

CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

FEBRUARY 21, 2018

A meeting of the Children's Services Advisory Board of Manatee County, Florida, was held at the Manatee County Administration Building, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Manatee Room, Bradenton, FL 34205 Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Richard Aubry, Xtavia Bailey, Joanne Hibbs, Sharon Jefferson, Pierrette Kelly, Kimberly Kutch, Gina Messenger, Sandra Stone, Debbie Tapp, Melanie Teves Bell. **Absent Unexcused:** George VanBuren. **Excused:** Jeremy Giddens. **Also Present:** County Staff: Cheri Coryea, Deputy County Administrator, Ava Ehde, Interim Department Director, Susan Ford, LaWanda Timmons, James Slusser, Chris HandyHoneycutt, Deric Hanson. **Members of Public:** Kristin Olsen, Becky Canesse, Char Young, Laurel Lynch, Dora Santana, Bridget Harry, Katrina Bellemare, Beth Clark.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Kimberly Kutch, Chair called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Minutes for January 17, 2018, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Pierrette Kelly, **Seconded by** Joanne Hibbs **Vote:** Motion passed (**summary:** Yes = 8, No = 0, Abstain = 0).

SUNCOAST CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE LEVEL READING – Beth Duda

Beth Duda, Director of the Suncoast Campaign for Grade Level Reading, working with the Patterson Foundation in Manatee and Sarasota Counties, provided information on the importance of the campaign. Currently 80% of the low-income children in the U.S. cannot read proficiently by the end of third grade. This is an important benchmark because children are taught to read before third grade, but after third grade they are expected to be able to read to learn. If they haven't met that benchmark, they fall further and further behind and are 13 times more likely to drop out of high school. Two-thirds of children that are not proficient by the end of 4th grade; two-thirds of those children will end up in our prison system or on welfare. In Manatee County, 50% of our third grade students are unable to read proficiently by 3rd grade. The work of the campaign concentrates on 5 main areas and working together with the community for better results for our children. Summer is time that can and has been utilized to help close the achievement gap.

Sandra Stone entered @ 3:12 pm

Sharon Jefferson entered @ 3:14 pm

STAFF UPDATES

Cheri Coryea introduced Ava Ehde who is serving as the interim department director. Ava has been with Manatee County for 15 years, starting with the libraries, moving up in that organization to Library Services Manager and now as the Interim Department Director. Susan Ford reported the new staff have been working hard, learning new parts of their jobs, and doing site visits. LaWanda Timmons provided information on the 2018 Luncheon Lecture Series on the impact of prisoner reentry on the community. They will be held in Sarasota on March 2nd, April 6th, and May 11th. The cost per luncheon is \$30.00. For more information, members can contact LaWanda or Susan. Ms. Coryea gave an update on the funding process and the application. We are entering negotiations with the software application vendor and are confident that we can bring this in and that the board will enjoy the changes. There will be a revision to the schedule and timing of the process this year. Staff will create a schedule that works with the available timeline and the availability of

the majority. Discussion ensued on the timeline scenarios proposed and members expressed concern for starting later and shortening the review time available to them. The consensus was to start at earliest possible date and to keep the number of applications reviewed per week at a reasonable level in consideration of their time it takes to complete reviews. Susan Ford shared that Hal Williams has developed a mock application that will be available to the members prior to the start of the reviews so they can practice and get a better comfort level with the application, matrix and the online system.

Just for Girls

Kim Kutch reported she had recently been informed that, from a DCF standpoint, Just for Girls had decided not to contract with the county for the current fiscal year, which would effectively leave the funding allocated to the agency unused. She wanted to make sure the board was informed that the agency has not signed any contracts for this year. Cheri Coryea confirmed that no contracts have been signed. The agency was awarded funding for two programs; \$244,439 for GAPS, a prevention program for middle school students at the alternative school in Palmetto; and \$858,047 for an Out of School Time program at three locations.

