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**MINUTES OF LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting Held May 19, 2021**

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

Members Present: Ms. Cowell, Ms. Easterly, Ms. Gagnon, Ms. McCollough, Rev. Dr. Perryman, Mr. Ridi, Mr. Schinharl, Ms. Vasquez, Ms. Wilson

Member(s) Absent: Ms. Arnold, Mr. Walrod

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Ms. Vasquez called the May 19, 2021 regular meeting of the LCCS Board to order. Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

Ms. Alethea Easterly gave a brief history of her background and was welcomed to the board.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES**

Nichol Kaltenbach – Driver – Family Visits/Transportation Unit

Michelle Mathews – PC Support Specialist – IS Support

Telicia Murray – Driver – Family Visits/Transportation Unit

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA AND MARCH 2021 LCCS BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Vasquez asked if there were any items to be removed from the Consent Agenda. Two items were pulled from the Consent Agenda:

- From Services and Programs Committee: Annual Report
- From Finance Committee: Resolution 03-2021, DESIGNATION OF JP MORGAN CHASE TO ADMINISTER THE FOSTER PARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER COMMERCIAL CARD PROGRAM

Ms. Vasquez read the Consent Agenda into the minutes:

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Minutes from 04/21/2021 LCCS Board of Trustees Meeting
- Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes ( 05/03/2021 )
- Services and Programs Committee Meeting Minutes ( 05/05/2021 )
- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes and additional finance documents attached ( 05/11/2021 )

Ms. Vasquez asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Rev. Dr. Perryman made a motion for approval. Ms. Cowell seconded. Ms. Vasquez asked those in favor of the motion to signify by stating aye, those opposed nay. Motion unanimously carried.

Patricia Daher, Manager of Quality Assurance, gave a brief overview of the Annual Report for 2020.

Mr. Schinharl discussed Resolution 03-2021: DESIGNATION OF JP MORGAN CHASE TO ADMINISTER THE FOSTER PARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER COMMERCIAL CARD PROGRAM and read it into the minutes:

**RESOLUTION            03-2021**

**SUBJECT:                DESIGNATION OF JP MORGAN CHASE TO ADMINISTER THE FOSTER PARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER COMMERCIAL CARD PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS,**                Lucas County Children Services currently provides written vouchers endorsed to specific local retailers which caregivers utilize to purchase care items (clothing, food, hygiene supplies, and other items) for children in custody or with relative caregivers.

- WHEREAS,** The current voucher system is being phased out by large retailers and is not accepted by several other retailers. The current system is costly to administer and is quickly becoming an outdated practice.
- WHEREAS,** JP Morgan Chase has a Commercial Card Program that can supplement and eventually replace the written voucher system. The card program is accepted at retail stores which accept major credit cards. The card program will meet the agency's needs at no additional cost to the agency and comes with an annual rebate program ranging from .20% - 1.40% of annual dollars spent.
- WHEREAS,** The JP Morgan Chase Commercial Card Program is an efficient and cost-effective method of buying and paying for care items.
- WHEREAS,** With the Commercial Card program, foster parents and relative caregivers will be issued a designated card in their name and the name of the child in their custody. The card comes with a declining balance feature and limited time usage feature based on an approved amount on the request for fund. The foster parent and relative caregiver will be able to make purchases for clothing, food, and other client support items.
- WHEREAS,** This program is in line with Ohio Revised Code Section 307.86(K) exempting this type of purchase from competitive bid requirements.

**NOW BE IT THEREFORE**

- RESOLVED,** That the board approves the authorization for Lucas County Children Services to enter into an agreement JP Morgan Chase to administer the Foster Parent/Relative Caregiver Commercial Card Program.

Ms. Vasquez asked for a motion to approve Resolution 03-2021: Designation of JP Morgan Chase to Administer the Foster Parent/Relative Caregiver Commercial Card Program. Mr. Ridi made a motion for approval. Rev. Dr. Perryman seconded. Ms. Vasquez asked those in favor of the motion to signify by stating aye, those opposed nay. Motion unanimously carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Resolution 02-2021; Labor Contracts**

**RESOLUTION**      **02-2021**

**SUBJECT:**            **LABOR CONTRACTS**

**WHEREAS,**            Management and Union have agreed upon newly negotiated contracts; and

**WHEREAS,**            The Union ratified the contract on April 8, 2021; and

**WHEREAS,**            The Executive Director recommends that the Labor Contracts be accepted.

**NOW BE IT THEREFORE**

- RESOLVED,**            That the Board approve the new Labor Contracts (summary attached and part of this Resolution).

LCCS Board Members:

I wanted to provide you with a summary of the items discussed and agreed to during Bargaining Contract Negotiations that led to an amicable conclusion to a new one-year contract agreement. This agreement was reached ahead of the April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline of the current contract.

The one-year contract was agreed to by both parties with the intent of reconvening after the COVID pandemic. This would ensure that items discussed and negotiated are truly reflective of the agency and bargaining union membership needs and not reflective of the needs due to being within the current pandemic.

