

Social Services

Education

Information

Accountability

September 2014

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 September, 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 state disability advocates, 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, Salvation Army and Neighbors Helping Neighbors.
- b. Social Services made/received over six hundred and fifty (650) phone calls²; interviewed sixty-one (61) individuals for direct general assistance³, and provided food/non-food assistance to two hundred and fifty-eight (258) 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 Forty-six (46) Windham; fifteen (15) Gorham.

- a. In August, nearly three hundred and fifty (350) 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 August, two (2) 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 September the Food Pantry received \$400.00 in donations and thirty-three (33) community members volunteered seventy-seven and one-half (77.5) hours of their time.

3. The annual audit demonstrates compliance with state regulations.

- a. The last audit was conducted by DHHS in August of 2013 and noted 100% compliance
- b. We have not yet been notified of the date of the next audit.

All of the programs located at the Family Resource Center, support the mission of Social Services and all of those that sought assistance in September 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 almost four hundred (400) eligible individuals and their families while working to help them to achieve improved self-sufficiency.

Highlights

- Cumberland County Correctional Institution delivered zucchini, squash, cabbage, and watermelons to the Food Pantry.
- Hannaford added meat and deli products to their bi-weekly donations of bread, pastry, fruits and vegetables to the Food Pantry.
- Mosher Farm donated over two hundred (200) dozen ears of corn for Food Pantry clients.
- Social Service staff attended the kick-off meeting for the “Community Coin Challenge” which benefits local food pantries. Staff shared information about the pantry with the group – i.e. number of clients, type of food provided, how often, etc.
- Donations of non-perishable and canned goods came from Windham Hill Union Church North Hill Union Church, St. Ann’s Episcopal Church, Friends Church, Unity of Greater Portland Church and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish.
- Fresh Start Farms delivered a variety of fresh vegetables (United Way Grant).
- We continued to receive fresh vegetable and fruit donations each week from Idexx.
- The Community Garden donated squash, cucumbers, and tomatoes.
- All clients were encouraged 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

- The Food Pantry received/made three hundred and eighty-four (384) phone calls.
- Two hundred and fifty-eight (258) households were served through the Food Pantry; eight (8) of which were new clients.
- Thirty-three (33) volunteers worked a total of seventy-seven and one half (77.5) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Clothes Closet received sixteen (16) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served eighty-six (86) households. (The increase can be largely attributed to the need for back-to-school clothing.)
- The Food Pantry received forty-eight (48) donations (multiple boxes/bags of canned and packaged food from residents and local businesses; fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods, and bread) from Hannaford and bi-weekly and donated bread from The Bakery Outlet.
- Eighteen (18) thank you notes were sent to residents and businesses for their donations.
- General Assistance received/made two hundred and ninety-two (292) phone calls. (This number also includes calls for Gorham.)
- Sixty-one (61) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: Forty-six (46) Windham; fifteen (15) Gorham.
- Direct general assistance was provided to two (2) Windham residents.

Type of Assistance Requested	Assistance Provided
27 requests for rental assistance	2 were provided financial assistance for rent; all others were referred to Westbrook Housing Authority for Section 8 or Senior Housing.
15 requests for assistance with electrical bills – 10 had received disconnect notices.	0 was 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
13 requests for emergency winter fuel	0 were provided financial assistance; all were referred to LIHEAP
2 requests for water assistance – 1 for connection to a public water supply and 1 disconnect notice.	0 were provided financial assistance; one was referred to LIHEAP and one to Opportunity Alliance

September Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 9/01/14 – 9/30/14: | \$ 374.00 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations: | 9/01/14 – 9/30/14: | \$ 400.00 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses: | 9/01/14 – 9/30/14: | \$ 681.95 |

Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 7/01/14 – 9/30/14: | \$ 1,511.00 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations: | 7/01/14 – 9/30/14: | \$ 6,365.06 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses: | 7/01/14 – 9/30/14: | \$ 1,944.96 |