

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: February 13, 2023

Members Present: Chair Pat Heydinger, Vice Chair Nicole Blakley, Treasurer Jason Murray, Secretary Jim Nicholson, Bill Hope, Judy Forney, Bennie Allen-Stanford, Mary Stentz

Members Excused: Scott Gatchall

Members Absent:

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

Others Absent: Nicole Foulks

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, February 13, 2023, in the Board Conference Room at Richland County Children Services. Heydinger called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. of Board members present and representing a quorum.

AGENDA

Heydinger stated that there is need to add approval of the 2023 Board Committee list to the agenda.

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

MINUTES

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously approved the January 9, 2023, regular Board meeting minutes as presented.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Blakley commented on the number of Valentine's Day cards that were received. There was a great response to this throughout the Richland County community. Harless informed the Board that RCCS Clinical Director Marsha Coleman will be retiring at the end of March this year. We are keeping many of her duties but redefining them under the new Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer position. Hope asked for clarification on AWOL (Absent Without Leave) children. Harless stated that the one who is currently AWOL ran away from his foster home and is hiding out somewhere until he turns 18 later this month. We enter these children into a nationwide database when they go AWOL, and the assigned caseworker looks for them daily. However, many of them are really good at hiding. These are almost always older teenagers who believe that they can take care of themselves without our Agency's assistance.

On a motion by Allen-Stanford, seconded by Stentz, the Board unanimously accepted the Executive Director's report.

Executive Committee Report

The Board Executive Committee members met immediately prior to the February Board meeting. Heydinger stated that their meeting was long but productive.

2023 Board Committee Members

Heydinger drew attention to the 2023 Committee assignments as distributed. The Board members present were asked to review this and vote for approval, barring any further discussion.

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Murray, the Board unanimously accepted the 2023 Board Committee lists as presented.

2022 Executive Director Evaluation Results

Heydinger explained the Executive Director evaluation process to the full Board. The Director first completes a self-evaluation. The Executive Committee then completes their own evaluation of the Director's previous year performance in a blind survey on the basis of numerous areas of competency. These areas include Leadership, Communication, Adaptability, Attitude and Problem-Solving Abilities; Planning and Development of Goals and Objectives; Program and Direct Services; Board Relationships; Personnel Management; Fiscal and Facility Management; Community Relations; and Child Advocacy. Heydinger stated that the entire Executive Committee was very pleased with the Director's performance in all areas throughout 2022. Harless did not receive "Does Not Meet Expectations" in any area. Nicholson felt that this was an easy evaluation for them since her performance was so exemplary in all facets. The Executive Committee will have a new contract drawn up for Director Harless for the next 2 years with a possibility to extend another year. Any salary increases will be decided closer to her anniversary date of July 1st. Hope asked if there is a possibility for a retire/rehire situation. Heydinger and Harless stated that this is a possibility, but that there haven't been any other cases of that occurring within child welfare locally. Heydinger thanked the Executive Committee members for all of their work throughout this process.

Finance Director Report

January Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the January 2023 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$8,918,282.60, \$211,757.83 in revenue, and \$889,220.06 in expenses with an ending balance of \$8,240,820.37. The ending fund balance reflects 61.2% or about 7.3 months of the 2023 budget.

Goshe stated that revenue for the year was 6.5% lower than budgeted. That is normal for this time of year, as this typically lags behind the budgeted amount until we receive our first real estate tax settlement. Expenses at the end of January were 1.7% lower than budgeted. Every expense line item was lower than budgeted for the month. Heydinger asked when the Board must take action on the levy renewal. Goshe would like to have a Budget & Finance Committee meeting in March. November of 2023 is the first opportunity that we will have to put this on the ballot. This would give us three opportunities to get the levy passed. Goshe will have resolutions drawn up to take to the Commissioners once the Board has met regarding this. Murray asked when we normally receive the first real estate tax payment. The bulk of this is typically received in April. Forney asked how much we receive from our tax levies. This has traditionally accounted for over 1/3 of our annual budget every year.

On a motion by Murray, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously accepted the January 2023 Final Financial Report.

Resolution 02-13-23-01: Authorization to Sign Documents

Resolution 02-13-23-01 was proposed for purposes of authorizing specific agency staff to perform the various functions necessary to process payroll, pay bills, and be the point of contact to the Auditor's office. These authorizations must be approved annually by the RCCS Board.

