Town of Greenwich
BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES MINUTES
Regular Meeting, November 19th, 2019

ATTENDING
Board Attendees: Abbott Jones, Alan Gunzburg, Tom Petrone, Natalie Queen

Staff Attendees: Alan Barry, Laura Poschar

CALL TO ORDER
Chairperson, Abbot Jones, called the meeting to order at 7:02PM in the DHS Conference Room at Town Hall.

BOARD PROTOCOLS
The minutes of the October 15th meeting were not approved – No quorum

CASE MANAGEMENT REPORT
Case Manager Report: Laura Poschar introduced herself to the Board and discussed her background. She earned a master’s degree in social work and her work experience has been in supportive housing in New York. She began her work as a case manager for the department in July. Laura provided the Board with information regarding client issues with the Greenwich Housing Authority. One of the most challenging problems with residents in housing authority buildings is bed bugs. Laura had experience with bed bug issue when working in housing programs in New York. She explained the extensive treatments necessary to maintain a bed bug free environment.

Laura reported that a recent change being proposed by the Greenwich Housing Authority might have a significant impact on GHA residents. GHA is proposing a change in funding support moving to a project based section 8 voucher for residents. It is unclear how this will impact on residents and needs further review. Discussions are taking place with Assistant Director and the GHA social worker.

Discussion on department’s case management model and Laura expressed her support for the department’s approach of systematically assisting with clients on all issues. She thanked the board for approving the adjustment for client financial assistance eligibility to 300%. Overall consensus that programs such as the on-site employment services provided by RITE Program are very effective with clients.

Board members thanked Laura for her presentation.
COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Finance Committee**: Tom Petrone presented the Finance Committee’s proposed FY 21 Budget. The most significant increases are in client related direct services. The Community Partnership Program and Client Financial Assistance were increased to support community agencies and client financial need. The programs providing mental health services, especially in the child mental health area were given emphasis in funding and additional funding for client financial assistance to accommodate the adjustment to 300%. Two versions were presented; a 2% budget increase and a 2.26% budget. The 2.26% increase reflected an increase for funding the Child Guidance Center. Motion was made to approve the 2.26% budget increase and passed unanimously. Mr. Gunzburg voted for Ms. Fernandez as her proxy. Board members expressed their support for the community agencies that help low-income and vulnerable Town residents. The funding provided is a small portion of agencies budget but is critical with helping them to serve department clients. The increase is modest and provides a good return on investment for the Town. Department is 1% of Town’s operating budget.

2. **Community Partnership Committee**: Alan Gunzburg provided the board with a summary on each agency’s programs, requested funding, actual funding and proposed FY’21 funding. He reviewed for the board each agency’s proposed FY’21 funding and changes that were made in funding allotments. Board discussed the priorities for funding and the emphasis on child mental health. Proposed increases for Child Guidance Center and proposed Kids in Crisis KidTalk program for the elementary schools. Board also discussed the Community Partner agencies receiving higher amounts of funding: Kids in Crisis (TeenTalk), YWCA (School DV Prevention) and River House (low income transportation). These programs will be receiving more analysis in the future and funding adjusted. In the FY’21 budget a portion of TeenTalk Program funding is used to support KidTalk Program. New program funding for Father’s Forum at YMCA.
Decision making is assisted by review of agency quarterly reports. Data is reviewed with each agency and revision suggestions made to improve reports.

**COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

Operating statement shows department operating at 16% below budget. Most of that surplus is an unfilled case manager position that will be filled in 3 months. Expectation is that by end of fiscal year the surplus will shrink to 3%-4%.

A review of the clinical dashboard shows very high staff productivity and impressive goal achievement with clients. No significant variances.

**BYLAWS COMMITTEE**

Committee Members: Tom Petrone, Annalisa Fernandez and Alan Gunzburg

Tom Petrone reported that the committee reviewed the current by-laws and have four recommendations for the Board to review.

1) Required Board meetings – Now set at 10 per year. Recommendation is to reduce to 8 or 9 meetings per year.

2) Terms of officers – Now term is one year with no limit. Recommendation is to set officer term at 2 years and a cap on consecutive terms.

3) Voting by Proxy – Not included in by-laws- Recommendation is to allow a vote by proxy and allow, if necessary, a board member to participate in a meeting by conference call.

4. Increase number of board members – now set in Town Charter as 7. Recommendation to increase to 9 members

By-laws recommendations will be discussed at January Board meeting.

Motion made to adjourn meeting 8:30 pm

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Board Meeting will be held on December 17th, 2019 in the DHS Conference Room at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Alan Barry