1. Meeting Materials

Documents:

  SEPTEMBER 15, 2015 BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES AGENDA.PDF
  JULY 28, 2015 MINUTES - DRAFT.PDF
  JULY 28, 2015 MINUTES - APPROVED.PDF
MEETING AGENDA

I. ACTION/ FOLLOW–UP ITEMS
   1. Approve Minutes of July 28, 2015 Meeting                   Mrs. Nolan
   2. Achievement Gap                                          Mr. Robinson

II. COMMITTEE/WORK GROUP UPDATES
    1. Community Partnership Committee                       Mr. Gunzburg
    2. Strategic Planning Committee                           Mr. Robinson
    3. Human Resources Committee                              Mrs. Nolan

III. COMMISSIONER’S REPORT                                    Dr. Barry
     1. Operating Statement & Dashboard Report
     2. ClientTrack Update

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

NEXT MEETING DATE IS OCTOBER 27, 2015
Town of Greenwich
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MINUTES
Regular Meeting, July 28, 2015

ATTENDING

Board Attendees: Alan Gunzburg (with Kili), Steve Gross, Abbott Jones, Barbara Nolan, Natalie Queen, Lauren Rabin (late) and Winston Robinson

Staff Attendees: Alan Barry, George O’Loughlin and Martha Reyes

Other Attendees: Patricia Burns (Commission on Aging), Silvia Foster-Frau (Greenwich Time)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ms. Nolan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Hayton Conference Room at Town Hall.

ACTION/FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

Approved Minutes of June 16, 2015 Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes of the Board’s Regular Meeting of June 16, 2015. Second: Mr. Gunzburg. APPROVED 6-0.

Strategic Plan – Consultant Contract – Mr. Robinson presented the current contract for $17,000. The consultant Debra Hertz Ph.D. (The Strategy Group LLC) and her proposal qualified as a single source provider for town purchasing purposes. Ms. XX is well known in Fairfield County and has worked with many non-for-profit agencies on their strategic planning initiatives

MOTION: Mr. Gross moved to approve the acceptance of the proposal and to submit it to the next stage in the town’s approval and purchasing process. Second: Ms. Queen. APPROVED 7-0.

Achievement Gap – Ms. Nolan attended a function where Gordon Beinstein, principal at Western Middle School (a Title 1 school) presented on the Achievement Gap. The Strategic Planning Working Group is exploring the ability to make this a focus in the FY17-19 plan. Highlights of Mr. Beinstein’s presentation were: today the achievement gap is more based on economic factors versus race, the achievement gap between low income and high income students in 2011 is 30-40% higher than it was 25 years ago, and CT is the state with the highest economic achievement gap in the nation. 82% of prison inmates in the US do not have a high school diploma and future jail space needed is based on 3rd grade reading levels. On a separate note, the summer program at Brunswick School seems to be having an impact. Mr. Beinstein
suggested engaging parents early, which could tie in with DSS programs at BANC, especially around pre-school. Worth noting is a higher percentage of low income students start Kindergarten closer to 4 years of age and a higher percentage of high income students start Kindergarten closer to 6 years of age. There may be cultural differences in how parents approach early childhood education. Is it possible that we define services for parent education?

Mr. Robinson brought up the point that the DTC and RTC might not be aware of the work that DSS is doing in the community. We noted to send both the DTC and RTC a copy of the annual report. We also want to continue to break down silos, work in partnerships, even presenting at Neighborhood Associations and RTM district meetings. We need to think about what we want to highlight in our annual report & media outreach.

**COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

*Operating Statement & Dashboard Update* - Dr. Barry reviewed the June 2015 Operating Statement and the June 2015 and 4th quarter (year-end) Dashboard Reports. Year-end we operated at 3% under budget, which is the closest actual to budget that the department has had in recent years. There were no major variances, with the exception of homemaker services due to unfilled positions.

Now that a full year has gone by from the separation of case management and applications, Dr. Barry made an assessment that the reorganization is going well. Case managers are able to focus and spend more time with clients that have long-term needs. The staff is also not closing and reopening client cases, when there are short intervals between engagements, and clients that have not engaged for over 6 months are being closed. Cases are managed much tighter by looking at the date last seen. Engagement with clients is not always linear; many times, there are steps back in addition to steps forward.

Dr. Barry provided an update on the Client Track implementation, which is going well. There is still some data-cleansing going on from the data that was in Evolv, prior to it being imported into Client Track. In addition, a software upgrade will take place to take advantage of some new features. The cutover date is set for August 10, 2015.

Dr. Barry provided an update on the RIT program. The onsite case manager has seen 91 clients, 52 are still active, 26 have found jobs
and 19 are still working and 20 have dropped out of the program. Challenges are the limited number of available jobs and the amount of pay, which is not enough to make clients economically self-sufficient.

**COMMITTEE/WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

1) **Finance Committee Update** - Mr. Gross reported that the Finance Committee met to start to determine projections for the FY16-17 budget, based on assumptions of an annual increase. We reviewed these projections alongside the budgets for FY15-16 and FY14-15. Ms. Rabin would like to see the actuals (even though BET looks at budget-to-budget comparisons) and the revenue. The department is ahead of the budget submission timeline.

2) **Community Partnerships Committee Update** – Mr. Gunzburg reported that the RFP period for FY16-17 has been closed and the committee is looking to fund an amount equal to FY15-16. There are five new requests from four new agencies. The committee is setting up meetings with the new agencies to vet the new requests and ensure they are in line with our Community Partnership objectives. All of the programs currently supported are also asking for funding.

4) **Client Relations Committee Update** – Ms. Queen reported that the committee discussed the client satisfaction survey and other methods for sending it out, such as online or email. The committee also discussed the grievance procedure and if it needs more promotion by case workers in addition to what is described in the pamphlets provided. Since most case managers stay after hours, clients should be made aware of this at intake. The “Food Voucher” program was discussed and the movement from a gift card versus a paper voucher, which could be embarrassing for the clients to use. The paper vouchers are also redeemable at limited locations. The committee also discussed the idea of getting a closer relationship with the Greenwich Housing Authority and the Greenwich Public Schools (especially when school is not in session). We should not have relationships just when client needs are at the extreme point. The committee also discussed how user friendly is the DSS website – can we add FAQs or links to applications.

3) **Strategic Planning Working Group Update** – Mr. Robinson
Town of Greenwich
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MINUTES
Regular Meeting, July 28, 2015

reported the planning would begin in earnest in September, with the hiring of the consultant. Many stakeholders will be interviewed, including board members. We want to answer the question of where we want to be, review our offering and at the end of the plan development, to know ourselves better. We want to verify our priority of needs (Housing, Education, Employment, Healthcare, Food and Personal Safety).

ADJOURNED

MOTION: Mr. Gross motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 PM. Second: Ms. Queen. APPROVED 7-0.

NEXT MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be held on September 15, 2015 in the Hayton Room at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lauren Rabin

Lauren Rabin, Secretary
ATTENDING

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