

Charlottesville
Social Services
Advisory Board

City of Charlottesville, City Hall Annex, P.O. Box 911,
Charlottesville, VA 22902



Christine Gough, Chair
Kathryn Gallanosa, Vice Chair

Board Members:
Lisa Brown
Sena Magill
Rebekah Menning
Janet Morrow
LD Perry
Judith Zeitler

MINUTES

Charlottesville Department of Social Services
Advisory Board

February 24, 2020

Board Members Present: Lisa Brown, Kathryn Gallanosa, Christine Gough, Sena Magill, Janet Morrow, LD Perry, Judith Zeitler

Board Members Absent: Rebekah Menning

Staff Members Present: Diane Kuknyo, Laura Morris, Autumn Scott

The meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m.

Public Comment:

None

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The January meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Members' Report:

Ms. Brown shared that the Birth Sisters of Charlottesville will host a training for women interested in becoming a doula. Women of color or who can speak a second language are preferred. The training is approved by DONA International, the largest doula certifying organization. Two interest meetings will be held on Thursday, March 5 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, March 7 at 11 a.m. at Royalty Eats. The training is scheduled for two weekends, April 18-19 and April 25-26.

Mr. Perry shared that the Habitat Store will host a repair café at their facility on Saturday, February 29 from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. Attendees can bring up to three items they would like to have fixed. This is a free community event open to everyone. All proceeds will go towards building affordable housing in the Charlottesville area.

Ms. Brown also shared information about Liberation and Freedom Day festivities from March 1-8. Events include discussion panels, lectures, exhibits, walking tours, and more. Ms. Brown will send out more information to the board about these community events.

Ms. Magill shared a book recommendation with the board, "Brown Girl Dreaming" by Jacqueline Woodson. The book includes poems about Ms. Woodson's experience growing up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s.

Ms. Kuknyo shared that the department is putting on the second cohort of a book group that meets weekly to discuss "Just Mercy" by Brian Stevenson. The group is facilitated by a librarian from the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library and is part of the department's Cultural Humility initiative.

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Ms. Brown let board members know about an exhibit at the McGuffey Art Center that displays art, dance, and music from an organization called “Black Power Station.” Several artists from the organization traveled from South Africa to collaborate with local artists to create the exhibit.

Mr. Perry shared another book recommendation with the board, “Brainwashed: Challenging the Myth of Black Inferiority” by Thomas Burrell. The book discusses how history and popular culture promotes the myth of black inferiority. Mr. Perry will send the board additional information, videos, and resources related to the book.

Chair’s Report:

Ms. Gough reminded members that there is a vacancy on the board and asked everyone to encourage Charlottesville residents who may be interested to apply online. The deadline to apply is March 6.

Director’s Report:

FY 2021 Budget: Ms. Kuknyo shared that she was notified about reductions to the department’s general fund request for the FY 2021 budget. A reduction in general fund dollars would mean that the department could potentially lose state and federal funds because general funds are often used as matching funds for federal and state assistance. Because personnel costs make up 87% of the department’s budget, the ability to fill vacancies would likely be affected if the department budget is reduced. The next budget development work session is scheduled for March 5 from 5-7 p.m. in City Space. More information about upcoming budget work sessions is available on the City website.

Department Updates: Ms. Kuknyo shared that the department was highlighted in the Virginia Department of Social Services benefits appreciation month e-mail for its participation with the non-custodial parent employment program pilot. The program pilot assists unemployed non-custodial parents in obtaining employment to create a pattern of regular child support payments. The e-mail also featured the employment services conference planning committee. Two staff members, Tonia Alexander and Kelly Logan, served as committee members.

Ms. Kuknyo also shared that a family services case was randomly selected by the Department of Health and Human Services for a quality service review. The review process consists of interviews with agency staff, family members, and community partners. It measures how well a child and their family benefit from the services provided by the agency. The reviewers gave very positive feedback and had no questions or suggestions for change.

Ms. Magill shared that she would like to make a public announcement at an upcoming city council meeting highlighting the non-custodial parent employment program pilot, employee services conference committee, and family services quality review.

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The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 23, 2020 in the City Hall Basement Conference Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

Recorded by:
Autumn Scott