

Lorain County Children Services

Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 20, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. at the Lorain County Administration Building, 226 Middle Ave., 4th Floor, Room A, Elyria, Ohio 44035.

A. Roll Call

Present: Lee Armbruster, Rania Assily, Roberto Davila, Christina Doran, Martin Heberling, Jim Miller, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago

Excused: Kenneth Glynn, Dan Gross, Tawana Jackson, Andrew Lipian

Also Present: Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director

B. Review Agenda

Board Chair Jim Miller asked if there were any additions or changes to the Board Meeting Agenda submitted for the September 20, 2023, Board meeting. No additions or changes made.

C. Review and Approve Minutes

Board Chair Jim Miller asked if there were any additions or changes to the Board Meeting Minutes submitted for the August 16, 2023, Board meeting. No additions or changes made. Hearing none, the minutes are approved as distributed.

II. Public Comment

Board Chair Jim Miller noted that there was no one from the public present and wishing to address the Board.

III. Old Business

A. Tabled Items

None.

B. Unresolved Action Items

1. Visitation Center

Kristen Fox-Berki and Dan Gross met with architect Bob Matakovich to walk through the building and talk about the needs of the agency. He asked for a list of the essential items we need and sent us a proposal. Compensation costs include schematic design, city meetings, design development, existing conditions document and reimbursable expenses. The total is \$13,500 and does not include hourly rates for principal, architect II, project manager etc. Essential items we need are rooms for visitations, space for the Independent Living program, conference rooms and offices. Mr. Matakovich did not provide us with timeline for having the design/floor plan completed but did indicate that he is ready to begin. The Board discussed the previous concerns about the term of the lease. Kristen Fox-Berki shared that we did receive a term sheet today outlining the lessor, lessee, lease term, etc. In addition, Kristen Fox-Berki and

Jim Miller met with APA Dan Petticord and Lorain County Visitor’s Bureau Director Gary Gibbs to discuss the lease agreement, and all agree to a 10-year term. The architect could be employed before the lease is finalized to expedite the process. The building is currently owned by the Visitor’s Bureau and the monthly cost to lease the building will be \$4,500 per month. They are not amenable to a purchase option. Because the agency cannot own property, if the building was purchased with agency funds, the Commissioners would own the building and we would be paying them to lease the building. Either way, there would be a continuous cost to use the space. We will further review the contract and discuss more next month.

2. LCCS Board Subcommittee Re: Strategic Plan

The Board Subcommittee met following the August Board meeting and reviewed the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) data, as a vital part of the next Strategic Plan, to help identify ways to improve outcomes. Once identified, the Board Subcommittee will provide guidance to the staff working group. The Board Subcommittee will meet again following tonight’s Board meeting. The Board received a copy of the meeting notes from the August meeting for review.

The agency issued a Strategic Plan survey to the community to provide feedback for items the agency should focus on over the next 3 years as a part of the strategic plan. Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a copy of the survey and asked for their participation. We have received 36 responses so far; 18 from staff, 8 from services providers, 3 from community stakeholders and 2 from “other.”

3. 2025 LCCS Levy

Tabled.

4. Policy 5.12 Annual Management Plan

The Board received a copy of the 2024-2025 Management. The three (3) priorities include:

- 1. LCCS Visitation Center**
- 2. Improve retention and reduce turnover in Direct Services by 5%.**
Recruitment efforts through Indeed have increased the number of applicants for the Direct Services caseworker position, and turnover is decreasing. Ongoing retention efforts will include a peer mentoring program and improved training program, onboarding process for new employees and professional development for existing employees.
- 3. Upgrade the Agency Website**

MOTION: A motion was made by Christina Doran, seconded by Roberto Davila to approve the 2024-2025 Management Plan. Motion carried.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Rania Assily, Roberto Davila, Christina Doran, Martin Heberling, Jim Miller, Tamara Newton, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

IV. Executive Director's Report

A. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves

New Hires for the month of August:

1. Jessica Moritz, DS Caseworker 8/14/23
2. Nicole Krejci, DS Caseworker 8/28/23

Leaves for the month of August:

1. Samuel Arriaga Jr., DS Caseworker 8/18/23
2. Lucinda Spayde, Fiscal Account Clerk 8/31/23

B. Family Satisfaction Survey

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a copy of our family satisfaction survey. The Board previously inquired about the agency's process for receiving feedback from the families we serve. Since then, we assessed internally how we were promoting our survey, which could be found on the agency's website but was difficult to find. The survey was moved to a more accessible location on our site, and a postcard with a QR code directing families to the survey will be mailed with closing letters.

C. Princess Ball

The 13th Annual Princess Ball will be held on Sunday, October 8, 2023, from 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at the LCCC Spitzer Conference Center Grand Ballroom. So far, eighty-seven (87) tickets have been sold and (2) sponsorships. The Board is encouraged to invite friends and family members to attend and reach out to members of the community for sponsorships.

D. Lorain County Memorandum of Understanding

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a summary. The Lorain County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to Address Child Abuse and Neglect is required to outline the role and responsibilities of each official or agency in assessing or investigating child abuse or neglect in the county. Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-33-26 states that each public children services agency (PCSA) is to prepare and submit an MOU to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) before December thirty first of each biennial year. This is a change from the previous requirement of every four years. There is also now a requirement that it be signed by the County Commissioners. The final MOU will go to the State to keep on record.

Council on Accreditation (COA):

We received official notice that LCCS has been reaccredited through COA. This process took a lot of hard work by staff to prepare and submit the required documentation and participate in on-site interviews. Board members Jim Miller and Andrew Lipian also participated in the COA interview process. The Board congratulated staff for a job well done.

V. Fiscal Reports

None.

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)*

None.

VIII. Announcements

None.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION: It was moved by Martin Heberling, seconded by Roberto Davila to adjourn the Board meeting at 5:27 p.m. Motion carried.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at the Lorain County Administration Building, 226 Middle Ave., 4th Floor, Room A, Elyria, Ohio 44035.

Minutes Prepared by:
Kimberly Kassam, Administrative Supervisor

Approved by:
Christina Doran, Board Secretary