

JFS Planning Committee
February 23, 2016 9:00 am
CCDJFS Community Room

Present: Eloise Traina, Kathie Chaffee, Lori Colian, Cindy Linger, Bert Cene, Tracy Smith, Cathy Webb, James Ford, Audrey Null, Carol Harvey, Eileen Dray-Bardon, Brandy Virden

Eloise Traina called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Quorum Established

A quorum was established.

Introductions

Eloise welcomed new Community Representative, Cathy Webb of Columbiana. Member introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes

There were 2 corrections to the minutes from the November 24th, 2015 meeting. Under Bert Cene's Ohio Means Jobs report, he reported that they had requested an additional \$500,000, not \$50,000. Under Cindy Linger's Member Comments, CAA had entered into an agreement with the Market Street Lofts, not the Market Street Locks. Tracy Smith made a motion to approve the corrected minutes. Bert seconded. Motion carried. **Terry will correct the November minutes and will re-send them to members.**

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Corrections

Eileen requested that item C under New Business, "2016 Federal Poverty Level Chart for PRC," be deleted as the new numbers were not yet available. **Terry will e-mail them out to members once they are notified of them by the State.** James Ford made a motion to accept the revised agenda. Carol Harvey seconded. Motion carried.

Reports

Ohio Means Jobs - Bert reported that for the period from July 1, 2015 through today (February 23, 2016), Mahoning County had 10,544 visits from individuals seeking services, and Columbiana County had 3,332. This is a 5% decrease from the same time period last year.

Moving forward, they are involved in regional planning and, as required by new legislation, will hire a consultant to oversee this. As reported at the last meeting, they did request an additional \$500,000 to assist 800 new individuals with job training.

MCTA is moving this weekend 2 blocks from the current Front Street address to 20 Federal Street – the old Strauss building. They will be located on the 6th floor. There will be no disruption in services. The Youngstown office will be closed on Monday and will re-open on Tuesday, but both the Boardman and Lisbon offices will be open on Monday as usual.

Work Participation Report – Eileen Dray-Bardon gave the OWF report for Luann Dunham, who was attending a Shared Services Readiness Phone Conference. In the All Family Participation category, CCDJFS dropped below the 50% standard 2 months of 2015 (August and September), but received no penalty. In the Two Parent Participation category, CCDJFS achieved 100% for 4 months (April, October, November, and December). Columbiana County currently has only 4 families participating in this category which results in a low performance percentage if only 1 of those families does not comply.

Caseload and Applicant Reports – Eileen shared the Food Assistance numbers for recipients and expenditures and the ABD (Aged, Blind, and Disabled) and CFC (Covered Families with Children) Medicaid statistics. From 2014 to 2015 ABD numbers decreased while CFC numbers increased. Tracy explained that this is largely due to the changes in the Medicaid categories and in the types of Medicaid assistance for which people may qualify. The Application Process was also reviewed. The big peaks in applications approved during the early part of the year were due to open enrollment. For application process timeliness, staff are under a lot of pressure to meet the 95% standard for Food Assistance applications mostly due to the large volume of applications being submitted.

Monitoring Reports – APS, NET, Child Care, and PRC numbers were reviewed. Eileen reported that counties are looking at some possible upcoming changes in the reporting of PRC – they will be required to be more specific regarding the kinds of PRC services provided. **At the May Planning Committee meeting, JFS will include more detailed information on specific services provided through PRC.**

Eloise commented that it was interesting that there was an increase of abuse investigations in September 2015. Eileen reported that typically, self-neglect is the highest category of elder abuse.

Contract Monitoring Report Frequency – Carol will begin sharing this report one time per year at the November meeting since there is usually nothing new to report every quarter. This will save time and paper. The Business Office monitors the financials and the goals for all contracts twice during the year.

