

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: June 14, 2021

Members Present*: Chair Jim Kulig, Vice Chair Pat Heydinger, Secretary Deanna West-Torrence, Nicole Blakley, Jim Nicholson, Bill Hope, Renee Bessick

Members Excused: Treasurer Jason Murray, Scott Gatchall

Members Absent:

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

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, June 14, 2021, in the Fuddy Training & Learning Center at Richland County Children Services. Chair Kulig called the meeting to order at 3:34 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 West-Torrence, the Board unanimously approved the proposed agenda by all Board members in attendance.

MINUTES

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Heydinger, the Board unanimously approved the May 10, 2021 regular Board meeting minutes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Report and Comments

Harless commented on her meeting with Tammy Robertson from Avita on 5.27.2021. Robertson used to work at Ohio Health and was instrumental in creating the forensic center there. She still wants to help create a CAC (Child Advocacy Center) in Richland County even though she is now at Avita, but she will need to get local law enforcement entities on board. Law enforcement has not been utilizing the forensic center at Ohio Health because they are using their own space and equipment to conduct these interviews. The Prosecutor's office is already in favor of the creation of a CAC, but in order for this to work there needs to be buy-in from every involved entity. Kulig thanked Harless for providing the Board with an update on this issue. Harless stated that May was National Foster Care Month. The Agency paid to have foster home recruitment billboards placed up around the community. One of the Richland County Commissioners (Cliff Mears) gave an interview regarding this topic, and we are very grateful to him for doing so. Harless also mentioned the health insurance situation we are dealing with. She contacted Commissioner Mears about the possibility of our Agency rejoining the county insurance plan. They are currently with CEBCO (the County Employee Benefits Consortium of Ohio). However, the county will not be able to give us a final answer on this issue until September, and we need to give our insurance carrier notice of cancellation by June 30th. The Commissioners will review what the county rates would be in 2022 with and without our agency included. Richland Newhope was previously with Jefferson Health Plan (our current carrier) and they have already made the decision to switch to a new carrier in 2022 since they encountered many of the same issues that we have faced. Harless will provide additional updates at the July Board meeting.

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

Executive Committee Report

Executive Director's Contract/Salary

The Executive Committee met today (6.14.2021) at 2:30 p.m. The only agenda item was discussion of any potential salary adjustment for Executive Director Nikki Harless per the clause in her employment contract. That clause states that the performance of the Executive Director will be assessed annually, and that his/her salary may be adjusted upon completion

of the assessment. The overall performance evaluation for Harless was completed and discussed at the May Board meeting. Following their meeting earlier today, the Executive Committee is prepared to recommend the approval of a 3% salary increase for Executive Director Nikki Harless that will be effective July 1, 2021. This is in the context of Harless not receiving a wage increase in the 1.5 years since she was first appointed Executive Director in January of 2020. Kulig was tasked with contacting Commissioner Cliff Mears as a professional courtesy in order to make him aware of our decision, and he will inform Commissioner Mears that any salary increases will be proposed by January 31st each year moving forward. The delay this year was simply due to COVID-19 meeting restrictions hampering the ability of the Executive Committee to conduct business in-person. West-Torrence stated that the Executive Committee would like to acknowledge the work done by Harless over the past year. Heydinger stated that the Executive Committee took into account that the 3% was in line with what other RCCS staff members received already in January of 2021.

On a motion by Nicholson, West-Torrence, the Board unanimously accepted the proposal from the Executive Committee of a 3% salary increase for RCCS Executive Director Nikki Harless effective 7.1.2021 by roll call vote and signature.

Finance Director Report

May Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the May 2021 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$8,217,076.81, \$391,980.30 in revenue, and \$820,598.82 in expenses with an ending balance of \$7,788,458.29. The ending fund balance reflects 67.2% or 8.0 months of the 2021 budget.

Revenue for the year exceeds our budget by 0.5%. We received a small real estate tax settlement for mobile homes (in the amount of \$4,210.24) along with the normal quarterly reimbursements from ODJFS for independent living services, Title IV-B, Emergency Services Assistance Allocation (ESAA), and Medicaid. Expenses for the year are 4.7% lower than budgeted. All expense line items are lower than budgeted except for the Purchased Services line, which is still high due to the pooled fund contribution made at the beginning of 2021.

On a motion by Heydinger, seconded by Hope, the Board unanimously accepted the May 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. HR Manager Sarah Soliday is going to send an email to the Board Personnel Committee members in order to set up a meeting for review of the proposed 2021 Personnel Manual amendments.

Services and Program Report

No report at this time.

BILLS

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

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Bessick, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jim Kulig, RCCS Board Chair

Amy Hackedorn, Recording Secretary