

DCYF Advisory Board
Dolloff Building, SOPS Campus
April 17, 2023

Attendance: Mike Adamkowski, Lori Hebert, Rep. Patrick Long, Sandra McGonagle, Dolly McPhaul, Rep. Sheila Seidel, Joseph Ribsam, Beth Margeson and Elena Marcotte

Meeting started promptly at 2pm

March Minutes: Rep. Patrick Long motioned to approve the March meeting minutes, this was seconded by Dolly McPhaul. 1 person abstained and 5 were in favor.

SYSC Update

The bill to replace SYSC and extend the closing, passed in the house, with two-thirds of the house approving it, it was a bipartisan bill. The senate then passed the bill unanimously. The governor signed the bill the same day that the senate passed the bill. The governor has stated that their might be a ceremony in the next couple of weeks in regards to this bill.

Location: This will have to go through committees and this will probably take a couple of months. There are three current location options going around, Concord (near NHH), Manchester (current location) and Hampstead. Hampstead currently has the most to offer in regards to overlapping services, that the youth placed at SYSC need.

Timeline for New Building: The contract for the building should be going to G&C in the next couple of months (hoping for 6-8 weeks). The design of the building should be done by the end of this year. It is looking like at least two years before the building is finished and youth can be placed in the new building.

Staffing: SYSC is still struggling with staffing but it has gotten better in the past month or so. Out of the 40 staff we need to run the place efficiently we currently have 22. We have not had to mandate overtime for any of the JPPOs in about two months. The mandate is available if needed. SYSC still has a contract with Maxim to help supplement some of the YC positions, we are hoping in the future to rely less on Maxim and to wean off using them but it is going to be a slow process, and we do not want to rush anything.

Legislative Update

The TANF subsidy for fictive kin (people not related by blood) passed the senate.

Change/Amend the statute in regards to JJ assessments to not provide services to out of state children/youth that have police contact in NH. It is hard to do assessments and give services for youth that live out of state.

The senate passed a bill that would increase the number of tuition waivers that are available for eligible kids (increase from 35 to 75). This bill will now go to the house.

Budget Presentation

Joe handed out a copy of the PowerPoint presentation that was given to the House Finance Committee. He then went over several topics that the board was interested in.

The following are the top highlights from this handout and discussions:

- Accomplishments
 - Community Navigator Program – To help families that do not meet the standards of abuse or neglect, but still need assistance.
- Challenges
 - Workforce.
 - There has been an increased amount of reports to central intake and therefore increased number of assessments and cases for the field.
 - The division would like to create an “IMPACT” team that would go from office to office to help with the turnover and caseloads. NOTE: this was not budgeted for but, we are hoping to have another go on getting this funded in the near future.
 - Currently we need to have more case aide positions (12) throughout the state.
 - Also talked about was the need for more CPSW positions (this was not requested during this budget as the requests were put together about a year in advance)
 - Support for Alternate Caregivers
 - Increase foster care rates to align with USDA median cost of raising a child. This was approved and funded
 - The Division of Behavioral Health wants to enhance rates for youth residential care placements to help stabilize the workforce. This is about 60% funded
 - SB172 – the use of TANF benefits to support “fictive kin”.

Rep. Patrick Long motioned to adjourn, Mike seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 3:39pm.