

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: April 8, 2019

Members Present: Vice Chair Renee Bessick, Treasurer Jason Murray, Secretary Dr. Michelle Kowalski, Jim Kulig, Pam Siegenthaler, Pat Heydinger, Rick Grega, Nicole Blakley

Members Excused: Chair Deanna West-Torrence

Members Absent:

Others Present: Patty Harrelson, Nikki Harless, Chris Zuercher, Kevin Goshe, Recording Secretary Amy Gosser, Marsha Coleman, Tim Harless, Edith Gilliland, Nicole Foulks, Brandi Berry, Shelly Starrett, Brychelle Isaac

Others Absent:

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, April 8, 2019, in the Board Conference Room at Richland County Children Services. Vice Chair Bessick called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. of Board members present and representing a quorum.

AGENDA

On a motion by Siegenthaler, seconded by Murray, the Board unanimously approved the proposed agenda by all Board members in attendance.

INTRODUCTIONS

New Board member Nicole Blakley introduced herself. She is married and has five children, two of whom were adopted. Blakley graduated from Mount Vernon Nazarene University with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. She served 22 years in the military and also used to be the director of Crossroads City Center in Mansfield. Blakley is currently a member of Crossroads Church and volunteers at numerous organizations throughout Richland County. The other Board members and RCCS staff present introduced themselves and welcomed Blakley to the Board.

MINUTES

On a motion by Siegenthaler, seconded by Grega, the Board unanimously approved the March 11, 2019 Board meeting minutes.

MINI-TRAINING

RCCS Program Manager Nicole Foulks introduced Brandi Berry (RCCS START supervisor), Shelly Starrett (RCCS START caseworker), and Brychelle Isaac (peer mentor from Family Life Counseling). START stands for Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma. There are currently 32 counties in Ohio that have implemented the START program, and RCCS began the process in April 2017. This is a program that is designed to connect child welfare and behavioral health entities in order to help addicted parents achieve recovery and keep their children at home whenever it is safe and possible. The goals of Ohio START are to increase the number of children remaining safely at home and to reduce the recurrence of child treatment for trauma by improving their safety and well-being. By improving family stability and self-sufficiency, the hope is to help children obtain permanency. RCCS is currently focusing on cases with children who are born addicted. The START worker and peer mentor approach the family and find out if they are interested in working with us as part of the START program to engage in drug treatment. Once the parent agrees, our goal is to get the parent(s) into treatment within two days. We introduce them to recovery support meetings (A.A., etc.) and help them connect with local resources. Women in the START program in Kentucky nearly doubled their sobriety rate (66% vs. 37%). For every dollar spent on KY START, \$2.22 is saved in offset foster care costs. At case closure, over 75% of START kids in Kentucky remained with or were reunified with their parent(s). As soon as we meet with the family and they accept admittance into the program, both the START worker and the peer mentor begin working with them immediately. To be admitted to the program, the individual must have substance abuse that is somewhat prevalent in their life and they must be willing to engage in treatment (but treatment cannot be court-ordered). The main difference between typical caseworkers and START workers is that the START worker and peer mentor go out to the home much more frequently (at least once a week versus once a month). Harrelson said that part of the goal of the START program locally is to help our workers shift their cultural perception of addicted individuals. It can be hard for workers to maintain their belief that clients can change for the better. A successful outcome for a START case would be clean and sober parents who are able to safely care for their children in their own home. Foulks, Berry, Isaac and Starrett left the meeting at this point (4:07 p.m.). Kulig proposed that the S&P Committee review outcomes of the START program moving forward once more data becomes available, and Harrelson agreed to this course of action.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Report and Comments

Harrelson reported on the upcoming May 21st luncheon. This is the inaugural presentation of the Ron D. Spon Award for Service to Children, and the honorees will be Crossroads Church, Berean Baptist Church, and the New Store. This is a surprise to both Spon and the honorees, so Harrelson asked everyone present to keep the event a secret for now.

Siegenthaler asked if the monthly breakfast meetings with Representative Mark Romanchuk have been helpful. At the last breakfast meeting, Romanchuk asked Harrelson to assist him on Wednesday (4/10/19) in Columbus. The Finance Committee for Health and Family Services (of which Romanchuk is a member) asked Harrelson to testify regarding the retention of funding in the state budget which was supposedly allocated for child welfare. Harrelson

stated that they are trying to obtain legislation that honors the distribution of Title IV-E money up-front if Protect OH goes away. Harrelson met with Tim Harless and Kevin Goshe to discuss the potential loss of Protect OH. Two huge issues that this may raise would be loss of the ability to use Direct Parental Placements and the Kinship Legal component. There are 37 different demonstration projects across the country that are all run differently. Supposedly the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) is the answer, but the money is nowhere near the same amount. FFPSA would also require placement facilities to have a trauma-focus and to become accredited, in addition to having a nurse on staff. There is not a lot of incentive for these entities to jump through the hoops necessary in becoming accredited, however, because it really only affects children services agencies (in that we lose federal funding). We may need to have a person on staff who can provide crisis management on a 24-hour basis to foster parents. When the Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) begin, Teaching Homes will no longer be able to function unless they are willing to transition to a full-time therapeutic foster home. The fear is that there will be so many homes open in this model that we will not have enough kids to sustain their lifestyle without the foster parents having to seek supplemental income.

On a motion by Grega, seconded by Kulig, the Board unanimously accepted the Executive Director's report.

Executive Committee Report

No report at this time.

Finance Director Report

March Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the March 2019 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$6,444,089.10, \$615,088.80 in revenue, and \$970,493.99 in expenses with an ending balance of \$6,088,683.91. The ending fund balance reflects 56.8% or 6.8 months of the 2019 budget.

We are up to \$1,469,484.15 for the year in revenue, which is 9.3% lower than budgeted. This should be corrected when we receive our first levy payment in April. We started receiving some foster care maintenance (FCM) reimbursements. Our final TPP replacement payment was received in the amount of \$32,649.46, so that funding source is now gone. Goshe does not have any concerns on the expenditure side.

On a motion by Murray, seconded by Kowalski, the Board unanimously accepted the March 2019 Final Financial Report.

Finance Committee Report

No report at this time.

Levy Committee Report

No report at this time.

Personnel Committee Report

No report at this time.

Services and Program Report

No report at this time. The next meeting will be in May.

BILLS

Payment of Agency Bills - On a motion by Heydinger, seconded by Siegenthaler, the Board unanimously approved payment by signature of the Agency bills.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board did not convene an Executive Session on this date.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Grega, seconded by Murray, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Renee Bessick, Vice Chair

Amy Gosser, Recording Secretary