On a motion by Murray, seconded by Hope, the Board members present unanimously approved Resolution 02-13-23-01.

Youth & Family Council Overview

Goshe explained that the Youth & Family Council here in Richland County was the first of its kind in the state of Ohio, and so the state used ours as a model for others statewide. Ours has been in place since 1990. As part of our participation in the Council, the Agency contributes to the flexible funding pool. Other funding comes from Richland Newhope, Richland Public Health, the Mental Health & Recovery Services Board, Richland County JFS, and Richland County Juvenile Court. There are many contracts that are funded by the pooled fund account: the Newborn Home Visits Pack N Play Program at Richland Public Health, therapeutic mentoring at CACY, respite services through NECIC staffing, camp fees for Camp Nuhop. Lyft services for select Richland County residents, etc. Harless stated that other entities often come to these meetings to discuss their organizations. One goal of the Youth & Family Council recently was to reduce child fatalities due to co-sleeping. To meet that goal, the Council paid for visiting nurses to go out into homes, paid for a media campaign to draw attention to this issue, and provided free pack-n-play units to families so that there is someplace safe for their baby to sleep. Whomever the Administrative Agency is (currently JFS), they are who employs the Director of Youth & Family Council. Since the Commissioners are over JFS, that means they are in charge of hiring this person. The Youth & Family Council Finance Committee chooses from different proposals presented by various community organizations. These organizations request funds from the Council for programs and services that they will provide for the betterment of some issue within Richland County. RCCS contributes \$112,000 from Agency funds plus another 10% required by the state of Ohio. Mandated members of the Council include 3 individuals not employed by an agency and who have received services, the Director of the Mental Health Board, the Health Commissioner, the JFS Director, the RCCS Director, Superintendent of the City/Exempted Village, a school superintendent, a representative from the Board of Commissioners, a representative of the local Head Start entity, and a representative of an organization who provides services within the community. Harless stated that this group works well together to find solutions for some of the issues faced by children utilizing joint services. Hope asked if there is any way that we can communicate the problems we have seen in order to potentially eliminate some of our cases. We have communicated the problems that our clients have faced, but there usually aren't any easy solutions for preventing child abuse/neglect.

Finance Committee Report

No report at this time.

Personnel Committee Report

No report at this time.

Services and Program Report

2022 PQI (Performance & Quality Improvement) Report

Blakley stated that the Services & Program Committee met on February 9, 2023, to discuss the 2022 overall PQI report. There were four (4) main take-aways from that meeting. The number of after-hours calls increased by 68%. The decline in the number of inquiries from prospective foster parents was noted, although Harless stated that we discovered the cause of this discrepancy. We had hired a foster care recruiter in 2021 in order to boost the number of inquiries, but that individual had recorded the number of inquiries incorrectly. Nicholson stated that only five of the 19 new hires from 2022 successfully made it through their 1-year probationary period. There is no answer for this, other than that the field of child welfare can be difficult, and many new hires do not realize prior to employment here the extent of the challenges that they will face. All new caseworkers have a mentor internally, and the mentors receive a stipend and a lower caseload in exchange for this service. We have tried to be more strategic about which supervisor to place a new worker with (i.e., matching personalities) and which section (Intake or Ongoing) where they would do best. It is a state law that we can only hire someone with a job-related bachelor's degree. If we hire someone without a related degree, they have five years to obtain a related degree.

Agency Vision Statement

Blakley explained that a fifth bullet point in our Vision Statement regarding diversity was eliminated back in 2015 by the previous Executive Director. The Committee would like to reinstate this, to wit: "The community respects diversity and supports the racial, cultural and ethnic heritage of its families and neighborhoods."

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Hope, the Board unanimously accepted the revision to the Agency Vision Statement as proposed.

DEI Position

Blakley stated that the Board will need to vote to create the internal Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer position. The individual selected for the DEI Officer position will maintain many of the same responsibilities as the Clinical Director position, in addition to job duties related to diversity, equity and inclusion. The new position will be located in pay range 10 of the pay scale.

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Murray, the Board unanimously agreed to create the DEI Officer position, to be located in pay range 10 of the pay scale.

BILLS

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

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Allen-Stanford, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Pat Heydinger, RCCS Board Chair
Amy Hackedorn, Recording Secretary