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**Minutes – Collaborative Meeting – May 4, 2022**

The meeting of Fannin County Family Connection Collaborative was held Wednesday, May 4, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. In Attendance: Anna Speessen, Lori Kantner, Chris Martinez, Kirk Cameron, Joy Ford, Mark Knowles, Jacqueline McKee, Giovanna Quiros, Sheena Rymer, Joe Marteski, Kristy Lindstrom, Susan Barnhill, Sandy Bridges, Meredith Yacavone, Victoria Turner, Misty Dove, Tom Niswander, Amberle Dillard, Elaina Hinton, Jim Yacavone, Michael Kilpatrick, Lois Blockley, Benji Parker, Teresa Ross, Sherry Morris and Mandi Hyde.

Jim Yacavone, FCFC Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Introductions were made by those present and on zoom. Attendees were asked to look over the minutes from April 6, 2022 for approval. After a motion to approve the minutes was made by Misty Dove and seconded by Anna Speessen, the minutes were approved without correction.

The first speaker at the meeting was Elaina Hinton, Outreach Specialist with The Georgia Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Elaina presented about the equipment and services available for individuals with hearing loss. All the various equipment available is at no cost to the individual with hearing loss. The equipment choices included wireless devices, captioned phones, amplified phones, doorbell devices and more. The center also offers ASL classes for anyone that wishes to learn. They also provide summer camps for school aged children with hearing loss. For more information contact Elaina at [ehinton@gcdhh.org](mailto:ehinton@gcdhh.org) or call 888-297-9461.

The next speaker was Amberle Dillard, Social Services Specialist 1, Caregiver Recruitment & Retention Unit – Region 1, DFCS. Amberle presented about the need for Foster Parents here in Fannin County. As of May 4, 2022 there are 26 children in foster care here in Fannin. There is a great need for more foster homes here in our county. If there isn’t a home available in Fannin the child could be sent as far as Macon to be in a home, which makes visitation for the parent very difficult. For more information contact Amberle at [amberle.dillard@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:amberle.dillard@dhs.ga.gov) or call 706-618-8746.

Anna Speessen spoke about FCFC Strategy Team and that she found out it would take a year to be certified with NAMI to start the mental health support group here in Fannin. Anna has been trying to get in touch with Commissioner’s office to have a Proclamation for May to be Mental Health Month.

Misty Dove spoke about the Poverty Awareness Team and the outreach being done with the low income housing areas to build a rapport with them and to let them know about the resources available in our area.

Upcoming Community Calendar events:

North Georgia Community Action has assistance for people who are behind on rent, mortgage or utilities available. Call 706-632-2854 for more information.

Saturday, May 7th – Her Hope Pregnancy Center will hold their 2nd Annual “Walk 4 Life” at Fannin Recreation Center from 8:30am to 11:30am.

The Craddock Center will be having a Summer Send-Off and will give children a bag of goodies that includes a book and craft materials for a little arts & crafts fun.

PEAKS free enrichment series starts June 2nd. Morning and afternoon sessions available. Go to [PEAKS@ung.edu](mailto:PEAKS@ung.edu) to view sessions and register for free.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:32am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Morris