

Social Services

Education

Information

Accountability

October 2016

Summary

It is the mission of Social Services to improve the quality of life for people in need¹ who reside in the Town of Windham, by:

- Promoting economic self-sufficiency; and
- Connecting people with those resources made available by the Town, the state and the federal government, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Each month the current status of the program will be assessed using the following measures identified in the budget narrative.

1. People in need are counseled and provided information and referrals regarding local, regional, state and federal social service programs.

- a. In October, as in previous months we coordinated with government and community based agencies that offer resources to strengthen individuals and families and promote economic self-sufficiency, such as Project Feed, USDA, DHHS Emergency Funds, and the Aspire Program. We also coordinated with other providers of social services, such as the Good Shepherd Mobile pantry, Opportunity Alliance which administers LIHEAP; RTP Bus Service, Salvation Army and Neighbors Helping Neighbors.
- b. Social Services made/received seven hundred and sixty (760) phone calls²; interviewed thirty-three (33) individuals for direct general assistance³, and provided food/non-food assistance to three hundred and two (302) households. Each individual was provided education and information regarding additional resources available to them and encouraged to investigate these programs, and in many cases received assistance from staff (phone calls, emails, etc.) to connect with these services.

2. People in need that qualify for General Assistance under the Ordinance receive temporary assistance for basic needs.

¹ “People in need” are defined to include those people who qualify for financial or other assistance according to regulations issued by the Town, the state and the federal government. As authorized by the Town, Social Services may offer additional services to enhance the quality of life for children, families and seniors.

² This number includes calls from those seeking food/non-food, clothing, and/or financial assistance, out-reach to the community and calls made on behalf of clients seeking assistance.

³ Twenty-one (21) Windham; Twelve (12) Gorham.

- a. In October, three hundred and two (302) residents in need were assisted by the Food Pantry and/or the Clothes Closet.
- b. Vouchers are provided for housing, winter emergency fuel, or electrical assistance to those who qualify for it, under applicable law⁴. All decisions are rendered within twenty-four (24) hours as required by the state. In October, four Windham residents qualified for direct general assistance.
- c. Staff continued to reach out to members of the community, local businesses and NGO's that support with their time and their donations. In October, the Food Pantry received \$ 1,070.00 in donations and thirty-four (34) community members volunteered one sixty-eight (68) hours of their time.

3. The annual audit demonstrates compliance with state regulations.

- a. A special audit was conducted in July of 2015 by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) the then newly appointed General Assistance Manager and noted 100% compliance in all areas.

All of the programs located at the Family Resource Center, support the mission of Social Services and all of those that sought assistance in October received some type of assistance – food/non-food, educational/informational, or financial⁵.

As a result of these efforts, and the generosity of so many groups and individuals, assistance was provided to over three hundred and fifty (300) eligible individuals and their families while working to help them to achieve improved self-sufficiency.

Highlights

- The Windham Rotary sponsored a “Fill the Van” food/non-food drive at Shaw’s in Windham. They passed out the red “Plan It” bags as people entered the store, which were, in turn, given back filled when they exited. Over one thousand one hundred items were donated. Volunteers Jan Cantana and Joe Cummings helped the Social Services Assistant sort and shelf all that was delivered. Thank you Jan and Joe!
- Barbara Muir did it again! She collected and delivered over sixty (60) pounds of pet food – not including the many cans of dog and cat food. Many thanks to Barbara!
- Fall housekeeping has brought in multiple large donations to the Clothes Closet of gently used clothing. Volunteers, Pat and Sylvia, have been working diligently sorting, hanging, folding and displaying these items. Thank you, Ladies!
- The Social Services Assistant acquired three huge bags for “Coat for Kids” donations through the Knights of Columbus Council 2219 in Westbrook just in time for the cold weather.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables from Hannaford continue to be especially plentiful and well appreciated by Food Pantry clients.
- All clients were encouraged and reminded to come to the Food Pantry each week, in addition to their monthly visits for fresh fruit, vegetables, bread and pastries.

⁴ The Ordinance adopted by Council governs qualification.

⁵ To ensure public accountability, the General Assistance Ordinance was objectively, consistently and uniformly applied.

Statistics

- Two hundred and seven (207) households were served through the Food Pantry; twelve (12) were new clients.
- Thirty-four (34) volunteers worked a total of sixty-eight (68) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Food Pantry received/made four hundred and sixty-three (463) phone calls.
- The Clothes Closet received twenty-nine (29) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served ninety-five (95) households.
- The Food Pantry received forty-six (46) donations (multiple boxes/bags of canned and packaged food from residents and local businesses; and fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods, meat, and bread) bi-weekly from Hannaford in Windham.
- Twenty-one (21) thank you notes and/or receipts were sent to residents and businesses for their donations.
- General Assistance received/made three hundred and one (301) phone calls⁶.
- Thirty-three (33) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: Twenty-one (21) Windham; twelve (12) Gorham.
- In October four (4) Windham residents qualified for direct general assistance; three (3) Gorham residents qualified for direct general assistance.

Type of Assistance Requested	Assistance Provided
12 requests for housing assistance	4 were provided financial assistance for rent; all others were referred to Westbrook Housing Authority for Section 8 or Senior Housing.
1 request for water/sewer assistance	0 were provided financial assistance.
6 requests for assistance with electrical bills	0 were provided financial assistance; all were referred to DHHS, LIHEAP, the Salvation Army as well as being assisted in signing up for Efficiency Maine/Electricity Maine

October Expenses/Donations

- Direct general assistance provided: 10/01/16 – 10/31/16: \$ 2,096.28
- Food Pantry monetary donations: 10/01/16 – 10/31/16: \$ 1,070.00
- Food Pantry expenses: 10/01/16 – 10/31/16: \$ 837.82

Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations

- Direct general assistance provided: 7/01/16 – 10/31/16: \$ 2,519.28
- Food Pantry monetary donations: 7/01/16 – 10/31/16: \$ 4,363.06
- Food Pantry expenses: 7/01/16 – 10/31/16: \$ 2,664.32

⁶ The number also includes calls for Gorham.