



**Town of Greenwich**  
**BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES MINUTES**  
**Virtual Meeting, Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

**ATTENDING**

**Board Members Present:** Patty Roberts, Debbie Appelbaum, Natalie Queen, Gillian Ingraham, Dawn Turner, Tara Restieri, Erica Klair

**Board Members Absent:** Greg Pauletti

**Guests Present:** Ellen Wolfson, Commission on Aging Board, Janet Stone McGuigan, Selectperson, Town of Greenwich

**Staff/Other Attendees:** Commissioner Demetria Nelson, Jennafer Kalna

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson, Patty Roberts, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and took the roll.

**BOARD PROTOCOLS**

**Approval of Minutes:** Ms. Restieri made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2023 meeting. Ms. Queen seconded that motion. With an 7-0 vote of those present, the motion passed. Ms. Turner joined the meeting after this vote was taken.

(Note: There was no GDHS Board meeting held in February.)

Ms. Roberts recognized the passing of long-serving GDHS Board member Winston Robinson. He was lauded for his role as Board historian and broad knowledge base, his gentle reminders to adhere to Robert's Rules and process, his thoughtful and genteel soul and style; and his overall kindness. Ms. Roberts noted the many leadership positions he held on the Board and within the community. It was agreed there will be a big hole in the Board without his presence. A moment of silence was held after Ms. Roberts words which were echoed by all on the Board.

In light of Mr. Robinson's passing, his role as Vice Chair on the Board will have to be filled according to Board By-Laws. A vote will be taken at the April meeting to fill the position for April 2023 through June 2023. As is the practice, in June officers will be elected for the coming fiscal year.

Ms. Roberts noted that Mr. Robinson's role as Chair of the Finance Committee will be filled by Mr. Pauletti and Ms. Restieri will fill the GDHS seat on CDBG. She referenced and shared a chart with Board members identifying the committees on which they currently sit. Members were invited to share with her any committee assignments they wanted to add or delete.

Ms. Roberts noted a candidate has come forward for the open board seat and is going through the nomination process. The individual currently serves on the RTM Health and Human Services Committee and has a background in communications.



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**COMMISSIONER'S  
REPORT**

Commissioner Nelson gave her monthly report:

She quickly reported on the following meeting attendance:

- BET Budget Committee. They posed a minimal number of questions. Those posed related to the Community Partnerships and services for seniors. It was noted to them that services to seniors come from both within the GDHS dept. budget and our community partners. They were also advised that the demand for services has increased which correlated with the dept. request for funds through ARPA. Danielle Jean- Guillaume Sittol's position and roles covered by it were also referenced.
- Meeting with Emergency Management and community partners.
- Executive Committee of the Greenwich Assn. of Clergy conversation about addressing the many needs in town.
- Greenwich Together – reported on the postvention program.
- Greenwich Youth Services Comm. – Updated the Board on the committee's Conscious Coping Event held March 5th. Designed and run by the teens. Fifty-two teens participated. They identified resources and broke into discussion groups. Clinicians from local organizations were included.
- Two-day training for reunifying families post emergencies. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

Commissioner Nelson reported on the Operating Statement and Monthly Dashboards:

The Department is operating at 11% under budget. The average number of referrals increased from 48 to 49. For Applications, the Average Actual Clients Served decreased from 337 to 333. For Case Management, the Average Actual Clients Served decreased from 298 to 289. For Applications, the Average Goals Achieved increased from 8 to 10. For Case Management, the Average Goals Achieved decreased from 21 to 19. The Average Overall Staff Productivity remained the same at 73% (goal - 65%). For February, the Top Ten Services Provided by Hours included Education instead of Renter's Rebate.

Board members asked about the dept.'s ability to meet the needs being presented, what might be placing a strain on the dept. and how the Board might be able to help. Ms. Nelson noted that with the upcoming addition of a case manager and the various trainings and work with partners the dept. is currently able to meet the various needs of its clients.

