Town of Greenwich
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MINUTES
Regular Meeting, November 17, 2015

ATTENDING

Board Attendees: Alan Gunzburg (with Kili), Abbott Jones, Barbara Nolan, Natalie Queen and Lauren Rabin (left early)

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

Other Attendees: Gordon Beinstein (Principal, Western Middle School) and Patricia Burns (Commission on Aging)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson, Barbara Nolan, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Hayton Conference Room at Town Hall. Attendees briefly celebrated Lauren Rabin’s Election to the Board of Education.

ACTION/FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

Approve Minutes of October 27, 2015 Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Gunzburg moved to approve the minutes of the Board’s Regular Meeting of October 27, 2015. Second: Ms. Rabin. APPROVED 5-0.

Achievement Gap – Mr. Beinstein presented some achievement gap facts to the Board. These facts were also presented to the Retired Men’s Association who has also formed a committee to look at the Achievement Gap. In Greenwich, student needs are not evenly distributed amongst the Greenwich Public Schools (GPS). 17-18% of all GPS students are on Free or Reduced Lunch and these students are concentrated at the Title 1 schools. This is known as the concentration effect – when the ability to serve student need decreases when the group needs increases. The issue is not a race gap, it is an income gap. Many of these children are not exposed to the same words, the same experiences or same connections as their achieving peers. Other contributing factors include hunger/nutrition, student mobility, parent participation in education; and a high percentage of English language learning (ELL) parents. Ideas for closing the gap include before and after school help, Saturday classes and Summer school. The CT Center for School Change recommends affordable & quality pre-school, expanded school time, increased rigor and expectations, data systems and a comprehensive parent communication strategy - systematizing gap strategies across the schools. Schools cannot do this alone; we need wrap-around services. This conversation does not end today; all teams needs to work together.
1) **Community Partnerships Committee Update** - Mr. Gunzburg reported the proposal for FY17, totaling $330,000. This represents $20,000 increase over FY16, and new programs from Jewish Family Services (Supermarkets for Seniors), YWCA (2nd Steps at BANC), Boys and Girls Club (After-School Education), YMCA (preschool Social & Emotional Learning) as well as an increase to Child Guidance.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to approve the funding proposal as presented. Second: Mr. Gunzburg. **APPROVED 4-0**

2) **Finance Committee Update** - In absence of the committee chair, the board reviewed the previously submitted budget for FY17. Total spending of $3,240,084 represents a 2.0% increase from FY16, in line with instructions from the Board of Estimate & Taxation. There was also discussion to continue to communicate the services the Department does offer the community.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jones moved to approve the budget as presented. Second: Mr. Gunzburg. **APPROVED 4-0**

3) **Strategic Planning Committee Update** – Report was deferred to the next meeting.

4) **Client Relations Committee Update** – Ms. Queen reported that the outcome of the last meeting, where the results of the survey were discussed and in general were positive; with exception to knowledge of after-hours and the grievance policy. The committee discussed modifying the survey for next year to generate more responses as well as to ensure the questions are still the right questions to ask.

5) **Achievement Gap Task Force Update** - Report was deferred to the next meeting.

**COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

**Operating Statement Update** - Dr. Barry reviewed the October operating statement, which represented no significant variances. Personnel Services represent the variances and this is typical.

**Client Track Update** – Dr. Barry reported that team is in final stages
of establishing Service Plans in the Client Rack format. Most clients have been enrolled in the new system and the next step will be to add daily notes to Service Plans. Evolv is only archival at this point, with the exception of scheduling; which will be the next deliverable.

ADJOURNED

MOTION: Mr. Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM. Second: Mr. Gunzburg. APPROVED 4-0.

NEXT MEETING

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Lauren Rabin

Lauren Rabin, Secretary