

# Social Services

*Education*

*Information*

*Accountability*

**January 2017**

## Summary

It is the mission of Social Services to improve the quality of life for people in need<sup>1</sup> 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 January, 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 six hundred and seven (607) phone calls<sup>2</sup>; interviewed sixty-six (66) individuals for direct general assistance<sup>3</sup>, and provided food/non-food assistance to two hundred and seventeen (217) 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.**

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<sup>1</sup> “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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Forty (40) Windham; Twenty-six (26) Gorham.

- a. In January, two hundred and seventeen (217) 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 law<sup>4</sup>. All decisions are rendered within twenty-four (24) hours as required by the state. In January one (1) Windham resident 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 January, the Food Pantry received \$ 1,105.80 in donations and thirty-six (36) community members volunteered eighty-one (81) hours of their time.

**3. The annual audit demonstrates compliance with state regulations.**

- a. An annual audit was conducted in January of 2017 by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Field Examiner, Gerry Biron, and he 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 January received some type of assistance – food/non-food, educational/informational, or financial<sup>5</sup>.

As a result of these efforts, and the generosity of so many groups and individuals, assistance was provided to over two hundred and fifty (250) eligible individuals and their families while working to help them to achieve improved self-sufficiency.

## Highlights

- Stoneledge Animal Hospital held a pet food drive and provided the Pantry with bags, cans, treats, and beds for clients with pets. Two volunteers, Joe Cummings and Jan Campana filled Joe's van with the items. Thank you Joe and Jan. That was a lot of lifting.
- Shaw's Supermarket donated two pallets of food from their "Season of Sharing" food drive. The items totaled over \$3,100. Thanks to all who donated to this food drive.
- The Windham Middle School conducted a "Days of Sharing" food and non-food drive. It took four (4) SUV's to make the delivery. Great job, kids! It means so much to our clients.
- Jacob Piechowski, (Liz Scheetz' son) has become a regular volunteer. He sorts, shelves and stacks new inventory every single Wednesday. Thank you, Jacob!
- John Legere and Bob Witham keep the laughter going as they pack bags for Senior Monday. Thank you, gentlemen. Keep on laughing!
- Despite inclement weather, Brian Morin's crew managed to pick up the Hannaford donations on Mondays and Wednesday for most of the month. We couldn't do it without them!
- 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.

<sup>4</sup> The Ordinance adopted by Council governs qualification.

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

## Statistics

- One hundred and fifty-five (155) households were served through the Food Pantry; five (5) were new clients.
- Thirty-six (36) volunteers worked a total of one hundred and eighty-one (81) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Food Pantry received/made three hundred and six (306) phone calls.
- The Clothes Closet received seventeen (17) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served sixty-two (62) households.
- The Food Pantry received forty-one (41) 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-nine (29) 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 calls<sup>6</sup>.
- Sixty-six (66) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: Forty (40) Windham; twenty-six (26) Gorham.
- In January one (1) Windham resident qualified for direct general assistance; six (6) Gorham residents qualified for direct general assistance.

Type of Assistance Requested	Assistance Provided
20 requests for housing assistance	1 was provided financial assistance for rent; all others were referred to Westbrook Housing Authority for Section 8 or Senior Housing.
3 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
1 request for burial/cremation assistance	No financial assistance was provided.
16 requests for emergency winter fuel	0 were provided financial assistance; all others were referred to DHHS, LIHEAP, NHN, the Salvation Army as well as being assisted in signing up for Efficiency Maine/Electricity Maine.

### January Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 1/01/17 – 1/31/2017: | \$ 795.00   |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations:     | 1/01/17 – 1/31/2017: | \$ 1,105.80 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses:               | 1/01/17 – 1/31/2017: | \$ 782.63   |

### Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 7/01/16 – 1/31/2017: | \$ 5,849.65 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations:     | 7/01/16 – 1/31/2017: | \$23,189.28 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses:               | 7/01/16 – 1/31/2017: | \$ 4,477.26 |

<sup>6</sup> The number also includes calls for Gorham.