Caring for Kids Update – Carol reported that the invitations to the annual dinner went out. **The dinner will be held on Thursday, April 7th, at the Career Center. They will hold the Chinese raffle again as usual.** They will not be doing the envelope fundraiser as has been done the last 2 years. They are trying to focus more on the big November event – the first event brought in \$8,900. **Members may RSVP for the dinner to Carol. The second annual “Cookies for a Cause” event will be held on Saturday, November 12th, 2016, at the Links at Firestone. Carol asked members to mark their calendars.** The committee is already working on recruiting sponsors and donors.

Carol reported that the **Caring for Kids Advisory Council voted to expand the birthday allowance program to include not only foster kids but kids who are in the agency’s temporary custody and those who are in permanent protective living arrangements– each child will receive the \$250 birthday allowance. Kids who are living in kinship placements with relatives will also be given a \$150 birthday allowance.** The agency does receive reimbursements for most of the kids receiving this allowance. This will be more work for the Business Office, but the kids and the social workers are very happy about the decision.

Seek Work/SEP Update - Brandy Virden reported that **from the beginning of the program in April of 2014 through December 31, 2015 – they have seen 106 TANF participants; 70 Seek Work participants; and 88 OWF participants for a total of 264 assessments and interviews, but only 18 total participants have completed the program and worked for 6 months or more.**

Beginning in January 2016, Brandy started working with Travis Hostetter (CSEA Enforcement and Modification unit) to hold a workshop every other week. Both Travis and Brandy interview participants. In January, they had 18 interviews (6, TANF, 2 OWF, and 10 Seek Work).

Currently, there are 5 checks going out to employers for a total in January subsidies of \$2500. Employers are hesitant to work with Brandy at this point. She is trying to get new employers on board. Right now, she has 3 new employers. This is a very challenging population to work with. There are some barriers they need to overcome, but some barriers are self-induced.

Old Business

Shared Services Update – Eileen reviewed a packet of information with members. She took an MOU to the County Commissioners for their approval. **The MOU is an agreement among 10 counties (including Columbiana County) in the Shared Services hub. The 1st step of the new Shared Services system will go live this Thursday, February 25th, for 5 of the 10 counties. Columbiana County is included in this first roll-out. The remaining 5 counties in this 10-county hub will be added in 2 weeks on March 10th.**

The new Shared Services system is a virtual call center (through phone lines and telephony updates with Cincinnati Bell as the provider). All workers from these partnering counties will be able to accept calls from anyone living in any of these counties. **For now, this will just be for both new Medicaid applications (intakes) and for Medicaid renewals. Food Assistance cases will be added to the new system at a later date. Customers will call in to an 800 number – via their zip code – and will be directed to the 10-county hub.** Hopefully, the wait time for clients on the phones will decrease with the new system.

This is a huge transition for staff. **Columbiana County is starting with a small group of 6 workers and then will bring more staff on in stages. Counties in the hub will be able to cover for each other in**

emergency situations (bad weather, power outages, etc.), so there will be no disruption of services.

Eileen distributed a **handout explaining the new system and contact information cards with the new number for clients to call. There will be a media release at a later date. Renewal letters sent from the State include the new number to call. They are creating staff schedules based on recommendations from the State.**

TANF Concerns Update – Eileen reported that the State is looking more closely at how counties are spending their TANF dollars. If they are mandated by the State to spend more on workforce development, this could hurt Children Services significantly.

New Business

Nominating Committee Report / Election of Officers – Carol presented the new slate of officers for approval. Audrey Null, Chairperson; Lori Colian, Vice-Chair; and Carol Harvey, Secretary. There was no further discussion needed. Kathie Chaffee made a motion to accept the presented slate of officers. Cindy seconded. Motion carried.

Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program (CCMEP) – Bert reported that **this new initiative will use both TANF (CCDJFS) and Workforce (MCTA) funding and expertise to make it a holistic approach to case management. They will use WIOA and Youth funding. Everything in this program is geared to getting people to work.**

Commissioners in each county were given the responsibility of choosing the lead agency from their counties – either the county JFS or the county workforce agency. Bert reported that it is important to have a collaborative approach, and MCTA has a very good relationship with CCDJFS.

