

Lorain County Children Services

Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 18, 2025 @ 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, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Jim Miller, Tamara Newton, Martin O'Donnell, Thomas Patrick, Kim Withrow

Excused: Kenneth Glynn

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 June 18, 2025, 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 May 21, 2025, Board meeting. Hearing none, the minutes are approved as distributed.

II. Public Comment

Board Chair Jim Miller asked if any members of the public were present and requesting to address the Board. Public comment was provided by former employee, Saquoia Byrd.

III. Old Business

A. Tabled Items

1. Policy 4.1 Pay Scale- Non-Bargaining

Tabled until union negotiations are completed.

B. Unresolved Action Items

None.

IV. Executive Director's Report

A. Policy 4.6 New Hires/Leaves

New Hires for the month of May:

1. Kenni Tolliver, DS Caseworker 5/19/25
2. Autumn Fisher, DS Caseworker 5/19/25

Leaves for the month of May:

1. Cheryl Rain, DS Caseworker 5/2/25
2. Christina Turcola, DS Manager 5/7/25
3. Tee Taylor, DS Caseworker 5/16/25

4. Saquoia Byrd, DS Caseworker 5/28/25
5. Sara Simpson, DS Caseworker 5/30/25

B. Policy 5.6 Executive Director Contract

The Board was provided with a copy of the current Employment Contract for June 21, 2023 to November 10, 2025 for Executive Director, Kristen Fox-Berki. Board Chair Jim Miller appointed three (3) members of the Board to review the contract and conduct a performance review. Board committee members include Roberto Davila, Rania Assily and Andrew Lipian.

C. Policy 5.12 Executive Director Performance

See Agenda Item IV.B, Policy 5.6 Executive Director Contract.

D. Visitation Center

The remainder of the work will need to be done in a certain order, i.e. carpeting before furniture etc. Williams Brothers Builders hired a roofer that began repairing the leaks on the roof, but he fell from a ladder at another job site and requires surgery. The builders are looking for another roofer to complete the work, and the roof repairs will be back on track soon. It will be our responsibility to pay the cost for the repairs to fix the leaks. Kristen Fox-Berki presented a tentative timeline to the architect and Williams Brothers, with the hope that we would be opening the Connections Center by the beginning of August; we are waiting to hear back. The furniture is scheduled for delivery the week of July 28, 2025.

The parking lot needs will need to be repaired or replaced. This is currently on hold. There was an accumulation of water that was not draining properly. The County Engineer is investigating; we are waiting to hear back.

E. LCCS Board Subcommittee Re: Foster Care Recruitment

An event was held this month at the LCCC Lorain Learning Center at City Center. A presentation was provided by three (3) emancipated youth. They responded to a series of questions by Foster Care Recruitment Coordinator Judith Padua, as well as audience members. The youth did a great job explaining what it's like to be in foster care. They were articulate and honest about their experiences. Their future ambitions are service oriented, wanting to help others. There were also a few representatives present from Tri-C. Collaborating with local community colleges creates an opportunity to link young teens to community college programs to help them navigate the job market. There was also mention of the possibility of connecting the social work program for Tri-C to help recruit future caseworkers.

Another upcoming event is the Lorain International Festival on June 27-29, 2025.

Kristen Fox-Berki announced that the Independent Living (IL) staff will give a presentation about IL youth, ages 14-21 at the July 16, 2025, Board meeting and share more about the services they provide. We will also invite two or three youth to share their experiences. If the Board members have specific questions or topics they would like to hear more about, please email Kristen Fox-Berki before the next meeting.

The annual Princess Ball will be held on October 19, 2025, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the New Russia Township Lodge. Tickets are \$15.00 per person. Flyers, as

well as information about the VIP experience and sponsorship opportunities were provided to the Board to share with friends, family and the community.

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)*

MOTION: It was moved by Roberto Davila, seconded by Dan Gross to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Motion carried.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Rania Assily, Roberto Davila, Christina Doran, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Jim Miller, Tamara Newton, Martin O'Donnell, Thomas Patrick, Kim Withrow
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

Kristen Fox-Berki, APA Christine Mendoza and Human Resources Manager Amanda Pittner were asked to meet with the Board for Executive Session.

VIII. Announcements

None.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION: It was moved by Martin Heberling, seconded by Tamara Newton to adjourn the Board meeting at 5:43 p.m. Motion carried.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes:	Lee Armbruster, Rania Assily, Roberto Davila, Christina Doran, Dan Gross, Martin Heberling, Andrew Lipian, Jim Miller, Tamara Newton, Martin O'Donnell, Thomas Patrick, Kim Withrow
Nays:	None- 0
Abstentions:	None- 0

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 16, 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