Ms. Nelson updated the Board about the depts.' connection to the Town's Emergency Response team and the strong connections being built. Plans are being developed about where GDHS can assist in times of emergencies. The 2-day training regarding re-unifying families was part of that effort. Ms.



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Nelson will be sharing the information with the Director of Emergency Management to impart to other Town depts.

Ms. Nelson asked for the Board to have a discussion about the development of a Fair Rent Housing Commission in Town per state mandate. GDHS has asked to help develop an ordinance for it and then house it as a separate entity within GDHS.

Ms. Nelson defined what this commission would do and noted specifically that is not about questions related to rent control. She is speaking with other communities about what they are proposing and blending that information with what is required by state law yet works for the Greenwich community. The Fair Rent Housing Commission (FRC) will be a municipal board that holds hearings. The technical deadline to have the FRC ordinance per the state is July 1, 2023. Greenwich and other communities may not be making that deadline.

Next steps: Ms. Nelson would ideally like to submit a draft of the ordinance to the Board of Selectmen by April 17th. It might require a special meeting of the GDHS Board to review, comment and approve the ordinance ahead of presentation to the BoS. The hope is it will be accepted by them and ultimately placed on the June RTM agenda for their acceptance. It was noted by Ms. Roberts that a workgroup from the Board to help Ms. Nelson would be helpful. Adding experience with communication and real estate a plus. A communication plan needs to be developed to inform the community about the ordinance and commission. Last, basic requirements will need to be developed.

Ms. Restieri asked about the expected composition of the Commission. Ms. Nelson noted the thought is for it to be a 5 member panel with roughly 2-3 alternates. Ideally it will include someone who rents their home, a landlord and 3 tax paying residents. The alternates would hopefully include a renter and landlord as well.

Ms. Appelbaum noted that despite agreement the Commission should be housed within GDHS, she wondered about the impact it might have on Ms. Nelson and GDHS on top of the other duties within the dept and oversight GDHS is providing for other Town projects. Ms. Nelson noted that until the commission was developed and functioning it would be difficult to answer this question. It is possible additional administrative help might be needed. If that becomes the case, it will be discussed with the board and perhaps an interim appropriation to address a specific need could be considered. There was discussion about whether the GDHS Board was forming a subcommittee within the Board or appointing board members to be part of



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a commission; and whether a motion and vote to that extent was required. Ms. Appelbaum made a motion to form an FRC workgroup with three Board members on it as well as others. Ms. Restieri seconded the motion.

**COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Community Partnership Committee** - Ms. Appelbaum updated the Board on the recent CPC meeting. Timelines for ARPA and Community Partnership funding were discussed and approved. Criteria to be included in the RFPs was discussed as well. The committee reviewed its scoring rubric to be used during grant funding reviews. Last, there was a discussion about how the final annual reviews might be set up. Quarterly reports will continue to be expected. Additionally, an info session will be included in the RFP timeline to insure all applicants understand the expectations for receiving grant funding.

**Client Relations Committee** - Ms. Queen updated the Board. The committee had a meaningful conversation about the annual GDHS Client Survey that will be put out later this year. The format was changed to make it more user friendly. Additionally, the committee agreed to set up a focus group if clients were willing.

**CDBG** - Ms. Restieri updated the Board. The annual CDBG funding process just started. There were 26 programmatic requests for roughly \$563,000 and 12 public facility upgrade requests totaling roughly \$1.2 M. The funds provided to Greenwich this year were significantly decreased from last year. It will make the funding choices extremely challenging for the CDAC. A brief description of the process was provided to the Board.

Ms. Ingraham noted that there was a collection of Easter Baskets for KIC being conducted by the owner of Splurge. She wanted to make the Board aware should anyone want to contribute. The baskets will be given to roughly 300 children aged 1-17 years. There is an Amazon Wish List if desired.

**CHAIR REPORT**

Ms. Roberts noted she would like to look at April dates for the Board to get together socially.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

A motion to adjourn at 8:10 pm was made by Ms. Appelbaum and seconded by Ms. Queen. The vote was unanimous.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 7:00 pm via ZOOM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Appelbaum, Secretary, GDHS Board