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**MINUTES OF LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting Held September 18, 2024**

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The regular meeting of the Lucas County Children Services Board was held at 301 Adams Street, 3:00 P.M., in person and via Zoom.

Members Present: Mr. Corfman, Dr. Cowell, Ms. Gagnon, Ms. McCollough, Mr. Meyer, and Rev. Dr. Perryman,

Member(s) Absent: Ms. Easterly, Mr. Ridi, Mr. Schinharl, Ms. Vasquez, and Mr. Walrod

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Dr. Cowell called the September 18, 2024, regular meeting of the LCCS Board to order. Roll Call was taken. A quorum was present.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES**

- Joseph Corfman – Board of Trustees Member
- Toni Strack – Records Clerk

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA AND JULY LCCS BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Dr. Cowell asked if any items would be removed from the Consent Agenda. None were removed.

Dr. Cowell read the Consent Agenda into the minutes:

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Minutes from July 17, 2024, LCCS Board of Trustees Meeting
- Personnel Committee Minutes (8/5/24)
- Services and Programs Meeting Minutes (8/7/24)(9/4/24)
- Finance Committee Minutes additional finance documents attached. (9/10/24)

Dr. Cowell asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Rev. Dr. Perryman made a motion for approval, which Ms. McCollough seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Building Update**

Shelby Cully gave a building update regarding 301 Adams. LCCS is all moved in and loving it. There has been a couple hurdles such as climate control and parking issues, but other than those all is going well.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**DEIS – Dr. Joyce James Presentation**

Dr. Bland gave an overview of the deep dive into the ground water analysis being done by Dr. Joyce James and her staff. The leadership team will meet with Dr. James via Zoom for a two-day workshop going over the results and recommendations offered in result of this deep dive. This will include a debrief and reflection along with strategic sessions including recommendations. LCCS will share those recommendations with the board.

**Proclamation**

The proclamation was read regarding the death of former board member Mr. Theodore Bernard "Pete" Henderson Culp. The proclamation was read by Ms. McCollough.

## PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Lucas County lost one of its most passionate civil rights leaders with the passing of Theodore Bernard "Pete" Henderson Culp on August 31, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Culp held a number of paid and volunteer positions in Lucas County and for the City of Toledo between the 1960s and the 2000s; and

WHEREAS, they included an appointment to the Lucas County Children Services Board; as well as to the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commission, and the Economic Opportunity Planning Association, among others; and

WHEREAS, he served the Children Services Board honorably from 1999 to 2014; along with the boards of the Toledo Chapter of the NAACP; and the Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Culp was a tireless advocate for civil rights; fighting racism; neighborhood activism; diversity; full employment; fair housing; and social justice; and

WHEREAS, he believed in, "helping the needy, not the greedy," and

WHEREAS, he never hesitated to speak out on matters of interest to all people of color,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

The Lucas County Children Services Board and Dr. Suzette Cowell, chair, takes this opportunity to honor Mr. Culp and mourn his passing. We extend our condolences to his wife, Linda, sons Tony Culp, Alan (Bridgette) Culp, Robert (Felicia) Bethany, his daughter Charnell Bethany, his brother, Bishop Robert (Maggie) Culp, and many grandchildren and loved ones,

Rev. Dr. Perryman made a motion to accept the proclamation with Ms. Gagnon seconding. The motion passed with unanimous voice vote.

### CHAIR'S REPORT

Dr. Cowell thanked staff and Mr. Muth for their work on the upcoming Levy. A copy of the upcoming speaking events was given out to the board members.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

#### LCCS CHILD PLACEMENT STATISTICS:

|                          | Current Month | Previous Month |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Agency Foster Homes      | 320           | 320            |
| Subsidized Adoptions     | 1,112         | 1,118          |
| Purchased Boarding Homes | 193           | 199            |
| Institutions/Group Homes | 14            | 19             |
| Relative Placement       | 375           | 369            |

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTIVITIES

The Board of Elections has given LCCS Issue 30 on the November ballot. We are currently speaking to various Democrat and Republican clubs across the county promoting the levy. The Lucas County Democratic Party has endorsed Issue 30, and it will appear on a slate card of endorsements being sent to

every voter who requests an absentee ballot. Agency volunteers will fan out across the community to spread the word about the levy with a number of activities, including door-to-door, voter interaction at the Early Voting Center, sign waving, and participation in parades, festivals, and community events. Meetings are set up with Local 500 and UAW Region 2 to ask for their support; letters are going out.

### **Welcome New Board Member, Joseph Corfman**

The Commissioners have appointed Joseph R. Corfman to fill Ms. Arnold's unexpired term which will run through December 31, 2027. Mr. Corfman is currently the Assistant Treasurer/CFO of Toledo Public Schools where he has served since February of 2015. He holds a Bachelor of Administration and a Master of Business Administration, both from the University of Toledo.

