

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: May 10, 2021

Members Present*: Chair Jim Kulig, Vice Chair Pat Heydinger, Treasurer Jason Murray, Secretary Deanna West-Torrence, Nicole Blakley, Jim Nicholson, Bill Hope, Scott Gatchall

Members Excused: Renee Bessick

Members Absent:

Others Present: Nikki Harless, Kevin Goshe, Nicole Foulks, Sarah Soliday, Chris Zuercher, Recording Secretary Amy Hackedorn

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, May 10, 2021, in the Fuddy Training & Learning Center at Richland County Children Services. Chair Kulig called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m. of Board members present (both in person and by phone) and representing a quorum. *Please note that RCCS is following Federal and State guidance related to social distancing in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and conducted this meeting via teleconference as authorized by temporary changes to the Open Meeting law in Ohio**.

**Update: The Open Meetings Act exception allowing public bodies in Ohio to hold virtual meetings and hearings has been extended until at least July 1, 2021 through the passage of House Bill 404. The exception was originally set to expire in December of 2020 under House Bill 197. The General Assembly passed H.B. 404 as an emergency measure, and it became effective on 11.22.2020 upon Governor Mike DeWine's signature. The following rules will continue to govern virtual public meetings:

"The details:

- *Members attending the meeting through the body's chosen electronic method count as present and count toward a quorum. They are permitted to vote on any issues that come before the body.*
- *Any resolution, rule or other formal action taken or adopted by the public body during such a session will have the same effect as one taken during an in-person meeting.*
- *The public body is required to give notice of the meeting to the media and other parties requiring notice at least 24 hours before it takes place. In an emergency situation, the public body must give notice as soon as practical.*
- *Members of the public must be provided access to the public body's discussions and deliberations conducted via the electronic method to the same extent that they would get from attending in person. That includes the ability for the viewer/listener to hear every member participating in person or electronically. Examples of electronic methods that afford public access (and that are cited in the law) include live-streaming via the internet; local radio, television, cable or public access channels; and calling in to a teleconference.*
- *For a public hearing, the electronic method the public body uses for the meeting must be widely available to the public and must permit the public to converse with witnesses and receive documentary testimony and physical evidence." - Ohio Attorney General's website*

AGENDA

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

MINUTES

On a motion by Murray, seconded by Heydinger, the Board unanimously approved the April 12, 2021 regular Board meeting minutes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Report and Comments

Harless commented on her April Board report. She stated that the Agency will encounter a few challenges this year. Our health insurance situation is not getting any better. We are currently deficit more than \$250,000 even though we have deposited \$500,000+ since joining our own consortium in 2017, and our rates have increased by double digits every year. We may need to look at other options moving forward. The Family First Prevention Services Act is going to go into effect October 2021, so we will have additional requirements with which we will need to comply. Teresa Alt from Youth & Family Council recently received a grant pertaining to this. The QRTP (Qualified Residential Treatment Program) involves children in residential placements. Under this program, each child would be assessed to find their appropriate treatment level according to a state tool. Our placement costs may go up as a result, because if a child is not assessed at a higher level initially or the facility did not get certified, this placement might not be reimbursable through IV-E funds. Two new caseworkers will be starting this month, and two additional casework applicants have expressed interest as well.

On a motion by West-Torrence, seconded by Hope, the Board unanimously accepted the Executive Director's report.

Executive Committee Report

Executive Director's Evaluation

Kulig thanked the other members of the Executive Committee along with the Executive Director for their participation in the evaluation process over the last few months. All of Harless' ratings throughout the entire evaluation were in the 'Meets Expectations' or 'Exceeds Expectations' categories. There were no items identified as 'Does Not Meet Expectations.' The evaluation process was initiated several years ago in order to encourage a dialogue between the Executive Director and the Board on nine of the key points essential to the Executive Director's job functions. Consensus was to have this discussion in an open Board session, as opposed to moving into Executive Session. Harless was asked to comment on her challenges and major accomplishments over the past year. One of the challenges/accomplishments was filling several high-profile positions within the Agency. We created incentives to try to improve staff recruitment and retention, including reimplementing the tuition reimbursement program

and adding Christmas Eve as a holiday. An ongoing challenge has been securing an off-site visitation area. The primary issue facing the Agency in 2020 was the pandemic, although we were still able to function and work to keep children safe. We also received significant public criticism for trying to give monetary incentives to our staff, but we were able to come to a resolution that satisfied both our staff and local elected officials. Heydinger believes that the Agency is in a good position to move forward steadfast toward further success in the future. West-Torrence commented that the Board may need to take another look at staff compensation. Murray said that his expectation was that Harless would keep the ship afloat during the pandemic, and Harless exceeded his expectations in that regard. She not only kept it afloat, but also moved the Agency forward. Kulig stated that the Committee did not come up with any additional recommendations on how the evaluation process should be amended prior to the next evaluation period. The Executive Committee will resume meeting in-person in June. Nikki is currently under a 3-year contract and is 1.5 years into this. Harless will email her employment contract to the Executive Committee to discuss at an upcoming meeting.

Finance Director Report

April Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the April 2021 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$5,880,381.72, \$3,120,348.03 in revenue, and \$783,652.94 in expenses with an ending balance of \$8,217,076.81. The ending fund balance reflects 70.9% or 8.5 months of the 2021 budget.

For revenue we are up to \$4,397,073.60 total so far in 2021, which is 5.4% higher than budgeted. We received our quarterly advance for State Child Protection Allocation (SCPA). We also received an unexpected rebate from the Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation in the amount of \$36,940.68. All expense line items were lower than budgeted except for the Purchased Services line (which is still high due to our annual contribution to the Youth & Family Council), but this percentage will continue to decline throughout the year. We agreed on a dollar amount of \$112,000 every year, and last year when the state finalized the budget they made it a requirement that we share 10% of whatever they give us funding-wise with JFS.

On a motion by West-Torrence, seconded by Murray, the Board unanimously accepted the April 2021 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.

BILLS

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

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by West-Torrence, seconded by Hope, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jim Kulig, RCCS Board Chair

Amy Hackedorn, Recording Secretary