

**Butler County CY5 Advisory Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 14, 2022**  
**9:00 AM**

**Attendance:** Charlie Johns, Donna Jenereski, Bill Kepple, Kristen Lydon, Fr. David Hicks, Dennis Ditch, Alice Nunes, Commissioner Leslie Osche (via Teams), Cynthia Thompson (via Teams), Linda Peifer (via Teams)

Welcome back to in person for most of you and to our first meeting since November 2021. Here is our agency update since then:

- Board Membership update
  - Arlene Quinlan has resigned from the board after years and years of dedication, support, and friendship to this agency. As an agency, we are going to do something in recognition yet to be determined.
  - Board members:
    - We may need to recruit to get back up to the established total
    - I have reached out to Brandon for a replacement for Beth Gillan (CCR)

**I.** Call to Order-Cynthia Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM

**II.** Public Comment for General Items-None

**III.** Old Business

- Approval of November 2021 Minutes-Cynthia asked for a motion to approve the November minutes. Fr. Hicks seconded the motion.
- Unanimous Approval

**IV.** New Business

- Financial Updates

Bill Kepple, Fiscal Officer presented Fiscal Year comparisons for 2021. Bill also updated that the Advisory Board checking account balance is currently \$33,600. This special account is used for Adoption Day, Christmas gifts for children, and other general needs for children. Alice Nunes asked if the account is audited. Bill is not aware of the account being audited at this time. Commissioner Osche stated that she can provide information to Bill for auditor suggestions. Bill will also explore if a collapsing account would make sense for the board. Alice also asked if we have a combined list of 2022 graduating seniors and those children

who will be aging out. Charlie updated that the list will be provided at the June 2022 meeting.

- Agency Staff Update

Unlike other Children and Youth agencies, our turnover is very stable, which was Clargely discussed at the directors' conference at the end of March. Several counties are short on caseworkers for their agencies. Several of our providers are also have staffing shortages and are having a difficult time hiring qualified candidates. There are two planned departures from our Agency.

1. Michelle Gallagher to the Area Agency on Aging
2. Robin Johnston will be retiring the beginning of May after a lengthy 28 year career with us.

- Court Changes

A new President Judge has been named. Judge Yeager will be the new President judge since Judge Shaffer has retired. The new Dependency Judge is Judge Kubit The Courts have also added an additional Juvenile Court hearing officer. Russ Karl will be working along side Cori Dunn. The only concern will be the differing decision making. We are working with the Courts and the Office of Children and Families in the court on training opportunities for the new Hearing Officer.

- Other Updates

The Children's Advocacy Center has hired Danielle Schmidt as the new Director. Denna Hays left earlier this year. Charlie has a long history of working with Danielle and has already met with her twice, since she has become the new Director. Danielle has some challenges ahead of her, but Charlie is confident that she will address them. The primary goal is to provide high quality unbiased interviews.

A mentorship with Lawrence County CYS was recently competed with our Agency. Training on Safety Planning and Intake Screening were the main focus. OCYF supported the mentorship as we are a leading County in the state. This is a great compliment to our Agency. Charlie also consulted with Cambria County Commissioner on retaining/recruiting staff.

The recent Licensing Review resulted in 4 citations, none of which were safety related. The citations were technical and paperwork related. The CFSR is occurring in the next two weeks and are being managed by Tina Neuch and Beth Culley.

The current Case Flow has exceeded 3 case assignments per week/worker on average twice since November which indicated the seasonal rise. A little higher than last year. This system was designed on three assignments per week, so we are still operating within capacity. Kids in care has dropped to 111, which is trending downwards. Since March there have been 25 placements, which is very rare for the Agency. This is due to large sibling groups for a couple of the families.

- Complex Cases

The Agency is currently working with two Complex Cases that we have had difficulty with placements. The state is currently lacking in placements for children that have been behaviorally difficult or have extensive mental health needs. When this happens, we have these children who have had to stay in waiting rooms, hotels, and hospitals until we are able to find a facility that can accommodate the needs of the child. We are being assisted by OCYF in finding placements for the Complex Cases as far away as Florida and Georgia that can provide the much need services. With very limited placements available within the state, and working to find out of state placements, the need to have an extended term waiting room that will be need from time to time. Charlie has requested to have funds to purchase items needed for the extended term waiting room. Fr. Hicks motioned to allow the Agency to spend up to \$5000.00 for items that will be need to accommodate the room for an extended stay. Donna Jenereski seconded the motion.

- Unanimous approval

- V. Cynthia asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alice made the motion for adjournment and Cynthia seconded. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:11 AM

***The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on June 9, 2022 at 9 AM in the Carmine Scotecce Conference Room.***

**Minutes approved 6/9/22**

**1<sup>st</sup>-Father Hicks**

**2<sup>nd</sup>-Paula Opalka**