

Minutes of the Human Services Board of Director's meeting of November 17, 2020.

Meeting held via Audio/Tele Conferencing.

Sue Stango called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Sue Stango, Joan Campbell, Jessica DeYoung, Barbara Genovese and Rev. Karl Duetzmann.

Absent: Donna Nunno, Brendan Casey, Joy Duva, Aldermen Ellen Beatty and Aldermen James Tranquilli.

Also Present: Deepa Joseph and Beth Simpson

2. Public Comments

None

3. Minutes

A motion was made by Rev. Duetzmann, seconded by J. DeYoung, that the minutes of September 15, 2020 be approved as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Director's Report

The Department of Human Services (DHS) hired a new Community Outreach Worker, Sandy Morales. Sandy previously worked at the Agency on Aging. She also had experience with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The Outreach staff continues to assist residents through telephone appointments and email. Emergency requests have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the areas of rent & mortgage, utility, and food assistance. DHS was able to secure additional grant funding for this need through the CARES Act.

DHS is in the middle taking applications for the Energy Assistance program. In past years, TEAM, Inc. staff had taken applications at the Milford office. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, DHS Outreach staff has been taking telephone appointments on Mondays and Wednesdays. Milford residents can also call TEAM, Inc. directly and apply with them over the phone. DHS has an outside drop box set-up for documentation to be mailed to TEAM in Derby. The system has been working well.

The staff is finishing up Renters' Rebate applications for those residents that qualified for a medical extension. DHS staff continues to take Dollar Energy Fund applications that provide one-time water assistance of up to \$175. From mid-September through mid-November, the staff processed 47 applications for water assistance.

Holiday programs have started. The DHS staff is coordinating the distribution of 370 Thanksgiving baskets and meals to residents in need. The Outreach Workers continue to partner with community members such as the Boys Scouts, W.O.M.E.N. Inc., Knights of Columbus and Precious Blood Parish. This year we have created a new partnership with Cornerstone Christian Center through The Storehouse Project.

The Adopt-A-Family Holiday Program is also underway. This year, due to the pandemic, the program has been switched to gift cards, as opposed to donors purchasing individual gifts for families. DHS staff will continue to do intakes, allowing the residents in need to suggest the stores and types of gift cards that will benefit their families.

DHS and YFS continue to partner with the Salvation Army and Keeping Milford Warm in many areas.

Youth & Family Services (YFS) is part of H.U.M.A.N., the multi-agency network focused on homelessness and unsheltered populations in Milford. COVID-19 has presented additional challenges for the homeless. A virtual community forum took place in September, went live during month of November for National Hunger & Homeless Awareness month, to share community resources available to assist with basic needs.

Another virtual forum that was made public this month pertains to panhandling. The Milford Health Department has re-started the Have a Heart, Give Smart campaign relative to panhandling. A billboard was created to promote awareness.

YFS continues to receive funding through DCF. This year, due the higher level of need for services created by COVID-19, we have shifted some of the funding to support local youth programs, such as the Recreation Department summer camp and Boys and Girls Club program scholarships.

5. Old Business

None

6. New Business – Set meeting dates for 2021

The following 2021 meeting schedule was presented for vote:

- February 16, 2021
- May 18, 2021
- September 21, 2021
- November 16, 2021

A motion to approve these dates was made by Rev. Duetzmann. B. Genovese seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Rev. Duetzmann informed the board that the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Prayer Service will be videotaped, due to COVID-19. This video will be posted on Church websites. The mail in offering will be contributed to Milford's No-Freeze shelter.

7. Adjournment

B. Genovese made a motion to adjourn the meeting. J. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

S. Stango adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Simpson".

Beth Simpson
Recorder