

# Lorain County Children Services

## Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 19, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m.

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

Board Vice Chair Andrew Lipian called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. at the Lorain County Administration Building, 226 Middle Ave., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room A, Elyria, Ohio 44035.

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

**Present:** Lee Armbruster, Roberto Davila, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago

**Excused:** Christina Doran, Kenneth Glynn, Tawana Jackson, Jim Miller

**Also Present:** Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director

#### **B. Review Agenda**

Board Vice Chair Andrew Lipian asked if there were any additions or changes to the Board Meeting Agenda submitted for the April 19, 2023, Board meeting. No additions or changes made.

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

Board Vice Chair Andrew Lipian asked if there were any additions or changes to the Board Meeting Minutes submitted for the March 15, 2022, Board meeting. Hearing none, the minutes are approved as distributed.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Martin Heberling, seconded by Tamara Newton to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

### **II. Public Comment**

Board Vice Chair Andrew Lipian noted that there was no one from the public present and wishing to address the Board.

### **III. Old Business**

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

##### **1. Policy 5.6 Executive Director Contract**

Discussion will be held during Executive Session.

##### **2. Policy 5.12 Executive Director Performance**

Discussion will be held during Executive Session.

#### **B. Unresolved Action Items**

##### **1. Visitation Center**

Board member Dan Gross was tasked with identifying possible locations for the visitation center and requests the Board to contact him if they are aware of any. Ideally, the visitation center would be an existing building that could be renovated, approximately 5,000 – 8,000 square feet and centrally located between Elyria and Lorain. The site previously identified as a possibility near

LCCC is no longer available. Mr. Gross found a building on Route 58 that could be a potential option and will look into it further.

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

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

New Hire for the month of March:

1. Kash-Shae Singleton, DS Caseworker 3/27/23

Leaves for the month of March:

1. Jessica Moritz, DS Caseworker 3/6/23
2. Julia Ballou, DS Caseworker 3/10/23
3. Carol Levanoff, DS Caseworker 3/17/23

##### **B. Policy 7.14 Client Grievance**

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with the Ombudsman Quarterly Report from January 1, 2023, through March 31, 2023, including the number of Grievances Filed, Public Complaints, Telephone Calls, Emails, Walk-ins, New Requests for Ombudsman Services this Quarter, Requests Resolved that were pending from the last Quarter and New Requests Resolved within this Quarter. Some of the common themes/trends include communication regarding case plan objectives, questions or concerns about the court process, visitations, and home visits.

Roberto Davila requested the agency consider establishing a survey process for clients, as a way to receive positive feedback. Kristen Fox-Berki will take this suggestion into consideration and meet with the CQI department to discuss further, including a plan for how to utilize the results. Following the internal process, Kristen Fox-Berki will send a recommendation to Jim Miller and Andrew Lipian, to consider this for a future agenda item.

##### Hero for a Day Levy Fundraiser Event

The Friends of Children Services is holding a levy campaign fundraiser event in preparation for the 2025 levy. The Hero for a Day event will be held on June 10, 2023, from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The event will include appearances by superheroes in costume, as well as real-life superheroes like law enforcement, firefighters, paramedics and military branch personnel. The event will also provide children with the opportunity to see some of the first responder vehicles; touch a truck event. Kristen Fox-Berki requested the Board's support and assistance with promoting the event. The Board requests an e-poster that they could share on social media, and a means for the Friends of Children Services to accept sponsorships online, which could be done through Eventbrite.

#### **V. Fiscal Reports**

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

Kristen Fox-Berki presented, and the Board reviewed the Lorain County Children Services Revenue, Disbursements and Cash Fund Balance as of 03/31/23.

##### Revenue:

The total Revenue for January – March 2023 is \$8,453,209.41.

Expenditures:

The total Expenditures for January – March 2023 is \$6,847,204.91.

The Beginning Fund Balance for January – March 2023 is \$19,654,768.18 and the Ending Fund Balance is \$21,260,772.68.

Kristen Fox-Berki reviewed the highlights with the Board:

- Revenue- we receive levy funds twice per year; the first payment was received this quarter. This first levy payment will be higher than the second as the Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh) deduction will be included in the second payment we receive later this year. Workforce Grant funding through ODJFS was made available to public children services agencies in response to the workforce crisis. The State allocated approximately \$13 million for front-line casework staff, which was distributed to each county based on their size, to help with workforce recruitment and retention.
- Expenditures- Services to Clients & Their Families increased. We are experiencing more children coming into care, and there’s an increase in placement costs.
  - Purchased Board & Care- There was an increase of almost \$500,000.00 from this time last year.

The Board previously voted in favor of a one-time levy reduction for 2023. When making future decisions regarding the carryover, Board member Martin Heberling suggests the Board consider the ongoing increase in expenditures due to inflation and the unpredictable nature of future expenses.

**VI. New Business**

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

None.

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

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Martin Heberling, seconded by Dan Gross to move into Executive Session to discuss litigation, personnel matters and other matters required to be kept confidential by law. Motion carried.

**Roll Call Vote to Enter Executive Session**

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Roberto Davila, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

**Roll Call Exiting Executive Session**

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Roberto Davila, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Martin Heberling, seconded by Roberto Davila to increase the Executive Director’s salary by 5%, retroactive to December 21, 2022. Motion carried.

**Roll Call Vote**

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Roberto Davila, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

As only a few of the current Board members were present during the previous Executive Director contract negotiations, the Board is requesting time to review and familiarize themselves with the contract before approving a 3-year extension. The Board will be provided with a copy of the current contract for review prior to the May 17, 2023, Board meeting.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Mallory Santiago, seconded by Martin Heberling to temporarily extend the Executive Director’s contract from November 19, 2022, until June 21, 2023. Motion carried.

**Roll Call Vote**

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Roberto Davila, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

**VIII. Announcements**

None.

**IX. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** It was moved by Martin Heberling, seconded by Roberto Davila to adjourn the Board meeting at 6:06 p.m. Motion carried.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 17, at 5:00 p.m. at the Lorain County Administration Building, 226 Middle Ave., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room A, Elyria, Ohio 44035.

Minutes Prepared by:  
Kimberly Kassam, Administrative Supervisor

Approved by:  
Andrew Lipian, Board Vice Chair