

Lorain County Children Services

Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 17, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Vice Board Chair Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. at the Lorain County Administration Building, 226 Middle Ave., 4th Floor, Room A, Elyria, Ohio 44035.

A. Roll Call

Present: Lee Armbruster, Tim Carrion, Christina Doran, Kenneth Glynn, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Jim Miller, Mallory Santiago

Excused: Tracy Green, Rob Weber

Also Present: Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director

B. Review and Approve Agenda

Vice Board Chair Jim Miller asked if there were any additions or changes to the Agenda submitted for the November 17, 2021 Board meeting. No additions or changes made.

C. Review and Approve Minutes

Vice Board Chair Jim Miller asked if there were any additions or changes to the Minutes submitted for the October 20, 2021 Board meeting. Hearing none, the minutes are approved as distributed.

II. Public Comment

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

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**

Tabled until the December Board meeting.

- **Policy 8.2 Strategic Plan Update**

Tabled until the December Board meeting.

- **Board Officers**

Several Board members' terms will expire on December 31, 2021. Jim Miller is submitting requests to the Commissioners asking to reappoint them to the LCCS Board for another term. The LCCS Board Officer election will be held at the December Board meeting pending a response from the Commissioners.

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 10/31/2021.

Discussion topics:

- Revenue:

The total Revenue for October is \$2,598,255.11. The revenue for the month of October was higher than usual due to receiving a certainty grant through the State of Ohio in the amount of \$2,435,553.00, allocated to Protect Ohio counties to help close the gap in revenue due to the ending of the demonstration project. This amount is 90% of what we would have received from the Protect Ohio funds. The funds must be used by December 31, 2026 for three purposes: activities previously funded under the IV-E waiver, FFPSA planning and implementation efforts and Title IV-B allowable activities.

- Expenditures:

The total Expenditures for October are \$1,432,452.00.

The beginning fund balance for October is \$23,975,264.44 and the ending fund balance is \$25,141,067.55. The Board will continue future discussions regarding the fund balance.

B. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves

New Hires for the month of October:

- Jennifer Daggett, Direct Services Caseworker, 10/12/21

Leaves:

- Jessenia Matias Velez, Direct Services Caseworker, 10/6/21
- (Damaris Marrero, Receptionist, Deceased 10/21/21)

C. Policy 6.6 Adoption, Foster and Kinship Rates

Foster Care Rates

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with historical per diem foster care rates, separated into age groups, and noted that the age groups were further separated in 2018 from ages 0-13 into two groups, ages 0-2 and ages 3-13. In 2018, the Board approved a foster care per diem increase of \$1.00 for ages 3-13 and ages 14+ but did not increase ages 0-2. Kristen Fox-Berki requested the Board consider an increase of \$1.00 per diem for each age group, ages 0-2, 3-13 and 14+ for 2022. This would increase the annual budget by approximately \$26,000 per year.

MOTION: It was moved by Tim Carrion, seconded by Kenneth Glynn to increase the 2022 foster care rates by \$1.00 per diem for each age category; 0-2, 3-13 and 14+. Motion carried.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Tim Carrion, Christina Doran, Kenneth Glynn, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Jim Miller, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

Adoption Rates

For children adopted through our agency, a determination of the adoption rates is made at the State level based on individual circumstances and what is appropriate for each child. These amounts range from \$0 - \$1,162.00 per month.

Kinship Rates

In August 2020 the agency established, and the Board approved a \$300.00 monthly kinship subsidy for our kinship caregivers. Part of the planning process included staff from LCJFS and the prosecutor’s office to ensure that kinship families would not be penalized for receiving those funds. We recently became aware that the subsidy was posing an issue for some of our kinship families, and some are being penalized because the funds they are receiving exceeds their eligibility. Our agency is working with JFS administration to rectify this. We may need to reimburse JFS for overpayments but do not have details at this time.

Kristen Fox-Berki requests the Board approve an increase of \$50.00 per month for December 2021 through June 2022, and an additional \$50.00 per month beginning July 1, 2022. Based on the children currently in kinship care, the annual increase to the budget would be approximately \$140,000-\$150,000.00 per year.

MOTION: It was moved by Martin Heberling, seconded by Christina Doran to approve a kinship rate increase of \$50.00 per month beginning on December 1, 2021, and an additional kinship rate increase of \$50.00 per month beginning on July 1, 2022. Motion carried.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Tim Carrion, Christina Doran, Kenneth Glynn, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Jim Miller, Mallory Santiago
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

Other Discussion Topics:

Audits

Per Policy 7.2, “The Executive Director will present to the Board all Federal, State and local program audits, evaluations and reviews completed by non-agency entities on the performance of the agency within 30 days of receipt of the report and discuss the outcome of the audit or review and present a plan for resolution of any discrepancy or finding.” The agency recently participated in three (3) audits.

1. Lorain County Single Audit

We received results from a Single Audit conducted by the Auditor of State of Ohio for LCCS and Lorain County JFS, for January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. The LCCS portion of the audit included Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child

Welfare Services Program, Foster Care Title IV-E, Adoption Assistance and John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood. This audit concluded LCCS was found in compliance and no recommendations were made.

2. Chafee

We received notification regarding the results of a special audit regarding the use of John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (Chafee) claimed by LCCS for a period of April 1, 2021 through July 31, 2021. No instances of non-compliance were identified.

3. CFSR

The State of Ohio has been participating in the most recent Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) since 2017. At a Federal level, select cases are reviewed to assess indicators about safety, wellbeing, assessment of biological and foster parents and children, and permanency. Lorain County was identified and selected, along with 14 other counties, to participate in the 2017 round of CFSR reviews, including an on-site review. In 2018 we were notified that the State of Ohio did not pass the federal standards, and a PIP plan was implemented. Several initiatives resulted and were implemented by our agency. As of November 2021, the State of Ohio passed the 2017 CFSR.

Foster Holiday Party

The annual Holiday Party for foster and kinship families is scheduled for Friday, November 12, 2021. For the second year, it will be held as a drive-thru event at the Lorain County Collection Center. The center will be decorated for Christmas and Santa will be there. Kristen Fox-Berki invited the Board members to attend.

VI. New Business

A. New Items for Discussion and Approval

None.

VII. Announcements

None.

VIII. Adjourn

MOTION: It was moved by Martin Heberling, seconded by Mallory Santiago to adjourn the Board meeting at 5:29 p.m. Motion carried.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 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