Commissioners passed Resolutions designating MCTA as the lead agency in both Columbiana and Mahoning Counties. One joint meeting with Columbiana and Mahoning DJFS directors has been held and others will be scheduled to determine what approaches will work best in each county.

MCTA will receive \$3.8 million (double their normal allocation). \$1.2 million of that will be used in Columbiana County and \$1.6 million will be used in Mahoning County. The money will be tracked separately for each county. They are still in the planning stages.

Eileen reported that **participants in CCMEP have been mandated and include OWF cash assistance participants between the ages of 16 and 24 who are work required. In Columbiana County, that number is only 11. In addition, the program will serve WIOA youth and people who can choose to serve as volunteers (folks between 16 and 24 who have received PRC. In tracking people in this category, CCDJFS had 13 people during the months of November, December, and January who could potentially be volunteers (part of the mandated OWF population who must meet a work requirement to continue to receive benefits).**

Eileen reported that they have a lot of decisions to make and challenges to overcome. The State has provided a lot of funds, but CCDJFS does not have a big population in this demographic.

Carol questioned whether or not Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) kids would be eligible. Eileen stated that it could be possible but they don't know yet. Last year, there were about 280 SYEP participants.

Eloise reported that Family Recovery has been working with a lot of the same population, some of whom could fit into this category – ages 16-24.

Bert and Eileen agreed that both the DOL and HHS mandate these programs but don't always provide guidance or resources for counties to carry them out. The requirement to operate CCMEP is in State legislation. The problem is that both TANF and WIOA have certain restrictions/regulations specific to their respective programs, so MCTA and the county DJFSs have to make sure that administratively and fiscally they are spending the funds appropriately. They are required to spend 75% of their funding on their out-of-school youth. The State has applied for a Waiver, but Bert and Eileen agree that it is not likely it will be received.

Bert stated that they still will have the summer program, and some of those participants could be moved to CCMEP.

Carol reported that Summer Youth worksites are interested in keeping some kids permanently. The rules of CCMEP are really WIOA rules. Bert and Eileen will work on this.

Senior Citizens Services Levy Advisory Board Report – Eileen reported that they have **established a Senior Citizens Services Levy Advisory Board to oversee the spending of levy funds. Kathie Chaffee is serving as the President of that Board. The first tax revenues will come in starting in April. The Board will be using the array of services as listed in the levy campaign, and services will be available for all seniors regardless of income. The next Advisory Board meeting will be on March 11th.**

Members Comments

Audrey reported that a business in Salem, **Shoe Sensation, approached her and would like to work with the CCDJFS in creating a voucher for CCDJFS clients for shoes.**

Carol distributed a handout on the **2016 Summer Youth Program**. The guidelines on the handout were last year's until she receives the new numbers. **Worksite training will be held on April 6th and 13th. Letters will be going out. The guidelines look the same. Youth application days will be April 25th and some evening appointments.** The handout included a list of items the kids need to bring with them when they apply. Foster children are once again permitted to participate. Applicants will come into IM downstairs for eligibility determination and then will come up to the Community Room to fill out the required paperwork. When they leave, they will have a list of participating worksites in their areas of residence where they can apply for jobs. They will then go to down to Ohio Means Jobs to register through the virtual backpack program. **The whole application process takes about an hour and a half to complete.**

It was suggested that **perhaps they could identify kids early on during this application process to see if any would be eligible for CCMEP.**

Carol reported that they have not yet received their SYEP allocation. **The program starts May 1st and ends August 31st – there will be no extension this year. Work permits have to be obtained before the kids are out of school for the summer. The kids can begin employment on June 1st.**

Eileen would like to meet with the new officers regarding the information DJFS is sharing at meetings and possible changes they would like to see. Between now and the May meeting, she will contact them.

There being no further business to discuss, Eloise adjourned the meeting at 10:20 am.

The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 24th, at 9:00 am in the CCDJFS Community Room.