The negotiations with Professional Guild of Ohio (PGO) and American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees (AFSCME) concluded on Friday, March 26, 2021. The union membership ratified the tentative agreement items presented through the negotiation process on Thursday, April 8, 2021 and it is being presented to the LCCS Board for approval.

The agreement items negotiated through the collective bargaining process are as follows:

- A one (1) year term for the Bargaining Unit contracts: May 1, 2021 - April 30, 2022
- Strike through of Fair Share language within Article 5, Union Security, Section 2
- Removal of old wage language that reference the 2015-2018 contract within Article 20, Wages, Section 2
- Wages of bargaining unit employees and the wage scale to be increased by 3%, effective May 1, 2021 - April 30, 2022

In accordance with ORC 4117, there will need to be official submittal to the Board of County Commissioners, who will discuss the tentative agreement in an upcoming Executive Session. The Board per ORC will have thirty (30) days from submittal to either approve or reject the tentative agreement, or to take no action during that 30 days in which case the agreement is considered approved and may be implemented on the 31st day. Official notice by resolution was submitted to the Board of County Commissioners on April 27<sup>th</sup>. I will keep you updated regarding any action taken concerning the resolution.

Sincerely,

Robin Reese  
LCCS Executive Director

### **Board Re-Entry Plan**

Ms. Tanett Williams discussed the re-entry program with the board members. As of June 2, the Governor has opened up Ohio as far as wearing masks and social distancing. Before our next board meeting, June 16, 2021, we need to have discussion as to whether that will be an open board meeting. Ms. Vasquez asked if there is anything prohibiting us from going ahead with the plan as we already established it? Are we required to do anything new at this point? Ms. Williams said no. Ms. Reese stated that she will be having a meeting with the County Commissioners tomorrow and if anything new comes from that meeting, she will inform the board. Ms. Vasquez states at this point, before the June board meeting, administration will let the board know how we will do this. This will also apply to all committee meetings in June.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

As you recall last month we had Ms. Reese and Ms. Jackson highlight some things from the Race Equity efforts both locally and on the national level that the agency is involved in. One of the things that was part of that was a short video let by Emmanuel Acho with the series "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man." Because disproportionality is such a different issue and a significant part of our Strategic Plan to address disproportionality, Ms. Vasquez would like to start a series to address some of that, educate those of us who need educated, and to have us become as knowledgeable as we can about disproportionality. In that regard, I've asked Ms. Reese to plan to select additional videos from Mr. Acho that we will have at each board meeting for a period of time. We will begin these videos in June.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **LCCS Child Placement Statistics**

|                          | Current Month | Previous Month |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Agency Foster Homes      | 316           | 302            |
| Subsidized Adoptions     | 1,219         | 1,230          |
| Purchased Boarding Homes | 118           | 107            |
| Institutions/Group Homes | 9             | 10             |
| Relative Placement       | 302           | 302            |

## **DIRECTOR'S ACTIVITY REPORT**

### **Building Issues**

This past week we experienced ongoing plumbing issues in the building. The Commissioners responded by bringing in outside contractors to address the problems. As a result of our conversations with the County, we decided that it would be best that we allow as many people as possible to telework on Thursday and Friday of last week so that the plumbers could have uninterrupted access to address the problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **COVID-19 Update**

The Food and Drug Administration has cleared the coronavirus vaccine for emergency use in children as young as 12. I now must make decisions about the 656 children who are in our custody:

### **Section 5151.11 of the Ohio Revised Code Executive Director- Powers Duties**

Upon the advice of one or more reputable practicing physicians, the executive director may consent to such medical, dental, and surgical care, including surgery and the administration of anesthetics, inoculations, and immunizations, or other care as appears to be necessary for any child who is in the temporary or permanent custody of such agency. The executive director may also consent to the enlistment of a ward of such agency into the armed forces of the U.S.

### **State Child Protection Allocation/State Budget**

I spoke with Senator Theresa Gavarone (District 2), Vice Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, to share PCSAO's budget priorities. The Senate was accepting amendments to the budget bill. It was expected that the Ohio Senate would introduce their version of the budget bill by May 14. Per the Senator's request, we sent a copy of PCSAO's proposed amendment to HB 110. We also included background on the impact that the requested \$50 million increase would have on our ability to serve families. We respectfully asked that she submit the amendment in time for discussion.

### **Summer Programming**

We are in the process of identifying summer activities for children in our care/custody. We were able with short notice to get all of the school age children in our custody enrolled in TPS signed up for summer school. We are working on camps, daycare and other venues to give children a fun and productive summer experience.

### **Family First Prevention Services Pilot**

On April 5, LCCS, along with Butler, Fairfield, Knox, Licking, Stark, and Trumbull counties officially launched the FFPS pilot. In Lucas County we targeted the Ohio Start involved cases and MST involved cases. Thus far, we have not identified any pilot cases due to barriers that we and other counties are experiencing.

