

Lorain County Children Services

Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 19, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Rob Weber called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. Public can participate by joining with a Video Conferencing Device: 682042763@t.plcm.vc, Video Conference ID: 114 870 538 3, or Call In (Audio Only) by Dialing (614) 721-2972, Phone Conference ID: 468 115 175#.

A. Roll Call

Present: Lee Armbruster, Christina Doran, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Jim Miller, Mallory Santiago, Rob Weber

Excused: Tim Carrion, Kenneth Glynn, Tracy Green, Andrew Lipian
Also Present: Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director

B. Review and Approve Agenda

Board Chair Rob Weber asked if there were any additions or changes to the Agenda submitted for the May 19, 2021 Board Meeting. No additions or changes made.

C. Review and Approve Minutes

Board Chair Rob Weber asked if there were any additions or changes to the Minutes submitted for the April 21, 2021 Board. Hearing none, the minutes are approved as distributed.

II. Public Comment

Board Chair Rob Weber provided an opportunity for members of the public participating via phone conference to address the Board. No public comment made.

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

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Tabled Items

- **Policy 2.2 Annual Policy Review (July)**
Tabled until the July 21, 2021 Board meeting.

B. Unresolved Action Items

None.

V. 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 04/30/2021.

Discussion topics:

- Revenue:
 - The total Revenue for April is \$715,908.53.
- Expenditures:
 - The total Expenditures for April is \$1,409,651.07. Expenditures for this month are lower than expected because the Hospitalization/Dental invoice was not received and is expected to be paid in May 2021. Kristen Fox-Berki highlighted the cost difference from 2020 to 2021 for Direct Services to Children and explained that the decrease for 2020 is related to the pandemic with daycares closed. This line item increased in 2021 as expected and is within normal limits.
- The beginning fund balance for April is \$24,138,804.74 and the ending fund balance is \$23,445,062.20.

B. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves

No new hires for the month of April.

Leaves:

- Mary Knoblock, FBC Kinship Caseworker, 4/8/21
- Steve Kahla, IL Caseworker, 4/15/21

C. Policy 8.1 Annual Report

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with the 2020 Annual Report, highlighting staff accomplishments despite the pandemic.

- **Introduction**

Caseworkers continued with home visits in the community throughout the pandemic, finding creative ways to safely assess home environments, observe parent/child interactions and interview parents, children, and collateral sources of information.
- **Services to Children and Families**

Data provided regarding the number of referrals received and the number of referrals screened in and out. In April 2020 the number of referrals decreased due to the pandemic and limited access to mandated reporters, then increased again over the summer and fall. Overall, a review of 2020 indicates the number of referrals did not correlate to child safety or the number of cases requiring intervention.
- **Foster Care/Kinship**

On January 1, 2020 there were 106 children in LCCS custody, and 102 on December 31, 2020. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, staff-maintained success with finding permanency for children. Judge Walther held adoption finalization hearings throughout the pandemic; 20 adoptions were finalized in 2020 and 25 have been finalized so far in 2021.
- **Financial**

The local levy is the largest source of revenue, 56%. Kristen Fox-Berki thanked the community and voters for their ongoing support to the agency in providing services to and keeping the children of Lorain County protected.

- **Innovation and Collaboration**

One highlight for this topic on the annual report is the Foster Youth Independence Program (FYI), a partnership between LCCS and the Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMHA) to reduce homelessness among young adults transitioning from foster care to adult independence. Ten (10) LCCS youth participated in this program in 2020 and secured stable housing. In addition, six (6) youth transitioning out of LCCS' custody are graduating or obtaining their GED. Kristen Fox-Berki congratulated the youth, and the Independent Living (IL) department for their assistance with achieving these accomplishments.

The 2020 Annual Report will be sent to LCCS partners and other services providers. Board Chair Rob Weber congratulated Ms. Fox-Berki and the LCCS staff on a job well done.

D. Policy 8.2 Strategic Plan Update

The 2021-2023 Strategic Plan is in development. Work groups were created to work on the three initiatives identified and staff at all levels are participating. The initiatives include (1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, (2) Responding to Trauma/Advance Trauma-Informed and (3) Family First Act Implementation and Innovation. Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a draft document outlining the objectives each work group is striving to achieve. Final edits still need to be completed. Kristen Fox-Berki encouraged the Board to reach out to her directly with suggestions or feedback.

Additional Discussion Topics:

Family & Children First Council (FCFC)

The Council met on May 13, 2021 and voted to transfer the Administrative Agent from the Board of Commissioners to LCCS effective July 1, 2022. The delay will allow LCCS to complete the fiscal year 2021 regarding timelines of grants, allow time to consult with the APA, and request an audit. Although the FCFC Board voted LCCS to become the administrative agent, the Board of Commissioners will make the final decision.

Travel Contract

Following quote requests and no response, LCCS secured a contract effective May 18, 2021 with Travelmax Global, LLC through the State of Ohio Procurement Contract.

May is Foster Care Month

In celebration of National Foster Care Month in May, the Board of Commissioners presented a Proclamation at today's Commissioners meeting and allowed Kristen Fox-Berki to speak about the importance of foster parents and their commitment and dedication to the children of Lorain County. A foster parent was also present. Each foster family will receive a copy of this Proclamation.

VI. New Business

A. New Items for Discussion and Approval

None.

VII. Announcements

None.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Minutes Prepared by:

Kimberly Kassam, Administrative Supervisor

Approved by:

Christina Doran, Board Secretary