

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
EMERGENCY MEETING
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR MANATEE ROOM
1112 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, Florida
July 13, 2026**

Present were:

Xtavia Bailey, Chairperson
Jannon Pierce, Vice-Chairperson
Hon. Scott Brownell
Kristin Gallagher
Cassandra Mitchell
Connie Shingledecker
Debbie Tapp
Rita Smith

Absent were:

Carolann Garafola
Heather Felton
Michelle Laughrey

Two seats are vacant.

Also present were:

Melissa Bomar, Children's Services Section Manager
Johanna Beville, Program Analyst
Brenda Marquez Facio, Human Services Analyst
Hannah Bishop, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
Chairperson Bailey called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
Chairperson Bailey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA/SIGN-IN SHEET

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3. **ROLL CALL**
A quorum was declared.
4. **REASONING FOR EMERGENCY MEETING**
Melissa Bomar, Children's Services Coordinator, stated the purpose of the emergency meeting was to discuss Just for Girls, Stepping Up Two Success, request for reconsideration of funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027.

Discussion ensued regarding changes in the program over the past year, timing and process for reconsideration requests, the program does not meet the emergency funding requirements, meetings with the Just for Girls corporate office, the updated budget and improvement plan, revised documentation presented, notification provided to programs that were not recommended for funding, this request should be considered by the Board of County Commissioners, rather than this Board, thanked Just for Girls staff for all their

efforts throughout the process, and the potential development of a 30-day plan moving forward.

Johanna Beville, Program Analyst, addressed maintaining transparency, potential next steps for Just for Girls, proposed changes to the Stepping Up to Success Program, following the School District's decision not to renew the Girls Alternative Path to Success (GAPS) Program, meetings were held with Just for Girls corporate and foundation Boards and CPA regarding program changes, financial information, staffing changes, implantation plans, and inconsistent communication. Staff reviewed the previously identified \$2.9 million, cumulative deficit for the GAPS and Stepping Up To Success programs for FY 2021 through the second quarter of FY 2026, based on agency-submitted financial reports, and noted continued coordination with community partners and investors regarding County-funding programs.

Candice Copeland, Corporate President, Just for Girls, introduced the organization's team, and addressed the purpose and mission of the program.

Bryan Carter, Auditor, Just for Girls, discussed the financial data, audit results, and funding for the foundation.

Reverend James T. Golden questioned the purpose of this emergency meeting and requested reconsideration of funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027.

Dreena Green, Just for Girls, thanked the Board for all efforts accomplished.

The being no further public comments, Chairperson Bailey closed public comments.

5. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/UPDATES**

There were no Commissioner comments or updates.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There being no public comment, Chairperson Bailey closed public comment.

7. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place August 19, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., at the Manatee County Administrative Building, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, in the 5th Floor Manatee Room.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairperson Bailey adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Minutes Approved: _____

