



Luzerne County Children and Youth Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time/Location: October 14, 2020/noon/ Conference Room 132 (MS
Teams/Conference Call Meeting)

In Attendance: Robert Childs, Maggie Farrell, Dennis Gochoel, Larry Marchetti, Alex Milanese, Eileen Song, Joshua Wilder, Susan Roskos

Absent: Charlene Aben, Ciro Cinti, Martin Dartoe, Mary Agnes Kratz, Olga Papa, Fritz Scarnulis

Children and Youth: Ceil Bartolai, Janice Bonner, Chris Dalessandro, Donna Domiano, Lisa Koval, Georgine Meyers, Robin Ritsick

Office of Human Services: John Alunni

Welcome – Chairman Song welcomed everyone to the October meeting. Ms. Meyers took attendance. Chairman Song would like to reach out to Members that have been missing meetings.

Approval of Minutes – September meeting minutes approved by Member Gochoel, seconded by Member Wilder, all in favor.

Director's Report – Manager Bartolai announced that Director Van Saun and Deputy Director German are attending the PCYA meeting. Manager Bartolai noted that past Chairman Finn passed away. His sons have shown an interest in making a donation to the Adoption Celebration/Foster Children's Holiday Party in his remembrance. Director Van Saun, Ms. Meyers and other Human Services Directors and Administrative Staff recently attended a meeting with Mr. McGinley, Mr. Perry and Ms. Lawrence to discuss Advisory Board ByLaws that needed approval from past years as well as the agency websites. Mr. Perry is newly assigned to the ABC committee. Different requirements on each board were discussed at this meeting. The Luzerne/Wyoming County Systems of Care Expo was held virtually on September 28th and 29th. Mr. Alunni discussed the event. Having a live session was vital in making connections but with COVID they needed to change the format. There were 20 sessions that took place at the virtual expo. It went well this year. Manager Bartolai discussed that staff continues to work remotely. Everyone is required to wear masks. Families are visiting in the building and areas are being cleaned frequently. Trainings are virtual for staff as well as meetings. The Needs Based Budget process is complete and responses to the follow up questions have been returned. The annual inspection process concluded last week. Administration is waiting for the exit interview date to determine the final outcome of the inspection. Administration continues to prepare for the County budget. The Events Committee is meeting to discuss the Holiday Party/Adoption Celebration. Tentatively it is scheduled for

December 12th. This year the plan is to have a drive by Santa event. The Adoption Celebration cannot be held so an idea is to give everyone that adopted a tree to plant. There will be a meeting this week to discuss further. The RFP process is going well. The Bidders Conference is October 20th and will be held virtually. There are 25 caseworker vacancies. Management and HR have been working hard to bring candidates in. FBI clearances are holding things up but the agency has made offers to about 10 candidates. If you ordered a windbreaker you can pick it up at the main office on Thursday from 9am-noon and Friday from 10am to 2pm. Those who paid extra for their windbreakers, the money was put towards the Holiday Party/Adoption Celebration and the agency would like to thank those individuals for their generosity. If you have not paid for your jacket yet, please do so when you pick it up.

Member Childs stated that Ollie's in Hazleton is collecting money for Children and Youth at their cash registers. C&Y staff were not aware of this so Member Childs will talk to the store manager to clarify.

Committee Reports

1. **Events and Fundraising (Wilder)** – Secretary Wilder noted that he has not heard from Wegmans in regards to the donation request for the Adoption Celebration. Donations are down this year so Secretary Wilder sent out another round of letters. So far the donations from letters, windbreakers and Barry's book have totaled \$802.00. There is a meeting coming up soon with the Events Committee. There is a meeting set up with Attorney Rodgers regarding the Holiday Party.
2. **Strategic Planning and ByLaws (Gochoel)** – Vice Chairman Gochoel discussed the survey link that was sent out. He needs more responses. It will be sent out again and he kindly asked for everyone to complete the survey by Monday. Some questions required feedback. He will schedule another meeting to review results as well as schedule a meeting to review the ByLaws. He would like to put together a list of goals by January 2021.
3. **Recruiting and Community Advocacy (Song)** – Chairman Song noted they will be meeting with Attorney Rodgers. She went through another interview with County Council to renew her membership. There are several Board Members who have terms that expire in December. She will contact them to determine if they plan to renew or not. Member Farrell and Member Scarnulis do not plan to renew. Chairman Song asked that Members assist in recruiting. Discussion took place on what is considered conflicts of interest in recruiting. She hopes to hear from County Council on the recent interviews.

Old/New Business – Chairman Song asked when a member resigns if the person receives anything. It was clarified that a thank you letter is sent to each resigning Member.

Fiscal Update – Mr. Dalessandro noted that on November 16th, Director Van Saun and he will be presenting the C&Y budget to Council. He will know in December what the final allocation will be. Chairman Song and Vice Chairman Gochoel would like to listen in. Mr. Dalessandro will send details to them.

Final Questions/Comments – **Reminder that the November meeting will be held Wednesday, November 4th due to the agency being closed the 2nd Wednesday of the month for Veteran's Day.** Chairman Song asked that for upcoming meeting, when Advisory Board Members get their invite to the meeting, can they please RSVP so she can ensure there will be a quorum. The CPS case discussion will take place next month. Member Childs wanted a case specific clarification and discussion. Manager Bartolai discussed how when a child goes into

placement, the judge has the ultimate decision after presentation of the evidence and there are attorneys for all parties involved. If the child is placed there is a 10 Day Meeting with the family. A Child Permanency Plan goes into effect with services put in place to remedy what caused the placement. Manager Bartolai discussed how there is a lot of work put into each case. Chairman Song asked that Advisory Board Members be included in the virtual 10 Day Meetings again. Ms. Meyers will contact Ms. Dymond to ask that Members be invited to 10 Day Meetings again.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn by Member Wilder, seconded by Member Childs, all in favor.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 12:00pm.