

Gloucester County Human Services Advisory Board Meeting

February 20, 2025 at 115 Budd Blvd. West Deptford NJ

Present: Kim Gober, Jim Jefferson, Jennifer Rodriguez, Theresa Taylor, Michael Gower, Natalie Fortunato, Frances Harwell, Ingres Simpson, Lisa Conley, Amy Swanson, Elmorina Thomas, Joan Dillon, Danielle Alia, Madelyn Frazier, Khaleha Blackmore, Susana Dias, Ken Ridinger, Jennifer Myers, Scarlett O'Dell, Michelle Pandolfo

Meeting is called to order at 4:10pm

Open Public Meetings Act is read

Introductions

Deputy Director/Liaison Jim Jefferson Swears in 2025 members Frances Harwell, Natalie Fortunato, and Ingres Simpson.

Kim Gober asks for a motion to approve the Minutes from November 21, 2024. Elmorina Thomas motions, Ken Ridinger seconds, Frances Harwell abstains, motion carries.

Kim Gober asks for a motion to open the floor for public comment Michael Gower motions, Frances Harwell seconds and floor is open for public comment.

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Allocations – Elmorina Thomas

- No meeting since previous meeting.

No Appeals

CEAS – Kim Gober

- Did not meet in February, met in January. Last Wednesday in January the point in time survey was conducted updates will be made available on that when complete.
- Continuing to review support letters for grants that come in, first go to CEAS then to SNJCoC.

COMA – Jennifer Rodriguez

- COMA met and has been recently working on resource updates to the Children's Advocacy Center website that is being put up, want to move people towards the CAC for resources within the community.
- Also planning workshops to market to schools, planning some needs assessments for the schools as well as a list of topics that may be of interest.

MART – Michelle Pandolfo

- Monitoring Site schedule has been set and copies provided. Anyone who is interested and available to join they are welcome to do so, just let Michelle know and it doesn't have to be for all it can only be for one or more.

Childcare – Elmorina Thomas

- National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Recently made public a report “The 21st State of Preschool”. The report shows that enrollment is very low with the number of children enrolled in state-funded preschool still lower than it was prior to the pandemic, discussions were had yesterday on why enrollment is low and found it does not help working families.

DHS Staff Persons Report – Michelle Pandolfo

- Thank you to those who responded to survey voting membership, a reminder to complete survey will be sent to those who have yet not responded. One piece of that survey process asks if there are any surveys or topics of interest. One such request was made and happy to report a speaker on Childcare Resources and Referral has been lined up for the May Meeting.

State Representatives Report

Susana Dias - DCP&P Gloucester West

- Currently open with 308 families, investigations are at 197 for the past month and a total of 220 children open and of those children 71 are in placement.

Daniel Alia - DCP&P Gloucester East

- 210 open families, 71 in placement and 132 open for the month.

Public Comment

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Old Business

- Michael Gower at prior HSAC meeting United Way was approved for the Gloucester County Cares about Hunger Food Drive, that starts next weekend to the following Sunday and the food will be collected and distributed on March 3rd. Flyer will be circulated to the group.

New Business

- American Job Center- Mega Job Fair March 7th at RCSJ 9:00am to noon. Flyer will be circulated to the group.

Kim Gober asks for a motion to adjourn, Elmorla Thomas motions, Ken Ridinger seconds and meeting is adjourned.

Next Meeting March 20th at 4:00pm February 20, 2025 at 115 Budd Blvd. West Deptford NJ.