

# JAMES CITY COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

## Meeting Minutes

HUMAN SERVICES CENTER – TRAINING ROOM C  
5249 Olde Towne Road, Williamsburg, VA 23188  
Monday, June 24, 2024 @ 3:30p.m.

### I. Call to Order

Lawrence Gholson called the meeting to order at 3:30p.m.

### II. In Attendance

#### a) Board Members Present

Charvalla West  
Chris Howard  
Frank Ferguson  
Karen Davis  
Kenya Williams  
Laura Hill  
Lawrence Gholson

#### Board Members Absent

Adrienne Carter  
Camica Credle

#### b) Staff Members Present

Barbara Watson, Director of Social Services  
Denise Kirschbaum, Chief of Services  
Diane Finney, Chief of Benefits  
Kim Vernall, Administrative Office Manager  
Keith Denny, Housing Program Administrator  
Lynette Diaz, Assistant Director  
Catrice Alliers, Administrative Assistant (Minutes taken)

#### Staff Members Absent

Dhaniella Wijaya Munoz, Fiscal Manager

### III. Approval of Minutes

**Lawrence Gholson** made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2024, meeting be accepted as amended. **Laura Hill** motioned approval and **Frank Ferguson** seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### IV. Board Members Report Out

- a) Charvalla West: No updates.
- b) Chris Howard: No updates.
- c) Frank Ferguson: No updates.
- d) Karen Davis: No updates.

- e) Kenya Williams: I was featured in the International Detailing Association (IDA) Spotlight and because of sharing my story, I was given the opportunity to donate a vehicle to a deserving mother.
- f) Laura Hill: On Saturday, June 22 we had our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Journey to Racial Healing Ceremony. Juneteenth Virtual After Party June 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30p.m. seeking feedback on how to make Juneteenth 2025 celebration better. Also, in observance of Juneteenth, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Juneteenth Commemorative Art Exhibition located in the Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL) Gallery at the Stryker Center from June 18 – July 27, 2024. (see attached Flyer)
- g) Lawrence Gholson: How to celebrate Juneteenth; It is my birthday and you are invited to celebrate with me. It is important to educate and understand our history. On June 15, the NAACP and James city County (JCC) hosted the Juneteenth Community Fest at Freedom Park, which was the first Free Black Settlement. African American Heritage Trail is underway, please reach out and share your story. (see attached flyer) “WHAT’S POPPIN’ TUESDAY’S” located at 5252 Olde Towne Road. (see attached flyer)

## V. Presentation

### *James City County Housing Portal presented by Keith Denny.*

- Access via <https://jccvahousing.gov> or simply download the app to your smart phone.
- Digital front door: Clients will be able to access everything online that they can get by coming into the office.
- When forms and applications are filled out, they are submitted to the housing email address and then given to the appropriate specialist to process.
- Clients are able to click on individual icons for their needs including Housing Programs, Additional Resources, Forms & Documents, Staff Directory, Apply for Assistance, Affordable Properties, Landlord Portal, FAQs, Social Services Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages.

### **Housing Challenges**

The conversation about the James City County Housing portal led to a larger discussion about the challenges of addressing homelessness, homeownership, and affordable rentals.

**Next Step:** Barbara Watson will research information to bring to a future meeting about the broader process of planning and implementing affordable housing in the community.

## VI. Program Updates

- a) Kim Vernall: Hurricane Season has started and social services is responsible for shelter management. Our designated Admin staff will start completing the annual calling of our Access Functional Needs list. On this list are James City County (JCC) residents who are elderly or medically needy, who we call for emergencies or when a shelter is opening up. On July 12, we will be conducting a Work Party at our storage facility as part of preparation for shelter management. Our staff will gather and organize supplies. We have also arranged for the Salvation Army to come to pick up the furniture.

- b) Diane Finney: The Benefits Team is fully staffed. James City County Cooling Assistance program is now available for eligible clients. Applications are being accepted June 15 through August 15 by applying online through Commonhelp, over the phone at (855) 635-4370, and paper applications, which can be picked up at our local department of social services. Assistance available includes:
- Air conditioning unit (window) - purchase and install
  - Air conditioning unit (central) - repair air conditioning unit or heat pump
  - Electric bill - operate cooling equipment
  - Security deposit - primary electric expense
- c) Denise Kirschbaum: The Community Outreach Network Educate Care Thrive (CONNECT) program was awarded a \$1000 grant from the Williamsburg Community Foundation as part of the Williamsburg Landing Outstanding Service to Seniors award. Shout out to Jamesha Edwards who is the case manager for CONNECT and Lisa Walker who is our fire fighter who also does the medical case management. We have also finalized an adoption for a sibling group of four after multiple appeals over a 3 year period. We are looking to fill two Family Services Specialist (FFS) positions as well as a Family Services Assistant (FSA).
- d) Keith Denny: We received an extra \$25,000 for the Homelessness Prevention Program
- e) Lynette Diaz: The Care Team was awarded \$283,500 for year 7 grant. We have two open positions. One Social Work Case Manager position and interviews are scheduled tomorrow June 25. The Care Team Nurse Case Manager position is also open but has been a challenge to recruit for. We will be working with the Williamsburg Health Foundation (WHF) to potentially redefine the position. We are also currently working with WHF to identify lived experience leaders for the Child Health Initiative meetings to increase understanding of specific challenges in the community. Kinship Navigation is currently working towards a Kinship Care Awareness event for September in coalition with the Historic Triangle Drug Prevention Coalition (HTDPC) as well as Trauma-Informed Community Network (TICN).

## **I. Directors Report**

- Hurricane season started June 1<sup>st</sup> and ends November 30<sup>th</sup>. We are currently finalizing the people on our six shelter teams. We have staff participating in trainings.
- The shelter managers were able to participate in Family Assistance Center Training for non-weather related events.
- Warhill High School is in the process of building an auxiliary gym which will later become a shelter that can withstand up to a category three tornado.
- July 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of a new fiscal year. All staff will be receiving a 5% salary increase and look forward to another change in salary as a result from the compensation study in October.
- The next meeting will be held on August 26<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m. At the meeting we will be reviewing and voting on the bylaws.

## **II. Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00p.m.