

Social Services

Education

Information

Accountability

August 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 August, 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 five hundred and sixty (560) phone calls²; interviewed seventy-one (71) individuals for direct general assistance³, and provided food/non-food assistance to one hundred and ninety-two (192) 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 Fifty-six (56) Windham; fifteen (15) Gorham.

- a. In August, over two hundred and fifty (250) residents in need were assisted by the Food Pantry and/or the Clothes Closet. Fourteen (14) students receive backpacks filled with grade appropriate school supplies.
- 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, four (4) 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 August, the Food Pantry received \$1,506.42 in donations and twenty-four (24) community members volunteered seventy and one-half (70.5) 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 August 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 (300) eligible individuals and their families while working to help them to achieve improved self-sufficiency.

Highlights

- Weekly donations of non-perishable goods came from Windham Hill Union Church, North Hill Union Church and St. Ann's Episcopal Church.
- A grant was received from United Way for the purchase of \$500 of vegetables from Fresh Start Farms.
- Several town citizens contributed backpacks and school supplies for the annual Backpack Program.
- Donations from Frye Island continued to come into the Food Pantry each week.
- Windham residents contributed generously – eggs, vegetables, fruit, and paper goods.
- We continued to receive fresh vegetable and fruit donations each week from Idexx.
- The Community Garden donated squash, cucumbers, and tomatoes.
- The Food Pantry's "Summer Break" program to assist families with children at home for the summer with extra food and snacks wrapped up at the end of the month.
- A regular donor contributed flour, yeast, oil, pasta, sauce, and canned meat.
- The North Windham Union Church Extension Group contributed diapers, wipes, and infant formula.
- 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 two hundred and sixty-three (263) phone calls.
- One hundred and ninety-two (192) households were served through the Food Pantry; five (5) of which were new clients.
- Twenty-four (24) volunteers worked a total of seventy and one-half (70.5) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Clothes Closet received thirty-two (32) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served fifty-eight (58) households.
- The Food Pantry received thirty-eight (38) 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.
- Fourteen (14) thank you notes were sent to residents and businesses for their donations.
- General Assistance received/made three hundred and five (305) phone calls. (This number also includes calls for Gorham.)
- Seventy-one (71) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: Fifty-six (56) Windham; fifteen (15) Gorham.
- Direct general assistance was provided to four (4) Windham residents.

Type of Assistance Requested	Assistance Provided
25 requests for rental assistance	3 were provided financial assistance for rent; all others were referred to Westbrook Housing Authority for Section 8 or Senior Housing.
18 requests for assistance with electrical bills – 3 had received disconnect notices.	1 was provided financial assistance; all others 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

August Expenses/Donations

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 8/01/14 – 8/31/14: | \$ 200.00 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations: | 8/01/14 – 8/31/14: | \$ 1,506.42 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses: | 8/01/14 – 8/31/14: | \$ 936.13 |

Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 7/01/14 – 8/31/14: | \$ 1,137.00 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations: | 7/01/14 – 8/31/14: | \$ 5,965.06 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses: | 7/01/14 – 8/31/14: | \$ 1,263.01 |