

~~~~~

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

~~~~~

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

**Members Present:** Ms. Arnold, Ms. Cowell, Ms. Easterly, Ms. McCollough, Mr. Ridi, Mr. Schinharl, Ms. Vasquez, Mr. Walrod, Ms. Wilson

**Member(s) Absent:** Ms. Gagnon, Rev. Dr. Perryman

~~~~~

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

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES**

None

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

Ms. Vasquez asked if there were any items to be removed from the Consent Agenda. Nothing was removed.

Ms. Vasquez read the Consent Agenda into the minutes:

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Minutes from 10/20/2021 LCCS Board of Trustees Meeting
- Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes ( 11/01/2021 )
- Services and Programs Committee Meeting Minutes and additional documents attached ( 11/03/2021 )
- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes and additional finance documents attached ( 11/09/2021 )

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

**COA Resolution**

Board Chair, Ms. Vasquez, read into the minutes the following Resolution pertaining to our Reaccreditation of COA.

**LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES BOARD**  
**Resolution**

**RESOLUTION** 09-2021

**SUBJECT: REACCREDITATION OF LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES**

**WHEREAS,** Lucas County Children Services values reaccreditation as a framework to continuously improve, offer evidenced-based best practices, and demonstrate external validation of quality.

**WHEREAS,** The Board authorized Lucas County Children Services to pursue reaccreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA).

**WHEREAS,** Reaccreditation was granted for five years. This achievement was expedited through the Pre-Commission Review Report process as a result of not receiving any out of compliance ratings in any of the fundamental practice standards, which the COA acknowledged as an "amazing achievement".

1

**WHEREAS,**

The COA stated: "COA's program of quality improvement is designed to identify providers that have met high standards and have made a commitment to their stakeholders to deliver the very best quality services. COA is proud to recognize Lucas County Children Services as one of these outstanding providers, and we wish you the very best in your continuing work with the individuals you serve."

Now be it therefore

**RESOLVED,**

that the Board commends and congratulates the administration, staff, stakeholders, partners, and in particular the leadership of Patricia Daher, Quality Assurance Manager, Michele Hoffman, Quality Assurance/Special initiatives Supervisor and specific individuals in each department whose dedicated efforts were responsible for this outstanding achievement.

**NEW BUSINESS****Strategic Plan Refinement Recommendations**

The Directors presented the Strategic Plan Refinement Recommendations to the board (power point document was handed out and will be available electronically after the meeting).

Ms. Vasquez asked if there were any questions on the revised plan. Question and Answer session was held. It had been Ms. Vasquez's thought to have until the December meeting to consider the changes and then choose to adopt or put forth our own recommendations at the December meeting. Ms. McCollough would like more time to go over the documents. Ms. Vasquez thanked everyone for working on this.

**2022 Budget**

Ms. Jackson presented the 2022 Budget to the board. A power point presentation was provided for all in attendance and handouts were distributed. Discussion was held as to whether or not to approve the budget this month or at the December meeting. Consensus was for voting at today's meeting.

Ms. Vasquez asked for a motion to approve the 2022 Budget. Mr. Schinharl made a motion for approval. Mr. Walrod seconded. Ms. Vasquez asked those in favor of the motion to signify by stating aye, those opposed nay. Motion unanimously carried.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

- Ms. Vasquez had an opportunity to ride along with assessment caseworker, Nicole Dembski. They visited two homes. She highly encourages the other board member participate in ride alongs.
- Ms. Vasquez states that the Update is very beneficial to the board members. There are so many opportunities included in the Update.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT****LCCS Child Placement Statistics**

|                          | Current Month | Previous Month |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Agency Foster Homes      | 297           | 292            |
| Subsidized Adoptions     | 1,207         | 1,205          |
| Purchased Boarding Homes | 133           | 117            |
| Institutions/Group Homes | 12            | 9              |
| Relative Placement       | 407           | 419            |

**DIRECTOR'S ACTIVITY REPORT**

Ohio, as is the entire nation, is experiencing a serious placement crisis for children and youth in foster care. Very simply put there are not enough placement resources. Our current situation in Ohio is that on any given day children are literally sleeping in the local child protection building. Recently, Cuyahoga County Children Services was featured in the Cleveland Plain Dealer because they have children sleeping in their building for days at a time. The crisis has reached the point that counties have collectively decided to go public through our Public Children Services Association. This crisis is made especially difficult because we are all currently experiencing a workforce crisis. This is evidenced by retirements, losing staff because of daycare issues, hesitancy of going into homes/field, wanting to work from home or just the sheer nature of this stressful work. As I have stated in the past, this is not a new issue; it seems that right now to be at the breaking point. We need an urgent solution!

In Lucas County the impact is being felt particularly in our intake, family services and the placement department.