### **Effects of FFPSA on Placement Costs**

#### **Statewide Data**

Around the first of the year, the state released financial information which correlated to the first two full years of experience with the FFPSA (because this was federal legislation, that period was October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023). The data reveals (1) the average cost of congregate care cost rose by 42.5 percent; (2) reimbursement percentage went down from 28.60% to 15.9% and; (3) use of congregate care increased by 5 percent.

Our data is consistent, though ours to a greater extent, with the rest of the state. State congregate care costs rose by 42.5% while ours increased by 58% for the same time period.

#### **Local Data**

It is no longer possible for us to see other county's financial nor management reports in SACWIS. PCSAO has agreed to reach out to each of Ohio's 88 counties to gather specific data regarding annual placement cost increases. Preliminary data self-reported from local agencies shows that almost every county is experiencing increased placement costs ranging from 20% to 100%. When compared to pre-FFPSA levels, we're around 77%.

#### **State Response**

The state has been very slow to respond to the placement crisis. Real recognition of this as a legitimate problem did not occur until about October of last year after the above-mentioned state-wide data was released. In their defense, however, the new department was not created until July of last year. However, our current supervising department, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, did absolutely nothing in the 19 months subsequent to full implementation of FFPSA.

In a Data Review Letter from the State, Director Wentz said that the newly created Department of Children and Youth is committed addressing the placement concerns and will employ a full array of solutions." PCSAO is eager be active partner with DCY and has provided suggestions and feedback. PCSAO is also advocating for more funding in the upcoming State biennium budget.

### **Idea for Local Solution**

Prior to the 1960s, almost every child in the child welfare system lived in congregate care – i.e. group homes, orphanages, or asylums. In the early 60s, but more rapidly in the 1970s, child welfare began to transfer to the foster home system as the primary response to children who were not able to reside in their own home. By the mid 1970's, most Ohio counties had closed their children's homes in preference of foster homes. In 2016 only four public children service agencies operated homes in the State.

However, in the last two years, two counties have actually opened congregate care facilities as a direct governmental function – Portage and Cuyahoga. Both did so in response to the placement crisis. These homes are run by Agency employees instead of contracted private providers.

After much discussion with Social Services leadership here, we believe that establishing an agency run group home may be a viable solution for our placement costs. Although this is generally viewed as step backward in our field, it may be the only solution if costs continue to rise. The Admin team is looking at potential venues and initiating a feasibility study.

#### **DONATIONS/PARTNERSHIPS**

A team of LCCS volunteers joined Buckeye Broadband employees at the third annual Project Playhouse build September 12 on the cable provider's Oregon Road campus. This is a three-party partnership: Buckeye gets a team-building exercise, Habitat for Humanity gains much-needed funding, and five LCCS caregiver families (most with young sibling groups) obtain a backyard playhouse. The build is held to recognize September as Kinship Care Month.

Erie Home and Directions Credit Union in Perrysburg were among late donors to the backpack and school supply drive but provided some inventory to help children coming into LCCS care during the school year when backpacks may no longer be available.

Trunk or Treat planning is well underway, which will be held Saturday, October 19, 12-2 pm at The Believe Center. The change in location allows for better managing the event in case of poor weather. There is an indoor gymnasium and other spaces that will be used regardless, but trunks can be moved inside if needed. Some new features are in the planning stages. Sylvania Pediatric Dental has already donated 1,000 toothbrushes and a couple corporate candy drives will get underway soon.

#### **IN THE MEDIA**

|                                         |                                                                          |           |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| WTOL-TV, wtol.com                       | NAMI Trauma Training<br>(Dayna Riley interview)                          | 8-21-2024 |
| WTOL-TV, wtol.com<br>WTVG-TV, 13abc.com | Children Kept in Inhumane Conditions                                     | 9-3-2024  |
| WTOL-TV, wtol.com                       | See Something, Say Something<br>(Donna Seed, Nicole Williams Interviews) | 9-5-2024  |
| WTOL-TV, wtol.com<br>WTVG-TV, 13abc.com | TPD Investigation, Failure to Report Abuse                               | 9-5-2024  |

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Ms. McCollough to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and case discussion. Mr. Meyer seconded the motion.

A roll call was taken, and all members were present except for Ms. Easterly, Mr. Ridi, Mr. Schinharl, Ms. Vasquez, and Mr. Walrod.

#### **OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION/OPEN SESSION**

Rev. Dr. Perryman made a motion to come out of the Executive Session. Mr. Meyer seconded the motion.

A roll Call was taken, and all members were present except for Ms. Easterly, Mr. Ridi, Mr. Schinharl, Ms. Vasquez, and Mr. Walrod.

There was no action coming out of Executive Session.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Gagnon  
Ms. McCollough seconding the motion.  
The meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Suzette Cowell  
Board Chair

