



COUNTY OF LUZERNE  
PENNSYLVANIA  
ESTABLISHED 1786

## Luzerne County Children and Youth Services

**Date/T:**

September 12, 2018 **Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

### **In Atte**

Ciro Ciarrapino, Larry Finn, Denis Gochoel, LeDonne Kelly, Lawrence Marchetti, Fritz Scarnulis, Eileen Song, Joshua Wilder, Susan Roskos

### **Absent:**

John Bonin, Joseph Sperrazza, Rosella Fedor-Purcell, James Geiger, Rita Mauriello, Sue Strassman, Ruth Betty Baltimore

### **Children and Youth:**

Ellen Dymond, Kelly Gaughan, Deanna German, Emily Intelicato, Georgine Meyers, Robin Ritsick, Jan Wojnar

**Welcome** – Chairman Finn welcomed everyone to the September meeting. He introduced the newest members of the Advisory Board: Eileen Song, Larry Marchetti, and Maggie Farrell.

**Approval of Minutes** – July meeting minutes approved by Member Cinti, seconded by Member Scarnulis, all in favor.

**Director's Report** – Deputy Director German noted that Director Van Saun is unable to attend today so she will be covering for her. The Director's Report will cover the last 2 months since there was not an August meeting. Currently there are 16 caseworker vacancies. There are new employees coming on board for August and September.

The Quality Service Review (QSR) is our annual inspection but looking in depth at the quality of work done by agency staff. The QSR is a long process in which the QSR teams interview families, service providers and others involved with the family. It is a very intensive process.

The Needs Based Budget has 2 parts: The Narrative was submitted on time and the fiscal portion is due on Friday. One of the agency's main obstacles is that the fiscal officers were separated from the agency so Director Van Saun has been overseeing the entire fiscal department and running the day to day operations. The agency has hired consultants to assist in the fiscal department and the Fiscal Officer 3 position is to be posted.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) process will soon be beginning. The agency writes up services that are needed for the families served and providers respond. There is a fiscal component to the RFP process.

The agency had been working with the court system in regards to the lack of Parent Attorneys and Guardian Ad Litem and they are now at full complement, however the agency recently received a resignation from a C&Y attorney. The judge is hearing cases and the court has added

a second Hearing Master that will only oversee shelter care hearings. The agency and County had hired PFM consulting firm to interview the agency's legal department staff, management staff, as well as supervisors and Administration hopes to receive their recommendations and assessment on what changes can be made to streamline that department. Marijo Sullivan retired after 38 years and was in the legal department. This position will be a large void to fill. Ms. Sullivan had been the agency's public relations person, SWAN liaison, and foster care supervisor among other duties.

The agency continues to have issues posting positions in a timely manner. Currently there are 4 Managers and Administration wanted a 5<sup>th</sup> posted as in the past there had been 5 Managers. The Fiscal Officer positions have been vacant since March. There are issues with Civil Service. The OHS Director is exploring hiring a consultant to try to get the County out of Civil Service.

The agency receives calls in which there are no abuse or neglect. The agency screeners try to get as much information as possible. The agency put into place field screeners to assist in information gathering. The field screener would go out into the field and make contact to determine if additional information may allege abuse or neglect or should be screened out.

The annual Adoption Celebration is held annually in November. The agency reached out to the SWAN affiliates to see if there is a mini-grant opportunity coming out this year. There is no word yet. The events committee will be meeting soon to start the planning process for the event.

Lynn Hill, OHS Director, and other department heads came together to plan Luzerne County Cares Community Expo on 9/26/18 at the Woodlands. It is a free event. They ask for everyone interested to register. There are 3 speakers scheduled to attend the event. Deputy Director German has brochures to hand out if anyone would like to take some. It is open to everyone in the community. There are breakout sessions, free food, information tables and much more.

The County has started doing some improvements to the parking lot. Currently they are working on making an exit. Next year they are looking at repaving the parking lots, bringing them up to ADA standards and add visitor parking. They will keep us informed.

The Head Start Director met with agency representatives. Emily Intelicato will be the liaison. The agency plans to meet regularly to discuss shared cases and discuss services so we can be sure the families are getting the best services they can.

Deputy Director German reached out to Columbia County Children and Youth to establish Standard Operating Procedures for referrals since both counties border together.

Deputy Director German and Board Members discussed turnover, salaries, nature of the job, level of paperwork and stress as well as foster family regulations.

Chairman Finn noted that he wants to contact Lynn Hill and David Pedri regarding the fiscal situation. For the Civil Service issues he will contact Representative Toohill.

Jan Wojnar did a presentation on the Adolescent Unit.

## **Old Business**

No old business.

## **New Business**

- 1. Committee participation** –Member Wilder welcomed anyone that would like to join committees and noted that the Fundraising Committee will be meeting with the agency’s events committee to formulate a plan for the upcoming Adoption Celebration.
- 2. Fundraising**-Member Wilder noted that there is now a safety net for the Foster Children’s Holiday Party so we need to bridge the gap with funding for the Adoption Celebration. It was decided that letters would be sent out to fundraise.

**Final Questions/Comments** – The Foster Children’s Holiday Party will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup> from 1pm-3pm. There will be someone playing piano, Santa will be there and students will volunteer to assist. David Gaugler is working on solidifying a venue.

**Adjournment** - Motion to adjourn made by Member Cinti, seconded by Member Gochoel, all in favor.

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at 12:00pm.**