

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD**

Tammy Loewe, LCSW-C, Chair

Anna Cotton, Vice-Chair

Amanda Meatyard, Board Liaison



COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY:

James R. Guy, President

Michael R. Alderson, Jr., Commissioner

Eric S. Colvin, Commissioner

Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner

Scott R. Ostrow, Commissioner

**LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD
2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Purpose

The purpose of this Board is to serve as the coordinator for the collaboration of services specific to children, youth, and families in St. Mary's County. The Board is accountable for bringing together local child-serving agencies and providers, clients of services, and other local stakeholders to set priorities and address the needs of our community.

Activities

A variety of human service agencies are represented on the Local Management Board. During the year 2022, Board members remained focused on meeting vastly increased community needs brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Board meetings remained on a bi-monthly schedule as a result of the pandemic. In 2021, the Board voted to move from full board monthly meetings to bi-monthly meetings with the understanding the 'off month meetings' would occur for small committee work on specific projects.

The Board required agencies receiving LMB funds to attend a meeting to provide status presentations. As expected, all vendor agencies reported ongoing problems related to COVID like staffing challenges and increased cases. Of particular concern to the LMB was the mental and emotional toll the pandemic has taken on children, youth and families. The required isolation, the reduction of wages and loss of employment, and the loss of loved ones due to COVID related illnesses contributed to increased mental health needs for members of our community. Human service agencies continued to work diligently to adjust existing programs and establish new services to meet the need.

The Board established a committee for the thorough review of the findings from the 2020 needs assessment and then make recommendations to the full board on how to best utilize the funding allocation in response to the data.

The LMB Coordinator position had been vacant for several months. The Human Services Division was able to fill the position in early 2022. The new Coordinator, Amanda Meatyard, successfully lead the Board through the NOFA process for the funding for the upcoming year. The Board also elected a new Chair, Anna Cotton.

The Board hosted a community needs assessment update in late 2022. The assessment was completed in 2020 and the update was an important tool to assess

and document changes that occurred in community needs and services over the two-year span.

Discussion began about the possibility of bringing a new initiative to the county, Circles, USA, which focuses on poverty alleviation. It's a program that brings together community agencies and mentors to support families in poverty. Board members sought guidance from two other counties in Maryland that have launched Circles, USA programs and reaped positive results.

The Board remained focus on overall child well-being. To that end, the Board voted to support advocacy efforts for a YMCA in the county. Board members followed the discussion of this topic during County Commissioner business meetings.

Challenges

The primary challenge for LMB members remained meeting increased demands at their agencies, which often interfered with their abilities to attend all Board meetings. Overall, human service agencies continued grappling with the tremendous increase in need for services along with staffing changes and growing vacancies.

Plans

In 2023, the Board's primary focus will continue to be identification of changing community needs brought about by the pandemic and adjusting programs and services to meet those needs. The results of the Board's 2022 update to the needs assessment will drive the work for the coming year. The LMB's application to the Governor's Office for Children for funding allocation will reflect those priorities along with required data to support a coordinated strategic approach for response as a cohesive human services delivery system. The Board also voted to move forward with initiating the Circles, USA program. As with any new initiative, there will be significant planning involved regarding funding, program planning and training.

Membership as of December 31, 2022–

Missy Alexander
Michael Blackwell
Cynthia Brown
Anna Cotton
Troy Cowan
Kelly Hutter
Marissa Kelsh
Angela Cochran
Tammy Loewe
Cheryl Long
Ashley Milcetic
Alexis Zoss
Celia Engel
Annie Combs

