

CHESHIRE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 8, 2011 7:00pm
Cheshire Town Hall

Attendance: S. Chaudhry, C. Cullinan, P. Harris, E. Hines, M. Pickett, M. Sturges, and J. Vitarelli
Staff: S. Farrell, S. Manning, and K. Schechter

Call to Order: M. Sturges called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance and determined a quorum. The committee members and staff introduced themselves, which served as roll call.

Approval of Minutes: J. Vitarelli made a motion to approve the May 2011 minutes and S. Chaudhry seconded. Approval passed unanimously.

Report from Youth and Social Services: K. Schechter reported that 59 food vouchers were handed out in August. The number of available food vouchers will be reduced to 55 vouchers per month in September. There were 8 family violence reports for August. There is a new intern and clinician for Youth and Social Services. Energy assistance applications are ongoing, but deadline is September 15. Applications for energy assistance will be accepted for intake beginning September 12. There will be a Youth and Social Services table at the fall festival.

Preparation for October Strategic Planning Session: M. Sturges reported that the Planning Session would be held on Thursday October 27 at 7:00pm. This meeting will replace the regularly scheduled meeting on October 13. M. Sturges asked if there were any special questions that needed to be answered in order to prepare for the planning session. E. Hines asked what the differences were in the two committees. M. Sturges replied that there were times that the two committees have worked together such as with the Senior Center, Dodd kitchen, and the Firehouse. E. Hines asked if there was anything specific the committee could do for seniors, for example explaining the tax credit eligibility and tax freeze. S. Manning commented that a representative is at the senior center frequently and takes appointments. Members discussed different ways to get information to seniors. S. Farrell suggested putting a flyer in the tax bill and asked E. Hines if he could attend the focus group meeting. E. Hines agreed.

P. Harris asked K. Schechter if the committees were definitely being combined. K. Schechter replied that it is still in the discussion stages. P. Harris stated she did not want the committees combined because the committees do different things and she feels that some of the youth on the committee would not be comfortable in meetings with older parent types. J. Vitarelli agreed with her. M. Sturges commented that it may be more beneficial to combine in order to reach a quorum each month but she also is not sure if the committees would be interested in the same topics. S. Chaudhry stated she was in favor of the combination because she is interested in the topics both committees are involved in but feels Human Services is a broader committee. M. Sturges suggested that the committees could combine for select events. C. Cullinan suggested joining for the first meeting of the year to discuss what could be combined but stay separate committees. K. Schechter felt there could be pros and cons in combining and stated that we would get a better idea after the planning session in October. M. Sturges suggested the committee clarify the mission statement to help explain the committee's purpose. All health and human services members agreed. K. Schechter suggested the members come to the planning session prepared with questions and concerns. M. Sturges expressed the biggest issue is remembering why we have the human services committee in the first place. S. Chaudhry feels that these changes will be an opportunity to grow. S. Farrell stated even though the programs differ, the overall topics are the same. S. Chaudhry stated that the human services committee should support and not necessarily combine with other committee. E. Hines likes the idea of merging and asked if there is a concern or issue that would be a conflict between the committees. K. Schechter responded we would have to wait and see until the October discussion.

Adjournment: M. Pickett made motion to adjourn at 8:20pm and was seconded by S. Chaudhry.