

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: July 11, 2022

Members Present: Chair Pat Heydinger, Vice Chair Nicole Blakley, Secretary Jim Nicholson, Renee Bessick, Scott Gatchall, Bennie Allen-Stanford, Mary Stentz, Bill Hope

Members Excused: Treasurer Jason Murray

Members Absent:

Others Present: Nikki Harless, Nicole Foulks, Kevin Goshe, Mark Keck, Dennis Rickett, Recording Secretary Amy Hackedorn

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, July 11, 2022, in the Board Room at Richland County Children Services. Chair Heydinger officially called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. of Board members present and representing a quorum.

### AGENDA

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Blakley, the Board unanimously approved the proposed agenda by all Board members in attendance. *Bessick arrived at this point in the meeting (3:32 p.m.).*

#### Mini Training

RCCS Independent Living caseworker Dennis Rickett and Placement supervisor Mark Keck introduced themselves to the Board. Rickett stated that any child associated with the Agency who is over the age of 14 must be offered independent living services. Rickett teaches them basic life skills such as cooking, cleaning, getting a state ID or driver's license, obtaining housing, obtaining their high school diploma or GED, applying for jobs, setting up a bank account, going on college visits, etc. Rickett teaches a class at least once every two months for all of the kids he works with. The last class he led dealt with how to purchase a vehicle, and he had a car salesman and a mechanic come in to speak with the kids. Hope asked where the parents are in these situations. The biological parents have usually lost custody for some reason (drug abuse/misuse, death, incarceration, etc.) but sometimes the kids themselves are so unruly that the parents cannot or will not handle them. *Allen-Stanford arrived at this point in the meeting (3:42 p.m.).* The expectation is for the foster parents to take care of many of these things with/for the kids, but we have no way to enforce it. There are 35 kids aged 14–18 who Dennis works with right now. After children are emancipated from foster care at age 18, Dennis makes sure they have copies of their state ID, birth certificate, emancipation paperwork, Power of Attorney, contact lists for medical providers and counselors, lists of community services, etc. and then gives them a lockbox to keep all of their paperwork in. Rickett stated that many landlords in this area will not rent to our kids, and Wood Pointe has been a beneficial resource in this area. Joe Trolan is great at working with these kids and encourages them to advocate for themselves. Once Agency-involved youth turn 18, they often try to cut ties with Rickett because they believe they can take care of themselves. But they can come back to him for

assistance up to age 21 if they decide to use him as a resource. Heydinger asked whether other local agencies and/or schools help or hinder Rickett's work with these kids. Rickett stated that other agencies usually try to be helpful as much as they can. Hope asked if there is a way to maintain a tighter connection with kids after emancipation, such as offering a gift card whenever the youth check in with Rickett. Rickett already provides gift cards and prizes and free food for those aged 14-18 who attend his training classes. Gift cards for those over the age of 18 would depend on funding. Heydinger thanked Rickett and Keck for talking with the Board about this issue. *Keck and Rickett left the meeting at this point (4:11 p.m.).*

## **MINUTES**

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Stentz, the Board unanimously approved the June 13, 2022, regular Board meeting minutes.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **Executive Director's Report and Comments**

Harless commented on the recent wave of caseworker applicants we have received. We should only have one casework vacancy by the end of July if everyone we have interviewed passes their background checks. We have hired an individual from MANCI and one from Marion Correctional in addition to promoting internal workers to help fill these positions. Commissioner Banks told Bill Hope that he was asked to enter into a contract with Coleman Health Services for 35 positions pertaining to the OhioRISE program. Harless stated that the Youth & Family Council only wanted to be reimbursed for the two service coordinators who are already in place, and then Coleman could hire the rest. OhioRISE is part of a new Medicaid plan that will create mental health facilities where kids can stay long-term if they need that service. This is need-based for multi-system youth. Even children who do not qualify for Medicaid can apply for this service via a waiver.

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

### **Executive Committee Report**

Heydinger stated that the Executive Committee met today and was optimistic about the ODJFS grant that will be made available for caseworker recruitment and retention purposes. Harless informed the Board that we have not received concrete information about this yet, but that she will update them once we learn more about it.

### **Finance Director Report**

#### **Mileage Rate Redetermination**

Starting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the IRS raised their mileage reimbursement rate from 58.5 cents to 62.5 cents. We currently reimburse mileage at a rate of 41 cents for agency employees and foster parents. Goshe

recommends raising this to 58 cents for agency employees and foster parents, retroactive to July 1, 2022.

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Blakley, the Board unanimously approved increasing the Agency's mileage rate reimbursement amount as proposed.

### **June Finance Report**

Goshe distributed and reported on the June 2022 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$9,185,580.49, \$813,896.84 in revenue, and \$1,044,661.11 in expenses with an ending balance of \$8,954,816.22. The ending fund balance reflects 73.5% or about 8.8 months of the 2022 budget.

Goshe stated that revenue for the year is running 2.9% higher than budgeted, and expenses for the year are 6.1% lower than budgeted. The Personnel line was 11.6% lower than budgeted at the end of June, which is primarily due to the high number of vacancies we have had during the majority of 2022. The recent raises for caseworkers and new hire salaries will begin to be reflected in future reports.

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Allen-Stanford, the Board unanimously approved the June 2022 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**

Heydinger stated that the Agency has made great strides internally in addressing racial equity. The Core Team has been trying to learn more about these issues and develop buy-in before pushing this down to line staff. The state has a new ombudsman program that clients can use if they aren't happy with the final results of the Agency's grievance process. Blakley was happy to learn that the Agency has taken ownership of the training and education piece of this, which was always the ultimate goal. Development of the Advisory Committee has been slower than anticipated, but the Executive Committee members believe that the Agency has done well thus far with addressing the issues internally by making training and education a priority.

## **BILLS**

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

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Blakley, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Pat Heydinger, RCCS Board Chair  
Amy Hackedorn, Recording Secretary