Staff has been negotiating with the agency and all reasonable requests have been taken into consideration. Several revisions have been presented to the agency between November and now. We expect a resolution of the remaining minor issue with the GAPS agreement by the end of the week. We are very concerned about the before and after school program and have been attempting to negotiate and finalize a funding agreement that closely follows the OST program proposal from which the CSAB recommendations were determined, but some issues remain that we may not be able to agree upon. Staff provided an acceptable draft agreement the first week of January, but to date Just for Girls and the County have been unable to agree to finalize it.

Xtavia Bailey inquired what issue is causing the problem. What is different from last year or the years before that they don't want to sign the contract? Ms. Coryea stated the contract requirements have not substantially changed from the prior year. The problem relates to 2017 state rule changes in School Age Child Care (F.A.C. 65C-22.008), which ended the child care licensure exemption status for most OST providers throughout the state, including Rubonia Community Center, United Community Center, Tallevast Community Center, and possibly Just for Girls. Rubonia and United Community Center have attained licenses and Tallevast is in the process.

The OST contracts require parents to sign their children in and out as documentation for payment of services to ensure accountability. This requirement, in addition to direct supervision of children, release of children to a designated adult, and safety measures of the OST standards, are an issue in terms of open access or drop-in exemptions for state licensure. Because the Out of School Standards, adopted by this board, are consistently applied across all the agencies that receive our funds, there is a concern about revising them for an individual program for a legitimate problem. If we are unable to come to an agreement, and this matter is on the March meeting agenda for discussion, staff will prepare information and provide it to you in advance of the meeting.

Palmetto Youth Center

Cheri Coryea provided a handout of an email to Reggie Bellamy, Executive Director and Miss Kim Riker, the chairman of the Palmetto Youth Center. At the last two BOCC meetings the staff was directed to acquire some additional information including staff time per funded program and how much is billed to the county. Ms. Coryea spoke to the director who is working on this information to be provided to the county by 5:00 pm February 22, 2018. In addition, staff was directed to verify the annual salary of the Executive Director and to clarify the percent of direct time per position worked with the two funded programs. We are asking this as a courtesy in response to BOCC level questions. The contracts we have and the programs we fund are for services provided and not contingent upon staff in a position, unless otherwise noted, which happens in a rare

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case. The information we receive will be shared with the board. If there are any items of concern, we will take them back to the BOCC at the March 6 meeting. If no items of concern arise, the information will be kept on file.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Kim Kutch asked for information about the proposed homestead exemption, and how it will affect the Children's Services funding, as an item on a future agenda.

Debbie Tapp asked if the Commissioners have been briefed on Results First and understand that the CSAB is going to get out of this kind of detail and focus on results. Ms. Coryea confirmed the BOCC was briefed on Results First in 2016 and 2017, and Hal Williams has met with them individually. The Commissioners are on board and are talking about results routinely.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Becky Canesse, CEO of Just for Girls, presented the agency's 2017 Annual Report and provided a handout for the members. The agency has three sites in Manatee County providing before and after school programs. There are two alternative education centers; one for elementary in East Bradenton, and one for middle school in Palmetto. Just for Girls is a private non-profit organization, which subcontracts with the local school district to provide alternative dropout prevention programming, and the CSAB invests in pregnancy prevention and drug and alcohol abuse prevention program services. In addition to the before and after school and summer programs, Scholastic Saturdays services are provided. Last year, program participants that attended Scholastic Saturdays had an average reading gain of 75 points compared to demographically similar peers of equal proficiency with an average reading gain of 17 points. The hitch with the county contract this year is related to state statutory changes to licensing exemption criteria that became effective in April of last year and triggered a reaction by DCF on continued exemption as a drop in, open access program. She intends to take a stand on behalf of all girls who do not have a parent available or willing to come in and sign them out. Open access, licensing exemption, allows girls to leave the program facility without adult supervision or being signed out by a parent.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 18, 2018, Manatee Room of the County Administrative Complex, 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

APPROVED:


Kimberly Kutch, Chairman

April 18, 2018
Date

EACH MEETING OF THIS BOARD IS RECORDED. THESE RECORDINGS ARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPON REQUEST.