

Lorain County Children Services

Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 18, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Melissa Fischer called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. Public can participate by dialing (614) 721-2972, Conference ID# 214 851 521#.

A. Roll Call

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

Also Present: Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director and APA Dan Petticord

B. Review and Approve Agenda

Board Chair Melissa Fischer asked if there were any additions or changes to the Agenda submitted for the November 18, 2020 Board Meeting. Agenda Item V Executive Session will be held following Agenda Item II Public Comment.

MOTION: It was moved by Tracy Green, seconded by Kenneth Glynn to approve the Agenda as amended. Motion carried.

C. Review and Approve Minutes

Board Chair Melissa Fischer asked if there were any additions or changes to the Minutes submitted for the October 21, 2020 Board Meeting. No additions or changes made.

MOTION: It was moved by Kenneth Glynn, seconded by Jeremy Cordes to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

II. Public Comment

Board Chair Melissa Fischer noted that there was no one from the public participating via phone conference wishing to address the Board.

III. Old Business

A. Tabled Items

• Executive Director Performance

Tracy Green provided the Board members with an evaluation form utilizing the Executive Director's position description and evaluates performance, ranging from exemplary to unsatisfactory. Although the 360 review does have the capability to evaluate performance, the evaluation form Tracy Green provided to the Board would be a better tool to use. The 360 review is better designed for reflection and professional development rather than evaluation.

The Board members will coordinate a Special Session Board meeting prior to the December Board meeting to complete the tool and review with Kristen Fox-Berki.

- **Policy 6.8 Fiscal Management Policy**

During the October Board meeting, Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with the Fiscal Management Policy supporting documentation. The documents were comprehensive, and the Board requested more time to review them and further discussion was tabled until November.

The Board felt that the documentation provided to support Policy 6.8 was thorough and comprehensive and commended Kristen Fox-Berki. Melissa Fischer requested that Ms. Fox-Berki sign and approve the procedures currently approved by the former Executive Director Scott Ferris, resubmit the updated procedures to the Board prior to the December Board meeting and the Board will approve Policy 6.8 Fiscal Management Policy at that time.

- **Board Officers**

Melissa Fischer requested that any Board member interested in holding a Board officer position for 2021 please contact her directly.

B.

Unresolved Action Items

- **Integrated Services Partnership (ISP)**

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a revised draft of the ISP MOU, including suggested changes made by the LCCS Board and the ISP Executives. Highlighted changes in green were suggestions made by the LCCS Board and changes in yellow were suggestions made by the ISP Executives. The Board reviewed the draft changes.

Discussion held regarding the timeline for the needs assessment to be completed. ISP end of the year reports including program information and fiscal data are completed in August, then the budget must be approved by March of the following year. The needs assessment would need to be completed and a decision made prior to March when the budget is approved (State fiscal year).

LCCS was credited 50% of the annual contribution for 2020 per the ISP Executives previous agreement with the Board. The ISP Executives will continue to evaluate the carryover and may also provide an additional credit for 2022. Kristen Fox-Berki indicated that the ISP Executives prefer the equitable contribution credit to a return of resources. The Board agrees to the equitable contribution credit but requests a formula for the distribution of credit for each system. Kristen Fox-Berki explained that for 2021, each system, including LCCS, received a credit of 50% of their annual contribution. If the credit continues for 2021 and years to come, the Board would find it beneficial to have the ISP contribution projections before approving the LCCS annual budget in order to keep the LCCS budget in balance. The current ISP carryover currently exceeds a 50% cap. LCCS's contribution is made in two payment annually utilizing MSY funds. Currently, once the annual ISP contribution is paid, there are additional MSY funds to allocate. Discussion held regarding MSY funding and modernization efforts of the State of Ohio and Governor DeWine.

Kristen Fox-Berki spoke about the value of the ISP program, which provides committee experts to assist with case management for children with behavioral

and mental health challenges. The committee is also familiar with the community resources that would be beneficial and can provide insight on individualized services. In part, ISP was created to provide Judges with alternatives to avoid LCCS custody and provide other services to the children through mental health or drug and alcohol agencies, department of developmental disabilities etc. Children in LCCS custody are often redirected through other agencies. Discussion held.

The Board is requesting Kristen Fox-Berki to request a solid formula regarding our contribution credit from the ISP Executives. The Board also indicated that they would like the language firmed up in lieu of creating additional programming. The deadline to complete the MOU is July 2021 to commit funds. The Board is requesting that if it is determined that additional dollars will be used for another program, the LCCS Board will vote before implementation. The ISP Executives are scheduled to meet again on Thursday, December 10, 2020. The MOU will not be finalized until all modifications have been made and a vote taken. Kristen Fox-Berki will continue to update the Board regarding the MOU during monthly Board meetings.

- **Levy Discussion**

The Board congratulated Kristen Fox-Berki and the LCCS staff on passing the levy, especially with additional challenges due to the pandemic. The Board also acknowledged the voters in Lorain County and thanked our caring community.

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 10/31/2020.

Discussion topics:

- Kristen Fox-Berki reviewed the Revenue and Expenditures for the month of October; nothing unexpected or unusual to report.

B. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves

No new hires or leaves for the month of October.

C. Policy 6.6 Foster, Adoption and Kinship Rates

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with the current foster care, kinship and adoption rates. Prior to the Board's review and increase of the foster care per diem rates in 2018, these rates had not been increased since 2009.

