

Social Services

Education

Information

Accountability

December 2017

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 December, 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 ninety-nine (799) phone calls²; interviewed one hundred and ten (110) individuals for direct general assistance³, and provided food/non-food assistance to two hundred and fifty-two (252) 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.

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 Seventy (70) Windham; Forty (40) Gorham.

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

- a. In December, three hundred and twenty-three (323) households 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 December, three (3) 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 December, the Food Pantry received \$ 5,216.95 in donations and fifty-three (53) community members volunteered one hundred and thirty-nine (139) 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 December 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

- Public Safety (Fire and Police) sponsored a total of forty-two (42) children for Christmas. The Clerk's Office donated gifts and gift cards for teens. Many thanks!
- Windham's Marilyn Murch donated sixteen (16) quilts to be given to children as gifts. ☺
- The Lakes Region Rotary donated seventy (70) gift bags filled with goodies for Windham seniors –many living alone during the holiday season. Thanks to all!
- Many groups, businesses or individuals held food and personal items drives or gave monetary donations to the pantry. To list a few: Honeywell, Lake Region Senior Center, Windham Parks and Recreation, Windham Adult Ed., Ukulele Club, Evergreen Credit Union, the offices of Joe Bornstein, SDIX LLC, New Marblehead Friendship Club, A Child's World, Hall Implement, and the Windham Lions Club to name a few.
- Forty-five (45) families asked for assistance with gifts for their children. At the Toy Workshop volunteers worked to ensure that parents received assistance with the toys; had the opportunity to choose stocking stuffers (Thank you Kristi MacKinnon!); hats, mittens, wrapping paper, bows and even scotch tape. What a day!

⁴ The Ordinance adopted by Council governs qualification.

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

- The Food Pantry provided seventy-three (73) Christmas Dinners to Windham residents.
- 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.

Statistics

- One hundred and seventy-nine (179) households were served through the Food Pantry; five (5) were new clients.
- Fifty-three (53) volunteers worked a total of one hundred and thirty-nine (139) hours in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.
- The Food Pantry received/made three hundred and seventy-three (373) phone calls.
- The Clothes Closet received ten (10) donations (multiple boxes/bags) of clothing and linens and served seventy-one (71) households.
- The Food Pantry received eighty-two (82) donations from residents and fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods, meat, and bread bi-weekly from Hannaford in Windham.
- Fifty-eight (58) thank you notes and/or receipts were sent to residents for their donations.
- General Assistance received/made four hundred and twenty-six (426) phone calls⁶.
- One hundred and ten (110) individuals were interviewed for direct general assistance: Seventy (70) Windham; forty (40) Gorham.
- In December, three (3) Windham residents qualified for direct general assistance; eight (8) Gorham residents qualified for direct general assistance.

Type of Assistance Requested	Assistance Provided
16 requests for housing 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	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.
8 requests for food/non-food assistance	All were serviced through the Food Pantry.
31 requests for emergency winter fuel	1 was 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.
NOTE: The number of requests is higher than this time last year due to the extreme weather conditions.	

December Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 12/01/17 – 12/31/2017: | \$ 964.90 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations: | 12/01/17 – 12/31/2017: | \$ 5,216.95 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses: | 12/01/17 – 12/31/2017: | \$ 199.09 |

Fiscal Year-to-Date Expenses/Donations

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|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| ▪ Direct general assistance provided: | 7/01/17 – 12/31/2017: | \$ 6,435.70 |
| ▪ Food Pantry monetary donations: | 7/01/17 – 12/31/2017: | \$14,115.74 |
| ▪ Food Pantry expenses: | 7/01/17 – 12/31/2017: | \$ 1,309.61 |

⁶ The number also includes calls for Gorham.