

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2021

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

Members Excused: Treasurer Jason Murray

Members Absent:

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

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, December 13, 2021, in the Board Room at Richland County Children Services. Chair Kulig called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. of Board members present and representing a quorum.

As the first order of business, Kulig welcomed the newest Board member (Bennie Allen-Stanford) to the RCCS Board. Allen-Stanford explained that she enjoys getting involved with different projects in the community and is excited to join the RCCS Board in order to help make a difference. She works as an ICU nurse at Ohio State University Wexner Center down in Columbus. The Board members and RCCS staff present introduced themselves and welcomed Allen-Stanford to the RCCS Board. *Bessick arrived at this point in the meeting (3:36 p.m.).*

AGENDA

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

MINUTES

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by West-Torrence, the Board unanimously approved the November 8, 2021 regular Board meeting minutes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Report and Comments

Blakley commented on the 'Pie Party' that the Core Team hosted for staff. Harless explained that the Core Team is going to strive to do something memorable with staff approximately once a month or so moving forward to try to retain staff. Harless mentioned that we received

proposals from the same two entities we normally work with (the Harper Law Firm and Weldon, Huston & Keyser) for the Kin Legal contract. These will be reviewed and discussed further. The total for these two contracts has typically been \$60,000 per year. Staff completed the online survey, and the comments were positive overall. The Core Team will continue to evaluate potential changes that the Agency can make based on employee feedback. Harless also commented on her ongoing discussions with the Prosecutor's Office regarding child-positive drug tests. Richland County Prosecutor Gary Bishop has been working with Tony Tambasco (Director of the Mansfield Police Forensic Science Laboratory) to see what we need to do in order to make our oral drug testing swabs valid in court. They believe that we will need to use a second facility in order for the test to be admissible in a criminal court.

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

Executive Committee Report

2022 Board Meeting Schedule

The Board reviewed the schedule of anticipated Board meeting dates for 2022. These are scheduled for the second Monday of every month at 3:30 p.m. as per prior practice.

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Bessick, the Board unanimously approved the 2022 Board meeting schedule as presented.

Board Update

Kulig informed the full Board that West-Torrence has elected to resign from her seat on the RCCS Board. West-Torrence thanked the other Executive Committee members and Director Harless for their willingness to meet with her lately to discuss the reasons behind her resignation. West-Torrence stated that she has heard from several members of the African American community in Richland County about issues they have had with RCCS and its staff. After much consideration, she has elected to resign her position in order to distance herself from a RCCS 'leadership' position. She does not feel that she can remain unbiased and effectively initiate any necessary change at RCCS while serving on the Board. West-Torrence stated that RCCS also does not have enough black employees (and especially black caseworkers) to ensure a fair representation of the surrounding community. There have been two recent incidents West-Torrence is aware of which make it seem as though RCCS as a whole is not culturally competent. Hope asked if West-Torrence has heard of any cultural issues encountered by Hispanic or Caucasian clients of the Agency; West-Torrence stated that no one from any other racial demographic has approached her with any issues.

It is the role of the Board to make sure that there are policies and systems in place to make sure that every member of a community is represented fully. After much discussion, West-Torrence and the other members of the Executive Committee decided to take action to ensure that all RCCS employees are properly trained in cultural competency. RCCS used to have a Cultural Competency policy as part of its personnel manual, but this was deleted by the previous Executive Director (Patty Harrelson) several years ago. The Board bylaws allow for the creation of an Advisory Committee for purposes of reviewing the Cultural Competency policy and to serve as a resource for identifying other items that may be needed in order to ensure all citizens are fully represented.

On a motion by West-Torrence, seconded by Blakley, the Board unanimously agreed to the formation of an Advisory Committee for purposes of identifying policies and resources for ensuring cultural competency among staff and in dealing with clients and other community partners throughout Richland County. Members of the Advisory Committee will be determined by the full Board at a later date. West-Torrence expressed her willingness to serve on the Advisory Committee as a member of the general public.

Nominating Committee Report

Appointments/Reappointments:

Kulig stated that we will need to amend West-Torrence's Secretary position. The recommendation is that Jim Nicholson serve as Secretary of the RCCS Board in 2022.

On a motion by Kulig, seconded by Heydinger, the Board members present unanimously agreed to appoint Jim Nicholson as Secretary of the RCCS Board in 2022.

Potential Candidates:

Kulig stated that we will therefore need to identify additional candidates for the Board to fill the position being vacated by West-Torrence as of 12/31/2021. The Board members present agreed to defer nominating any potential candidates until the January 2022 meeting.

Finance Director Report

October Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the October 2021 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$8,543,285.95, \$1,630,186.45 in revenue, and \$852,980.92 in expenses with an ending balance of \$9,320,491.48. The ending fund balance reflects 80.4% or about 9.6 months of the 2021 budget.

Goshe stated that revenue for the year at the end of October was 12.7% higher than budgeted, primarily due to receipt of the first of two possible hold-harmless payments from the discontinuation of the Protect Ohio IV-E waiver project and from reimbursements received from JFS for the 2021 Child Welfare TANF contract and kinship-related expenses. Expenses for the year were 6.9% lower than budgeted at the end of October.

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously accepted the October 2021 Final Financial report.

November Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the November 2021 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$9,320,491.48, \$725,052.17 in revenue, and \$977,680.27 in expenses with an ending balance of \$9,067,863.38. The ending fund balance reflects 78.3% or about 9.4 months of the 2021 budget.

Goshe stated that revenue for the year was 10.7% higher than budgeted at the end of November. Some of the larger receipts during that month were reimbursements for costs

already incurred, such as the \$104,044.24 that the Agency received from ODJFS for our Multi-System Youth (MSY) expenditures, the \$135,205.74 that the Agency received from PCSAO for our recent expenditures related to the Ohio START program, and the \$116,827.49 that we received from the Federal IV-E program for recent placement costs. Our total expenses were 7.3% lower than budgeted at the end of November.

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Blakley, the Board unanimously accepted the November 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.

Hope recently learned that foster children and any other children living in the foster home are allowed to attend any private school in Ohio tuition-free as part of House Bill 110. HB 110 expanded the eligibility for EdChoice scholarships to foster children and any other student who resides in a certified foster home. HB 110 also expanded eligibility to children placed with a kinship caregiver and any other student who has “resided in the same household as such a child for at least forty-five consecutive days within the last calendar year.” Details are outlined in ORC Section 3310.033.

BILLS

Payment of Agency Bills - On a motion by Hope, seconded by West-Torrence, the Board unanimously approved payment by signature of the Agency bills.

Harless thanked both Kulig and West-Torrence for their years of service on the RCCS Board, in addition to their continued support of her as Executive Director. They have also both advocated strongly for RCCS staff through the years (by voting for wage adjustments, wage

increases, tuition reimbursement reinstatement, lump sum payments, etc.). Kulig and West-Torrence will each receive a plaque commemorating their years of service.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by West-Torrence, seconded by Kulig, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jim Kulig, RCCS Board Chair

Amy Hackedorn, Recording Secretary