

Board to Promote Self-Sufficiency

6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 300 • Columbia, MD 21046



Minutes of the June 29, 2017 Meeting

Non-Profit Center - 9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Columbia, MD 21046

Attendance:

Appointed Members: Michael Couch, Bita Dayhoff, Joan Driessen, Matt Poole, Lisa Jablonover, Brad Closs, Jennifer Pollott Hill and Kim Salazar.

Ex Officio Members: Karen Butler, Tiffany Smith, Jack Kavanagh, Minah Woo, Diane Martin, Jackie Scott, Francine Trout, Madeline Morey, Antigone Vickery and Elizabeth Meadows.

Department of Community Resources and Services Staff: Kathleen Swanson, Michelle Hippert, Megan Godfrey Jackson, Quinton Askew and Cara Baumgartner.

Guests: Justin Tyler

Consultants: Chris Kingsley

Meeting called to order at 9:10 am by Jennifer Pollitt Hill

Agenda:

- **Chris Kingsley welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an overview of the agenda**
- **History of the Board to Promote Self-Sufficiency (BPSS)**
 - Mike Couch, Jennifer Pollitt Hill and Jack Kavanagh spoke of their individual tenures as Chair of BPSS. Successes include workgroups that lead to adopting the Getting Ahead program. The Multi-Service Center was originally started to host Getting Ahead and then was expanded into a one stop shop for related services. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) for Howard County was piloted by BPSS. MakingChange then took it over and grew into offering many other finance related services and education. The HirePower program and awards also were pioneered by BPSS to reach out to the business community of Howard County and help people living in poverty or coming out of corrections to find work. Jack Kavanagh spoke of the wonderful partnerships he had formed through BPSS that had changed how corrections successfully integrating parolees back into society. Overall it was felt that BPSS had been an incubator for vital programs in Howard County but that more recently there had been less success in this area.
 - Kathleen Swanson presented documents, Bill No. 23-2008, that legally formed and gave shape to BPSS and its mission. There was then discussion on whether bi-laws needed to be updated to reflect what BPSS had grown into and may need to be in the future. There was talk of reaching out to the County Executive to see what he thought the future of BPSS should be. The different roles of BPSS included: program incubator, advocacy for groups of people and the programs that assist them and a place to form partnerships and network.

- **BPSS and the Continuum of Care (CoC)**
 - Michelle Hippert gave a presentation detailing how the CoC related to BPSS. CoC is focused specifically on ending and preventing homelessness. The Plan to End Homelessness was adopted in 2010 and required a board be formed dealing with homelessness. BPSS had already been formed two years earlier and agreed to take on CoC responsibilities and place emphasis on dealing with homelessness. Committees and subcommittees were formed to meet CoC requirements. Thus, BPSS became the CoC board as well.
 - Questions were then raised whether BPSS is focusing sufficiently on being the CoC board. While committees and sub-committees were enough to meet regulations, they may not delve as deeply into the problem as desired. BPSS had launched vital programs to help those in poverty and foster self-sufficiency, but were these programs directly related to homelessness? Does the CoC need its own board instead?
 - Options were put forward for BPSS's future:
 - Keep BPSS the way it is
Questions were raised if committees and sub-committees to deal with homelessness would meet future CoC regulations.
 - CoC is split off into its own board
The CoC board would only deal with homelessness.
BPSS would move its focus onto other issues related to poverty and self-sufficiency.
 - Focus BPSS only on homelessness
Committees and sub-committee would branch off to deal with other issues related to poverty and self-sufficiency. This way other issues would still be address but primary focus of BPSS would be homelessness.

After much discussion, Chris Kingsley proposed meeting again to flesh out above options and then present more formal ideas to County Executive. There was agreement to look into other existing boards in Howard County to see how BPSS relates to them, to collect data related to homelessness and see how funding is being distributed to various boards and self-sufficiency related causes.

- **Current Challenges, Opportunities and what is BPSS “niche”**
 - Chris Kingsley presented slides showing excerpts from his interviews with BPSS members.
There was found to be a lack of focus or mission for BPSS in recent times. Many pointed to their history of doing good for Howard County but that achievements seemed to be in the past. An elevator pitch and easier way to explain BPSS to people that are not members are needed. Much was made of defining self-sufficiency vs stability and if either is the correct term for what BPSS is trying to achieve. Many said that BPSS needs to hear from people recently in or just moved out of poverty and there needs to be more outreach to the community.
 - Chris Kingsley showed diagrams that illustrated how boards can work better together.

Showed lines going in all directions meaning not having a clear purpose or understanding of how each part should work together.

Showed the next step were lines are all moving in the same direction but are still separate. This stands for having a clear purpose but while they work together there are clear distinctions.

Showed the final step where all lines go in same direction in one line. This stands for clear purpose and a system that has a smooth flow of services meeting needs.

- Ayesha Holmes proposed using Results Based Assessment (RBA) system. Results oriented system that works backwards. Identifies problems and then finds the steps needed to resolve them. This will lead to clearer purpose and greater accountability. Was thought that using this would mean picking two or three projects a year to work on.

Chris Kingsley called on the room to agree to use RBA. The room agreed.

- **Mike Couch and the Board Nominating Committee**

Mike Couch moved that Jennifer Pollitt Hill would be Chair of BPSS and that Karen Butler would be Vice Chair of BPSS.

Matt Poole seconded.

Room unanimously agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 1:02 pm by Chris Kingsley with agreement of the room

Next meetings:

Subcommittee Meeting - July 6, 2017 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Full Board Planning Meeting – July 25, 2017 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Minutes submitted by Cara Baumgartner