

**Richland County Youth and Family Council Meeting**

**November 2, 2023**

**1:30 p.m.**

**Richland County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board/Microsoft TEAMS**

**The following members were:**

**Present:** Joe Devany, Sherri Branham-Fonner, Lori Bedson, Darrell Banks, Kevin Kimmel, Dan Varn, Michele Giess, Nikki Harless, Kevin VanMeter, Hannah Crouch, Wendy Thompson

**Absent:** Tiffany Ellenberger, Lisa Benson, Meghan Wheeler

**Administrative Staff Present:** Executive Director: Michelle Miller, Fiscal: Toby Borders

**Present via Microsoft TEAMS:** Richelle Ettel, Melissa Swank, Jessica Caughlan, Ashley Leadingham

**Guests:** Katie Gatten, Ashlea Shaw, Terry Carter, Julie Litt, Siera Marth-May, Patricia Dollison, Amanda Soliven, Jean Taddie, Kaye Clark, Jenette Karger, Anne Vermillion, Whitney Lindsay, Holly Christie

**1. Call to Order & Introductions**

President Joe Devany called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and began introductions. A quorum was established with at least six voting members in attendance.

**2. Approval of October 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting (October 5, 2023) was made by Kevin Kimmel and seconded by Michele Giess. The motion passed by a voice vote.

**3. Treasurer's Report**

A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Kevin Kimmel and seconded by Nikki Harless. The motion passed by a voice vote.

**4. New Business**

***State/FCFC Updates***

Michelle provided updates regarding funding through the Safe Communities grant and various other items.

- The Safe Communities grant will provide Richland County with the following:
  - a) \$5,000 – to be used for school-based services related to emotional/substance abuse;
  - b) \$39,200 split with Huron County to be used for employment and independent living services, employment attire, gas cards, graduation fees, school supplies for secondary education;
  - c) \$27,800 split with Huron County– to be used for respite services (up to 10 hours/week per family);
  - d) \$26,857 split with Huron County – to be used for family support services, risk reduction/births, ramps, bath chairs, grab bars, assistive technology, accessibility needs;
  - e) \$10,000 not split with Huron County– to be used for Kinship services (bedding, personal care items, outlet covers clothing, etc.);
  - f) \$5,000 not split with Huron County – to be used for Trauma Informed training

Michelle attended the state-wide Youth and Family Council Directors' Conference. Michelle stated eight Youth and Family Council directors have resigned in the past year. A work group has been established to analyze the situation and offer support; Michelle is participating on the workgroup. Additionally, Michelle

stated Kara Wente, the new Director of the Ohio Department of Children and Youth, addressed the conference members. Michelle added she is excited to see what will happen for families under the new department; the focus is on reaching children earlier.

Michelle informed Council members the Women's Fund has decided not to fund the child care conference this year. The Women's Fund is willing to offer \$9,000 in grant funding for in-home provider mentoring/training.

Julie asked Michelle if she could provide a breakdown of the funding amounts and purposes to assist agencies in making referrals under the Safe Communities grant.

### ***El Update***

Julie informed members Early Intervention is collaborating with Ohio Rise. Early Intervention staff have completed required state training and staff will participate in training on developing service plans for families. Julie stated referrals have increased to 31.

### ***Revision of By-Laws***

Members discussed the proposed changes to the by-laws. Following is a synopsis of issues discussed.

