



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD of SOCIAL SERVICES
September 1, 2020 | 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm
Video Conference
MEETING NOTES - DRAFT

Board Members			HHS and Council Staff			
Name	Title	Present				Present
Marquette Rogers	Chair	X		Oscar Mensah	HHS Staff	X
Jean Swift	Vice Chair	X		Carolyn Chen	Council Staff	
Stephanie Mensh	Secretary	X		Belinda Cervas	HHS Staff	
Kendell Battle	Member	X		Warren Hansen	HHS Staff	X
Catherine “Cat” Kahn	Member	X				
Chanté Leverette	Member	X				
Samaura Stone	Member	X				
Councilmember Rice	Member					

I. CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.
- Since the Board has not met during the pandemic shutdown in March, Marquette Rogers welcomed the attendees and said the purpose of the meeting was to check in and discuss possible activities for the fall and the October meeting.

II. DISCUSSION

- Cat Kahn described her www.HarvestShareMD.org program to bring backyard garden vegetable harvests to local food banks. Succeeded in bringing 5,000 pounds of fresh produce to 20 collection sites in Montgomery County. Next steps to promote education, awareness, accessible land to support more home and community food growing and sharing activities.
- Kendell Battle described her outreach and support of hard-to-reach individuals to help locate resources for food, COVID testing and care, health, housing, basic needs. Described some barriers to building trust so individuals can access the resources they need.
- Oscar Mensah described the work of the county HHS staff, including the large increase in case load numbers managed by staff working from home. He noted that individuals who did not qualify for federal SNAP were directed to other food assistance.
- Chante Leverette commented on challenges in the application process, particularly in how some staff seemed to not account for the specific issues in the case. She also commented on child support issues.
- The group discussed the trauma of children not in school, not getting meals; issues of language barriers and resources.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- Marquette Rogers suggested the following priorities and activities for the BSS in the coming weeks:
 1. Social Media Posting: set up a schedule to post information, events, policies, resources, links, etc. on various topics to the BSS Facebook page: facebook.com/montgomerycountyBSS. Marquette will send out a spreadsheet and posting information
 2. State legislation/policies: in the upcoming session that the BSS should follow, consider supporting, Montgomery County priorities
 3. Racial equity in Montgomery County: writing letters of support for social justice policies

IV. NEXT MEETING

- Marquette Rogers suggested that since the BSS was meeting virtually, to conduct the October BSS meeting in two parts, an hour each. The BSS members will be solicited for available dates/times.

V. ADJOURNED: Marquette Rogers, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm