

Lorain County Children Services

Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 17, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. via Phone Conference

I. Call to Order

Chair Melissa Fischer called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. via phone conference. Public can participate by dialing (614) 721-2972, Conference ID# 346 772 099#.

A. Roll Call

Present: Jeremy Cordes, Melissa Fischer, Kenneth Glynn, Tracy Green
Excused: Mallory Santiago
Also Present: Kristen Fox-Berki, Executive Director

B. Review and Approve Agenda

Chair Melissa Fischer asked if there were any additions or changes to the Agenda submitted for the June 17, 2020 Board Meeting. No additions or changes made.

MOTION: It was moved by Tracy Green, seconded by Kenneth Glynn to approve the Agenda for the June 17, 2020 Board Meeting. Motion carried.

C. Review and Approve Minutes

Chair Melissa Fischer asked if there were any additions or changes to the Minutes submitted for the May 20, 2020 Board Meeting. No additions or changes made.

MOTION: It was moved by Kenneth Glynn, seconded by Tracy Green 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

- **Policy 4.1 Staffing Table**

This agenda item is moved to Agenda Item IV. Executive Director's Report.

B. Unresolved Action Items

- **Integrated Services Partnership (ISP)**

ISP remains an ongoing discussion for the Board. The ISP Executives agreed that LCCS could use the MSY funding for our contribution to the ISP funding and revised the ISP MOU for FY2020. Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a draft copy. Kristen Fox-Berki summarized the highlighted changes:

- Merging the Lorain County Board of Mental Health (LCBMH) with the Lorain County Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ADAS) Board. The Board is now known as the Mental Health, Addition and Recovery Services (MHARS) Board of Lorain County.

- Page 6, Section 3.4.1- LCCS shall make its full contribution by using a combination of Multi System Youth Funds (MSY) and flexible local dollars. Sections A & B reflect changes to the invoice process due to moneys received on a reimbursement basis.
- Page 7, Section 3.5.5 pertains to ensuring the MSY reimbursable funds are used for children in residential care and outlines the services MSY funds will not cover.

As the ISP MOU has not been approved or finalized by the ISP Executives, the Board will table the vote to ratify the MOU until the July Board meeting.

To maintain transparency, the Board is requesting a report in the upcoming months that can demonstrate a level of specificity of how funds are being used. Kristen Fox-Berki shared with the Board that most of the MSY funds will be used for residential care, and ISP will provide the Board with an end of the year comprehensive report. Kristen Fox-Berki will continue her discussion with the ISP Executives at their August meeting regarding the formula for our contribution for 2021.

- **Levy Discussion**

Kristen Fox-Berki, along with Tracy Green, Melissa Fischer, Jeremy Cordes, Kenneth Glynn, Patti Jo Burtnett and Jessica Basinski, met with the Commissioners to discuss the levy. Kristen Fox-Berki thanked everyone that participated for their support. The meeting was positive and well-received by the Commissioners. Kristen Fox-Berki noted that she appreciated some of the questions they had and the suggestions they shared. Tracy Green commended Kristen Fox-Berki for a job well done preparing and presenting on behalf of children services. The official presentation to the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for June 24th. Fox-Berki will be giving a PowerPoint presentation.

Staff will have some opportunities to be a part of the levy by helping with yard signs, postcards and mailers. The campaign will be challenging due to the pandemic. Discussion held regarding Candidates nights. Kristen Fox-Berki met with the Morning Journal. They do not provide endorsements.

Patti Jo Burtnett provided the Board with a brief summary of Friends of Children Services and our campaign strategy. The levy cannot be funded by taxpayer dollars. Instead, levy funds are raised through the Friends of Children Services political action committee. Both the committee and the campaign are separate from the agency. Friends of Children Services has approximately \$22,000 to spend on the campaign. Print and digital ads will be placed in the Chronicle Telegram and the Morning Journal, and a digital ad through loraincounty.com. We will concentrate on mailings to voters that have consistently voted for us, as well as voters requesting an absentee ballot. We do not have a large volunteer group and instead rely on voting history of the public. Social media will also play a big role in advertisement, including the Friends of Children Services Facebook page. The art and images we used in our past campaign will be carried forward to our current campaign.

- **Board Officers**

A few Board members have indicated the possibility of committing to the Board Chair position beginning in January 2021. Melissa Fischer will continue her role as Board Chair for the remainder of 2020.

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 05/31/2020.

