

MINUTES OF LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES BOARD
Regular Meeting Held March 17, 2021

The regular meeting of the Lucas County Children Services Board was held at 705 Adams Street, 3:00 P.M. via WebEx.

Members Present: Ms. Arnold, Ms. Cowell, Ms. Gagnon, Ms. McCollough, Mr. Ridi, Mr. Schinharl, Ms. Vasquez, Ms. Wilson

Member(s) Absent: Rev. Dr. Perryman

Ms. Vasquez called the March 17, 2021 regular meeting of the LCCS Board to order. Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES

Frank Coleman – Security Officer – Security Department
Pamela York – Visit Monitor – Family Visits (was not present)
Janet Wise – Clerical Assistant – Placement Department

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA AND FEBRUARY 2021 LCCS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Vasquez asked if there were any items to be removed from the Consent Agenda. Hearing nothing, Ms. Vasquez read the Consent Agenda into the minutes:

CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes from 02/17/2021 LCCS Board of Trustees Meeting
- Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes (03/01/2021)
- Services and Programs Committee Meeting Minutes and an additional attachment (3/02/2021)
- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes and additional finance documents attached (03/09/2021)

Ms. Vasquez moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Hearing nothing, the Consent Agenda items are adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

CHAIR'S REPORT

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

LCCS Child Placement Statistics

	Current Month	Previous Month
Agency Foster Homes	306	309
Subsidized Adoptions	1,233	1,227
Purchased Boarding Homes	110	105
Institutions/Group Homes	8	8
Relative Placement	299	302

National Social Work Month

March is National Social Work month, so please join me in celebrating and raising awareness about the great work and service social workers provide in Lucas County. During the COVID pandemic, social workers, along with other child protection staff, are the unsung heroes as they have continued the work of leading this community in the protection of children.

OhioRise

As stated last month, I was asked to serve on the OhioRise Advisory Council. Workgroups have launched. The workgroups are Intensive Home Based Treatment (IHBT), Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF), Mobile Response and Stabilization Service (MRSS), and Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths NEEDS/care coordination. A webpage has been established that provides more information about OhioRISE, the Advisory Council, workgroups, and meeting dates.

V Project

I am currently participating on the V Project nonprofit committee. The V Project was formed in December 2020 to educate, motivate, and vaccinate the entire Northwest Ohio corridor. The committee is made up of leaders from industry, government, non-profit, health care, education, and religious organizations. All are united to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community. The committee is focused on amplifying the Toledo Lucas County Health Department's message that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, and an important tool in ending the pandemic and saving lives.

COVID Vaccinations

On Monday, March 8, 197 LCCS staff was vaccinated through our work with local organizations. We are currently working on a staggered re-entry plan to bring staff safely back in the building. The target is to have the plan fully implemented by the end of July, if the COVID numbers continue to go in the right direction in the county and state.

ODJFS Leadership Change

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Director Kimberly Henderson announced that she would step down effective March 8. She will serve in an advisory capacity until May, when she will relocate to North Carolina. Ohio Department of Administrative Services Director Matt Damschroder will become acting director, while the state launches a national search for Director Henderson's successor. This is truly a loss for Child Protection, because of Director Henderson's dedication and partnership over the past two years, especially the efforts she has made to keep county agencies informed and to offer guidance during the pandemic.

NAACP Award

I was recognized by the NAACP, Toledo chapter, as part of the organization's Black History Month celebration. Other NAACP honorees include Gwendolynn Gregory, MBA, MSN, BSN, RN and director of nursing at the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department; Claudia Sebree-Pressley, owner/founder of Aunt Minnie's Food, Inc; and Thomas Winston, president/CEO of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority. The award recipients were selected by the Toledo chapter's 26-member executive board.

Foster Care Funding

Governor Mike DeWine recently announced some critical foster care state funding to be included in his two-year executive budget. The funding focuses on expanding existing programs and services. Some of the funding priorities reflect the recommendations of the governor's Children Services Transformation Advisory Council on which I served:

- **\$32 million (\$16 million per fiscal year) to expand the OhioSTART program.**
- **\$24 million (\$12 million per fiscal year) to advance a partnership** between ODJFS and adoption program Wendy's Wonderful Kids.
- **\$10 million (\$5 million per fiscal year) to strengthen foster parent recruitment throughout the state.** Currently, 8,000 families are licensed to provide foster care for Ohio's 15,000 children in county custody.
- **\$10 million (\$5 million per fiscal year) to implement evidence-based programs** that prevent children from having to enter foster care.
- **\$1.5 million (\$500,000 in FY22; \$1 million in FY23) to recruit and train college students** interested in pursuing careers in children services.
- **\$1 million (\$500,000 per fiscal year) to create a statewide ombudsman.** to provide accountability and transparency in Ohio's foster care system.