- Article Three: Value Statement – the language has been changed to a broader, more general statement
- Article Four: Membership – language regarding mandated/required members has been revised to match language in the statute (removal of designee language with respect to the Mental Health Board and the Board of DD, does not pertain to our local situation); language pertaining to the county's Early Childhood Coordinating Committee that had been "stricken" has been included
- Article Five: Voting Members – suggestion to revise the language in 5.3 (conflict of interest) to just limit the member from voting (abstain from vote) rather than meeting discussion, etc.
- Article Six: Statutory Responsibilities and Powers (6.1(d)) – changed to reflect the more general statement noted under Article Three
- Article Seven: Officers – language revised to implement a fixed, rotation process with respect to Officers; Michele questioned if it is appropriate to have a state member Chair the Board, Joe replied a member can remove himself/herself from the rotation
- Article Eight: Duties of Officers – language revised to identify representative of the administrative agent as the Treasurer
- Article Nine: Council Staff – language revised to indicate the position of Executive Director is supervised by the Board of Commissioners (currently; this can change as a result of a change in administrative/fiscal agent)
- Article Ten: Meetings – regarding a quorum, the question was asked if a quorum could be designated if a majority is not present; however, the response was no, a majority of voting members must be present; language regarding questions to the Board (10.8) should be revised to indicate questions should be directed to the Board as a whole; regarding 10.9, it was suggested this should reflect statutory language and possibly distinguish between excused/unexcused absences
- Article Eleven: Standing Committees – there was a question regarding the Early Childhood Coordinating Committee and whether it needs to be addressed in the by-laws (does it exist); change the reference to Newhope (11.3 Care Management Team) to Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Members asked if the Council could conduct meetings virtually – Darrell will seek guidance from A. Keller

Members tabled approval of the by-laws to allow time to review statutory language and make any changes needed.

***Imagination Library (Dolly Parton program)***

Michelle informed members of a meeting with the Coordinator of the Ohio Imagination Library program. A representative of the Health Department and JFS attended the meeting with Michelle. According to the Coordinator of the program, counties/regions can designate a 501(c)(3) entity to administer the local program (seek donations, manage local child recipients, etc.). Currently, roughly 65% of age eligible children residing in Richland County are receiving monthly books through the program. Michelle is asking the Council members if the Council would like to spearhead the designation of an entity to manage the local program.

Dan informed Council members the United Way administers the Big Red Book Shelf program which he believes is a more efficient means locally, making it easier to manage local funds. Hannah noted there are conveniences related to the Imagination Library that might be missing in the local program such as delivery to the child's home. Additionally, Hannah stated there might be a difference in the quality of books from program to program. Wendy stated the Child Development Center spotlights information regarding the Imagination Library in its quarterly newsletter for parents. Julie stated children/families have access to the program so how would this increase accessibility; where are children being missed in the community? Katie mentioned the Library is concerned about the return of books when a child/family moves. She added the Library is not a 501(c)(3) so could not administer the local program and she does not believe the "Friends of the Library" could manage the program. Hannah stated the books follow the child as long as the family informs the program of the new address. Kevin informed members Marion County established a 501(c)(3) specifically to manage the local Imagination Library program. Wendy suggested reaching out to Marion County to seek guidance, ask questions. Joe suggested reaching out to Community Action as well.

**5. Old Business**

No old business was discussed.

**6. Updates/Announcements**

Joe informed members the Head Start program has been redesigned to expand the Early Head Start program due to limitations in staffing.

Michele informed members the Sterkel Park Project is coming along but weather has stopped the project for now. She added construction on the primary play area should begin in the Spring.

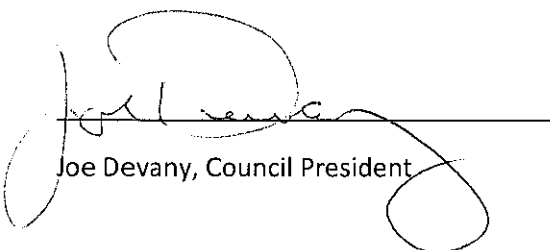
Wendy stated she is excited about working with Kara Wentz and the new department with its focus on early childhood education.

Katie informed members the Friends of the Library donated kits to the Buckeye Imagination Museum. A variety of kits will be rotated for use by the museum. Terry stated 211 distributed 352 surveys to local agencies as part of the accreditation process for 211.

Susan Clat stated there have been many community safety concerns that have affected the City Schools/students. The City Schools are working to keep students safe.

**7. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Michele and seconded by Kevin (K or V?). The motion passed by a voice vote.



Joe Devany, Council President



Michelle Miller, Executive Director