- Ohio Start often utilizes active safety plans to keep children safe in their own home while parents are seeking treatment for substance use. Per rule, prevention cases cannot have safety plans.
- Youth that are involved with and/or need MST are a small pool of families that are opened to DFS. Additionally, MST has strict eligibility criteria and they are often on a wait list. There are no cases that meet these criteria.
- FFT is not available in Lucas County and LCCS has decided not to implement Healthy Families America (HMA) as we are already servicing these families on a preventative basis. There is no added funding to LCCS or benefit to families.

The Public Children Services Association of Ohio convened the participating counties to share information among themselves. At the request of the pilot counties, the group will continue to meet monthly. We have two management level staff, Tionna Jackson and Michele Hoffman, who are directing the agency through the pilot process and will be attending the monthly meetings.

### **Workload in Service Division**

The Services Division has experienced a higher level of case referrals and case openings in the past several months. This increase has been coupled with caseworker vacancies that are a result of retirements, new job postings, employee movement into available positions, and resignations.

Our current vacancy rate is the highest in the Family Services area (DFS). There are currently 12 confirmed vacancies with a potential, based on employee movement, to have several more within a few weeks. This creates caseworker burnout, overwhelms, and overall affects morale.

In response to these pressing issues, Human Resources, the Management Team in the Services area and the Division Director are working together to develop solutions. First, a new training unit was expedited and will begin on June 7, 2021. This unit will hold a minimum of 10 caseworker trainees. Several of these trainees have been interning at the agency for the previous school year (UPP students). We are also assessing caseload transfers into other departments and working closely with the union to ensure caseworkers know we are promptly addressing these issues.

I'd like to thank the caseworkers and their supervisors, who are all experiencing this increase and helping their staff adjust, and the Services Department Managers in all areas who are consistently showing up for children and their families.

### **Kinship Support Program**

The Kinship Support program (KSP) through ODJFS started making KSP payments to Kinship providers in April 2021. Payments made by ODJFS were retroactive back to a placement date of December 29, 2020, or the date of placement, whichever is more recent. Eligible kinship caregivers receive \$10.20 per day per kinship child placed in their home. The child must be in agency custody.

Through May 8, 2021, 93 unduplicated LCCS Kinship providers have received \$109,619.40 for 137 unduplicated children in LCCS custody.

Right now, Kin are eligible for KSP payments for not more than nine months from 12/29/2020 or the date the child was placed in the home. During that time frame, Kinship providers are encouraged to become a licensed foster parent for their kinship child(ren). Kinship support payments end when a caregiver becomes a licensed foster caregiver, until the child is no longer placed in the home as a kinship placement, or the 9-month timeframe described above has ended, whichever happens first.

In addition to KSP payments, Kinship providers continue to receive other supports from LCCS such as Kinship Stabilization funds, vouchers for items related to child need (car seat and other baby items, beds, clothing, food, etc.) and supportive "hands-on" services.

### **DONATIONS/PARTNERSHIPS**

Ohio Highway Patrol troopers from across Northwest Ohio led a donation collection drive to mark sexual abuse awareness month in April. One of the troopers is also is a member of LBs Circuit Training and got the entire gym involved. Volunteers dropped off a large load of new clothes, feminine hygiene products, body wash and diapers.

Josh Podach donated hundreds of children's face masks to help replenish the supply used by Family Visits and other departments during the pandemic. Mask usage drastically increased once face-to-face visits resumed at the agency.

The partnership with the Salvation Army, Mercy Hospital and others is offering the sustainability that was hoped. According to voluntary caseworker reporting, the LCCS diaper bank served 47 children in Feb., 57 households with 65 children in March, and 64 households with 80 children in April.

### **IN THE MEDIA**

Toledo Blade, blade.com

Preview of Stand against Racism conference

04-20-2021



|                                 |                                                                                             |            |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Toledo Blade</i> , blade.com | Paramount Medicaid denial, quotes Robin Reese letter to state Medicaid director             | 04-23-2021 |
| Sojourner's Truth               | Recap of Stand against Racism conference                                                    | 04-26-2021 |
| <i>Toledo Blade</i> , blade.com | Letter to editor, abridged version of Robin Reese letter sent on behalf of ProMedica to ODM | 04-29-2021 |

Ms. Vasquez asked for any questions for Ms. Reese. Ms. McCollough asked regarding the 600+ children who need to be vaccinated, do you make a blanket decision on all the children or do you have to individually make decisions on all the children? Ms. Reese states that she will confer with the Health Services Department to see if there are any health issues with children and am hoping to get some feedback from their primary care physicians, again we will consult with their parents.

Ms. Reese stated that the directors have worked very hard on the re-entry plan for staff. All staff will be coming back into the building on June 7, 2021. We are at approximately 80% of our staff vaccinated. We are also having a POD (Point of Distribution) on May 28 from 1-6 PM which we are offering to staff, foster parent, biological parents, and the children Ms. Reese has made the decision about to get their shots.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

#### **OPEN SESSION**

None

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Rev. Dr. Donald Perryman, Secretary