

# Lorain County Children Services

## Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 19, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. via Phone Conference

### **I. Call to Order**

Board Member Jeremy Cordes called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. via phone conference. Public can participate by dialing (614) 721-2972, Conference ID# 785 845 632#.

#### **A. Roll Call**

Present: Jeremy Cordes, Kenneth Glynn, Tracy Green, Mallory Santiago

Excused: Melissa Fischer

Also Present: Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director

#### **B. Review and Approve Agenda**

Board Member Jeremy Cordes asked if there were any additions or changes to the Agenda submitted for the August 19, 2020 Board Meeting. No additions or changes made.

**MOTION:** It was moved by Kenneth Glynn, seconded by Mallory Santiago to approve the Agenda for the August 19, 2020 Board Meeting. Motion carried.

#### **C. Review and Approve Minutes**

Board Member Jeremy Cordes asked if there were any additions or changes to the Minutes submitted for the July 15, 2020 Board Meeting. No additions or changes made.

**MOTION:** It was moved by Tracy Green, seconded by Kenneth Glynn to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

### **II. Public Comment**

Board Member Jeremy Cordes noted that there was no one from the public participating via phone conference wishing to address the Board.

### **III. Old Business**

#### **A. Tabled Items**

##### **• Policy 8.2 Strategic Plan Update**

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board members with a copy of the completed 2018-2020 Strategic Plan outcomes. Throughout three years of development and implementation, there were involvement opportunities for all staff. Highlights:

##### **• Stronger Practices- Culture of Quality Improvement**

A visual practice model was developed to integrate the agency's core values. A sibling visitation agreement was created, with staff as the driving force, acknowledging the importance of sibling relationships and connections.

- Stronger Workforce- Informed and Supported Workforce

A Supervisory Onboarding program was developed and implemented for newly promoted supervisors.

- Stronger Community Engagement- Build and Strengthen

The Foster Parent Recruitment program was developed in 2018. In 2019 more foster parents were licensed than closed; a first-time accomplishment since 2013. A communications training was implemented, targeting staff participating in outside committees to help communicate professionally with the community.

Overall, as a result of the 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, a lot of positive things were accomplished for the children and families of Lorain County, as well as for the community. The Board expressed their congratulations to the LCCS staff for a job well done.

## **B. Unresolved Action Items**

- **Integrated Services Partnership (ISP)**

The most current ISP MOU, Section 3.3 reads “In addition to establishing an annual ISP budget as outlined above, the Executive Committee shall establish and maintain an unencumbered amount of funds equal to not less than eight percent (8%) of the total ISP budget to be set aside as a cash reserve fund to cover authorized and approved overruns or increases in costs of services or to provide additional services to children as agreed upon by the funding members.” There is no cap specified. Ongoing discussion will continue at the ISP Executive meetings regarding carryover and individual system contributions. Discussion held.

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with ISP data regarding FY2020 placements, programs, closed cases and carryover cases.

- **Levy Discussion**

Kristen Fox-Berki provided and the Board reviewed the campaign plan, which will continue to be developed. The campaign plan provides the Board with LCCS Levy History, Key Upcoming Election Dates and Campaign Tasks, a Budget Summary and a calendar of events for September and October with opportunities for community engagement.

The levy message will focus on our services to the children and families of Lorain County, as well as presenting the issue as a renewal levy without an increase to taxes.

Discussion held regarding networking with staff, foster parents and stakeholders/community members. The Board will be asked to sign, and the agency will send endorsement letters in September to individuals that routinely support LCCS. The Board expressed that they will also assist staff with areas need to make the campaign a success.

## **IV. Executive Director's Report**

### **A. Policy 6.1 Monthly Financial Update**

Kristen Fox-Berki presented, and the Board reviewed the Lorain County Children Services Revenue, Disbursements and Cash Fund Balance as of 07/31/2020.

Discussion topics:

- As requested by the Board, individual line items were added to the monthly financial report under Revenue for special State allocations received, including MSY, Best Practices and Foster Parent Recruitment.
  - We were recently informed MSY funding would be cut by 75% but following this announcement the funds were completely restored to 100%.
  - Foster Parent Recruitment will remain at 100%.
  - Best Practices funding was reduced to approximately \$118,000.
- Expenditures/Facilities- indirect costs were paid in July. These costs include costs for office space, utilities, vehicle insurance, payments to the Treasurer and Auditor's offices, among other facility costs.

### **B. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves**

#### New Hires for July 2020

- Elizabeth Dowdell, Direct Services Caseworker, 7/13/20
- Danisha Garrison, Direct Services Caseworker, 7/27/20

#### Leaves for July 2020:

- Teresa Cragon, Direct Services Caseworker, 7/6/20
- Andreina Rivera, Case Aide, 7/9/20

### **C. Policy 7.1 Present All Programs & Services Not Required**

By law, LCCS is required to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect. Other services provided by LCCS are not required by law. Some of the additional services LCCS provides include kinship services and monthly stipends to kinship caregivers, a contract with Lorain County Public Health for required health checks when children come into care, Case Aides to provide transportation for visitations, foster care and adoption services for licensed foster homes offering licensing, home studies, 30 Days to Family etc., among others.

The services outlined above would be at risk without the local levy. From a community perspective, these services are critical to the wellbeing of the children and families in Lorain County. Discussion held.

#### **Additional Topics for the Executive Director's Report:**

##### Fleet Vehicles

Per the agency's fleet vehicle retention schedule, the agency is trading in two used vehicles and purchasing two 2020 Ford Fusions. The total cost will be \$36,070.

##### Referrals During the Pandemic

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with information about the reduced number of reports due to the pandemic, from March 1, 2020 through August 1, 2020.

Discussion Points:

- From the beginning to the end of March 2020, there was a 55% reduction in calls.
- There was a 30% reduction in calls in April 2020 – July 2020, compared to January 2020 – March 2020. March 2020 – July 2020 also reflected a 30% decrease in calls compared to the same time span in 2019.
- Calls are steadily increasing; nearing the same volume of calls received before the pandemic.
- Majority of calls received were from mandated reporters, with a decrease from teachers and an increase from police officers (recently classified as mandated reporters). This is a consistent trend throughout the state and across the country. Discussion held.

**V. Executive Session** *(to discuss litigation, personnel matters and other matters required to be kept confidential by law)*

**MOTION:** It was moved by Tracy Green, seconded by Mallory Santiago to move into Executive Session to discuss litigation, personnel matters and other matters required to be kept confidential by law. Motion carried.

A Roll Call was taken prior to Executive Session. Jeremy Cordes, Kenneth Glynn, Tracy Green and Mallory Santiago were present. Melissa Fischer is excused.

**VI. New Business**

**A. New Items for Discussion & Approval**

- **Executive Director Performance**  
Tabled.

**VII. Announcements**

None.

**VIII. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** It was moved by Kenneth Glynn, seconded by Mallory Santiago to adjourn the Board meeting at 6:29 p.m. Motion carried.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Minutes Prepared by:  
Kimberly Kassam, Administrative Supervisor

Approved by:  
Mallory Santiago, LCCS Board Secretary