An assessment was completed to determine if our agency's per diem foster care rates were competitive with other county agencies to determine if an increase should be recommended. This assessment was completed for each age group, 0-2, 3-13 and ages 14-18. Following this comparison, it was determined that the foster care rates for ages 0-2 are very competitive with other counties and an increase is not recommended based on those comparisons. However, Kristen Fox-Berki is recommending a \$2 increase per diem for ages 3-13 and ages 14-18. The agency has experienced more challenging behaviors in the school-age population. In

addition, teens are more difficult to place and frequently present with challenging behaviors. By increasing the per diem rate for ages 3-18 by \$2, the agency will increase the foster care maintenance amount for LCCS homes by approximately \$60,000 per year. This figure is based on the current number of children in custody, and does not include any special board rates LCCS may approve due to exceptional needs of a child, such as multiple doctors/mental health appointments, increased transportation costs due to special needs, etc.

Discussion held regarding children ages 0-2. In addition to the per diem, the agency also pays day care costs and may provide a higher 'special' per diem based on the individual special needs of the child.

MOTION: It was moved by Jeremy Cordes, seconded by Mallory Santiago to approve an increase of \$2.00 for the foster care per diem rate for ages 3-13 and ages 14-18, with special consideration for any special board rates LCCS may approve due to exceptional needs of a child, effective January 1, 2021. Motion carried.

Kinship Rates: Beginning in August 2020, with Board approval, LCCS provides a \$300.00 per month, per child subsidy for kinship caregivers; an annual agency cost of approximately \$1,000,000.00 per year.

Adoption Rates: The State of Ohio increased the Adoptions Rates. The maximum amount is now \$1,162.00 (increased from \$1045.00).

Additional Discussion Topics:

Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Update

Bethany Lewis is the new director for the CAC. The Nord Center also has a new Executive Director. Kristen Fox-Berki attended the first multi-disciplinary team meeting hosted by the CAC; they will be held quarterly. The team is hoping to improve on collaboration and services. LCCS previously budgeted \$250,000.00 per year for 2020, but the funds were not used. Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with the revised budget, adjusting this line item to \$0. There is a new direction with the CAC, and a lot of work to be done. The new team will continue to meet quarterly (next meeting in January 2021) and Kristen Fox-Berki will keep the Board informed.

Personnel Plan

The Board approved the personnel plan in April including 6 new positions. Kristen Fox-Berki filled two of the 6 positions, IL Caseworker and Director of Social Service Programs, and held off on posting the additional four positions to ensure the levy passed. Now that the levy has passed, Kristen Fox-Berki would like to move forward with filling the additional four positions previously approved by the Board. Those positions include a caseworker for the FBC department, an administrative assistant, Direct Services Supervisor and Director of CQI and Special Programs. These positions were included in the 2020 budget as well as the 5-year projected budget. As the positions were not filled in 2020 and those funds were not used, Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with the revised 2020 budget based on the millage of the new levy and excluding those positions. The Board

agrees to move forward with posting and filling the four positions listed above. Melissa Fischer requests Kristen Fox-Berki to include the new positions in the monthly Executive Director Report under Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves for the upcoming months. Melissa Fischer is also asking that Kristen Fox-Berki provide the Board with an updated organizational chart for the December Board meeting.

Over-hires

Kristen Fox-Berki would like to continue with hiring over-hires. This is a practice the agency has utilized for several years, then temporarily suspended when referrals decreased substantially in March due to the pandemic. In July 2020, referrals increased, and caseloads are now high. Over-hires have proven helpful as a bridge to fill caseworker vacancies, and allows a new hire that has already received the required training to step into a vacant position. There are three over-hires included in the 2021 budget, previously approved by the Board. The Board agrees to resume with hiring 3 over-hire caseworker positions.

Fiscal Audit

The agency recently received a fiscal audit. Per Policy 6.7 The Executive Director will be required to present any Federal, State, or Local fiscal audit performed on the agency for review by the board within 30 days of completion of the audit report. On October 22, 2020, the agency was notified that “based on a review of the audit, there were no questioned costs or costs recommended for disallowance.” The audit reported no administrative findings, no uncorrected previous year findings and no management letter recommendations related to programs passed through ODJFS. Kristen Fox-Berki commended the fiscal department on a job well done.

Foster Care Review

A Foster Care record review was completed, and the exit interview was held earlier this month. A total of 8 records were reviewed. There were 2 areas requiring a corrective action plan; neither involved child safety. The first was related to an untimely pre-service training stipend payment to foster parents; required within 120 days of completing the training. The second was related to documenting competencies that foster parents received in their pre-service training in SACWIS. As a result of this review, changes were made to the tracking system for payments and competencies to ensure compliance in the future.

FBC Holiday Event

Due to the pandemic, the annual FBC holiday party will be different this year. Rather than an in-person event, the agency will be hosting a Holiday Drive-Thru event at the Collection Center in Elyria on Sunday, December 6, 2020. The collection center will be decorated for foster and kinship families to drive through and collect gifts, craft kits and children will be able to waive to Santa. Discussion held.

Strategic Plan

The Board would like to be involved in the development of the organizational and/or operational goals of the next strategic plan to give them a better understanding of the reason for the goals presented. Policy 8.2 Strategic Plan

Update is scheduled for review in January 2021. Further discussion regarding the next strategic plan will be held at the January Board meeting.

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

Executive Session was held following Agenda Item II.

MOTION: It was moved by Jeremy Cordes, seconded by Tracy Green 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, Melissa Fischer, Kenneth Glynn, Tracy Green and Mallory Santiago were present.

MOTION: It was moved by Jeremy Cordes, seconded by Kenneth Glynn to approve the settlement presented in Executive Session. Motion carried.

VI. New Business

A. New Items for Discussion and Approval

None.

VII. Announcements

None.

VIII. Adjourn

MOTION: It was moved by Mallory Santiago, seconded by Kenneth Glynn to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:03 p.m. Motion carried.

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

Minutes Prepared by:
Kimberly Kassam, Administrative Supervisor

Approved by:
Melissa Fischer, LCCS Board Chair