## **GREENBELT OUTREACH**

On Saturday Oct 30, we partnered with the MOVEMENT and the YWCA to bring services to the residence of the Greenbelt apartments. This is in line with our strategic plan, that we sponsor in neighborhoods as part of our prevention work. We took advantage of money that the commissioner's office provided to increase Covid Testing in underserved communities. We did not do a head count, but we believe the event was attended by well over a thousand residents of the Greenbelt apartments and the surrounding areas. It was reported that 250 people got their initial COVID vaccination. We were able to touch the lives of many families by distributing diapers, blankets, coats, hats, gloves, comb and brushes and toys.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Donna Seed is representing Lucas County working with ODJFS work groups to develop state level guidance for tiered treatment foster care. Lucas County is one of the very few public agencies that has administered treatment foster care in the state of Ohio. This is typically administered by private agencies throughout the state. This state undertaking is to help align per diem rates for consistency for rate setting, re-define the level of care needed and the caregiver expectation required for children placed in home settings, and address the issue of congregate care appropriateness and the overuse of Q RTP (residential/group home settings).

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Tionna Jackson, Amy Cox, and Sheila Funches are all being recognized by the Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities on November 22, 2021 because of their work with individual with developmental disabilities and their families. Congratulations, ladies!

## **COMMUNICATION AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

Holiday gift drive is underway. We have 24 families being sponsored by members of the community, and we have a number activities lined up with partner organizations:

- Community Bike Build - Nov. 28 at Jerusalem Township Fire Department, and with support of Local 92
- Angel trees at Franklin Park Mall
- Shred for a Toy - December 4 at Burger King across from Franklin Park Mall
- Give the Best Gift Ever donation event - December 9 at WTOL's parking lot
- iHeart Toyathon - December 11 at the Franklin Park Mall Sylvania Avenue parking lot
- We also have an Amazon wish list. The link is found on our website, [lucaskids.net](http://lucaskids.net). Donors can purchase gifts at the price point they are most comfortable with, and the item will ship directly here.

This is on top of the tremendous support we receive from Friends of LCCS and companies like Allshred Services, Bennett Management, Owens Corning, Meijer, DANA, BASF, ODOT, La-Z-Boy, Molina Health, several local schools, service groups, and generous members of our community. Our children will also benefit from a grant from the Governor's Office of Faith-Based Initiatives, which is providing Friends of LCCS with nearly 100 new winter coats.

Toledo Area Parent published an online profile of our newest director, Dr. Hope Bland. WTOL also featured one of our foster/adoptive families in a story for National Adoption Month. We also received a lot of positive coverage for our role in the



Greenbelt Place event. PCSAO has also asked me to participate in a wide-ranging interview on child protection with the Public News Service. It should take place in the next few weeks.

Playground redevelopment continues; we have accepted two loads of equipment in the past couple of weeks. These are items that had to be purchased before grant funding expired. The items are in storage.

### **DEPARTMENT OF EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND STRATEGY (DEIS)**

Working on the development of the Department to increase capacity and prevent departmental marginalization by adding new positions and other existing programs through an agency reorganization and reform process.

Development of DEIS Engagement Groups (Focus Groups) to participate in critical conversations in a safe space/smaller setting to strategize around racial equity, disproportionality, barriers that impact Diversity and Inclusion;

#### **GOALS:**

- a) Drive Inclusion throughout the agency;
- b) Understanding Ownership in the role of the worker in DEIS;
- c) Leadership Engagement and Moral.

Work closely with Casey Foundation Consultants "In the Public Way." Currently meeting with Consultants and Individual Directors to discuss their role and contribution to DEIS.

Continue meeting with all Supervisors and observing and participating in Case Reviews.

Collaboration with Ohio Start on Race Equity and Inclusion Improvement Planning from team approach.

Participating in Casey Foundation Racial Equity Network

Working on establishment of DEIS Advisory Council.

### **DONATIONS/PARTNERSHIPS**

The LCCS diaper bank continues to see consistent usage. Among reported data from caseworkers over an eight-month tracking period so far in 2021, the diaper bank serves an average of 65.5 households per month and 78 children. (The actual number is higher because caseworkers voluntarily report usage. The report rate is unknown.)

Perfecting Church held its second annual "pack-a-pickup" drive for the LCCS diaper bank. As usual, the congregation far surpassed their goal. Focused on pull-ups and diaper wipes, two things the agency doesn't get from partnerships.

Nicole Pierce and her Facebook business customers made the first holiday gift drive donation—four large boxes of toys, pajamas, and other items for LCCS kids.

12-year-old Jack Heckler of Toledo made 40 blessings bags— complete with a book, stuffed animal, and handwritten note of encouragement. He wanted to help other children served by LCCS.

### **IN THE MEDIA**

|                                   |                                                          |                        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| WTOL, wtol.com<br>WTVG, 13abc.com | LCCS takes part in Greenbelt Place Resource Fair         | 10/26/2021, 10/30/2021 |
| MetroPress                        | LCCS is a beneficiary of Holiday with Heart charity gala | 11/1/2021              |

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There is no need for an Executive Session.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Wilson.

Seconded by Mr. Schinharl.



Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Kathy Vasquez, Board Chair