Discussion topics:

- The Fund balance decreased for the month of May, mainly as a result of the pandemic. The main contributions to the decrease included:
 - Direct Services to Children line item due to a decrease in daycare costs
 - Gas Mileage Reimbursement
 - Salaries line item due to a decrease in overtime.

B. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves

No new hires for May 2020.

Leaves for May 2020:

Brigid Burke, Direct Services Caseworker, 5/18/20

C. Policy 7.14 Client Grievance

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Ombudsman Quarterly Board Report to the Board for the period of March 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020 including Grievances Filed, Public Complaints, Online Meetings, Telephone Calls, Emails, Walk-ins, New Requests for Ombudsman Services and Client Resolution Descriptions. Kristen Fox-Berki provided a summary to the Board regarding the resolved and pending situations. Discussion held.

D. Policy 5.14 Annual Management Plan

Kristen Fox-Berki provided a copy and reviewed the 2020-2021 Management Plan with the Board. The management team identified 6 high level issues to focus on:

- Implement Family First Act
- Strategic Plan Development for 2021-2023
- Passing the Levy
- Prioritize permanency for cases delayed by pandemic
- Satisfaction and Feedback Surveys
- Spend 100% of State Allocations SFY2021

The Independent Living (IL) Caseworker position has been filled. Kristen Fox-Berki posted and interviewed for the Director of Social Services position and is working on a decision. The Director of Quality Improvement and Special Projects position is delayed until the levy is resolved. Discussion held.

Additional Topics for the Executive Director's Report:

Policy 4.1 Staffing Table

Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with and reviewed the updated organizational chart incorporating the new positions previously approved by the Board and adding names of individual staff members. Discussion held.

Kinship Subsidy

The agency is ready to implement the kinship subsidy. Kristen Fox-Berki provided the Board with a draft letter to kinship caregivers with a frequently asked questions and answers attached. The Board felt it was well-written and achieved what the Board wanted to represent. With the Board's approval, the agency will begin implementation. Kristen Fox-Berki clarified that the subsidy will not impact the caregiver's benefits through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS).

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)

Agency staff have done a great deal of preparation for the upcoming CFSR review, which has been postponed to October. They will review 9 of our cases. The State is on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) due to the fed's concerns regarding practices from Ohio. We have updated procedures/forms and discussed the importance of documentation with staff.

There is a State foster care record review scheduled for July 20, 2020.

COVID-19 Update

In-person visitation between parents and children was temporarily suspended in March. Instead, visits were held virtually through FaceTime and Skype. In-person visits resumed on June 1, 2020 with safety precautions including the completion of a health assessment, requiring masks and instructing parents to wash their hands before the visit.

On June 8, 2020 we welcomed back our administrative assistants and fiscal staff. Safety measures taken include an increased cleaning through JSI and signage reminders to wear masks, cover coughs and sneezes and maintain social distance. We also made some changes to seating arrangements for some staff to maintain social distance. At the end of the month, supervisors will also return. Caseworkers will continue to work remotely.

Cultural Diversity

Management and staff are focusing on racial disparity in child welfare. We are aware of the racial disproportionality in child welfare and are recommitting ourselves as an agency and management team to look at our practices and data to make a difference at the agency. Kristen Fox-Berki is excited to bring change. The first step is to identify the changes that need to be made. The Board commended Kristen on this initiative and recognizing the need for change.

Parking

The parking structure repairs continue; things are going well, and a lot of progress has been made. It is still on schedule to be completed by mid-July.

Policy 4.1 states “The Board will approve the agency position classification specifications, staffing table and applicable pay-scale policies for all non-bargaining staff as developed and presented by the Executive Director in April annually for the new budget year. All revisions and amendments must be approved by the Board prior to enacting any of the revised or amended policies.”

The Board previously reviewed the classification specifications and pay-scale for non-bargaining staff at the April Board meeting.

MOTION: It was moved by Kenneth Glynn, seconded by Jeremy Cordes to approve the Staffing Table and Management Plan presented to the Board. Motion carried.

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

MOTION: It was moved by Tracy Green, seconded by Jeremy Cordes 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 and Tracy Green were present. Mallory Santiago was excused.

VI. New Business
A. New Items for Discussion & Approval

None.

VII. Announcements

None.

VIII. Adjourn

MOTION: It was moved by Jeremy Cordes, seconded by Tracy Green to adjourn the Board meeting at 6:26 p.m. Motion carried.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Minutes Prepared by:
Kimberly Kassam, Administrative Supervisor

Approved by:
Melissa Fischer, LCCS Board Chair