Governor DeWine's Executive Budget proposal also includes:

- Language to create a **Bill of Rights for foster youth and families**, so all parties involved with foster care are empowered to exercise legal rights.
- **An overhaul of Ohio's training, technical assistance, and professional development programs for children services systems.**

I have personally reached out to Rep. Paula Hicks Hudson (D-Toledo), who serves on the Ohio House Finance Committee, to explain the importance of the governor's foster care funding priorities. There may be a political battle ahead, as both houses work to pass the next biennial budget this spring and summer.

Labor Contracts

The unions (i.e., PGO and AFSCME) have verbally agreed to a one (1) year contract extension beginning May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022 with a 3% increase. Human Resources drafted the proposed changes to include the agreed upon 3% increase. There is an additional proposal to remove the Fair Share section from the Bargaining Unit contracts (in accordance with the Janus decision). The drafted contracts were then sent to Union Representatives (i.e. Chauncey Mason, Steve Kowalik) and Jim Walter in the Prosecutor's Office on March 8th. All parties will meet on Tuesday, March 16th to discuss and finalize the agreed upon and proposed changes to the bargaining unit contracts.

Mott Family Visits Center

We started transitioning back to in-person visits February 22. We currently have 102 weekly in-person visits being conducted here at the agency and 40 visits being conducted virtually. We are looking to open the former Mott Library location later this month. We have already identified 44 families that will conduct their visits at Mott when we open Mott. A big thank you to Family Visits, Security, DFS, Placements, HR, IT, Training & Development, Clerical and our Administrative Secretaries for supporting visits during the pandemic and during the opening of our new offsite visitation center

Jefferson Award

I have been nominated for a Jefferson Award this year. They will be honoring all nominees and finalists on Thursday, April 8 @ 10am on The Blade's Facebook page.

DONATIONS/PARTNERSHIPS

Two internal drives marked the observance of March as Social Work Month. LCCS staff donated and delivered a vanload of water, paper goods and other essentials to WTOL 11's "Hope for Texas" drive. The donation call also went to LCCS staff for used baseball and softball gear, so partner Uplyft Toledo can provide gloves, bats, balls, and cleats to kids who cannot afford them. LCCS donors filled an SUV with gear.

In turn, Uplyft Toledo will "scholarship" up to 200 children for their \$40 registration fees to play in summer TEAM leagues, including eligible LCCS kids. Their hope is to have at least one team per TPS elementary school for games in June and July at City of Toledo parks. Donors are paying those registration fees.

Maumee HS teacher Christina Jackson and her Leadership & Community Engagement students created and donated Easter treat bags and small toy animals for LCCS kids who stop in Family Visits while supplies last.

According to a recent Connecting Kids to Meals report to their donors, LCCS staff has distributed nearly 1,500 meal kits over the past six months. The program has now been running for 15 months with nearly 4,000 distributed.

Friends of LCCS has secured another \$25,000 playground grant, bringing total funding to date to \$155,000. This latest grant was an opportunity brought to us by our community partner, the Creating Health Communities (CHC) grant program housed at the Toledo-Lucas Co. Health Dept. So many local CHC programs turned money back to the state from unfinished projects last year (COVID-related), the Ohio Dept. of Health offered a one-time grant program.

IN THE MEDIA

13abc, 13abc.com	Increased interest in child welfare Christie Jenkins intvw., mentions LCCS	02-17-2021
The Blade, blade.com	Barbara Hendel column, NAACP award winners, including Robin Reese	03-07-2021

UPCOMING DATES:

Wed., April 14—Wear Blue Day

Thur., April 29—Child Memorial (virtual ceremony)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Ms. McCollough to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schinharl.

Roll Call was taken and all were present except for Rev. Dr. Perryman.

OPEN SESSION

Ms. McCollough made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion.

Roll Call was taken and all were present except for Rev. Dr. Perryman.

Nothing is coming out of Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Wilson.

Seconded by Ms. Cowell.

Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathy Vasquez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Vasquez, Chair