisa Jordan -