

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR MANATEE ROOM  
1112 Manatee Avenue West  
Bradenton, Florida  
September 17, 2025**

Present were:

Xtavia Bailey, Chairman  
Jannon Pierce, Vice-Chairman, (Entered during meeting)  
Hon. Scott Brownell  
Constance Charles-Logan  
Heather Felton  
Carolann Garafola  
Patricia Miner  
Connie Shingledecker  
Rita Smith  
Debbie Tapp

Three seats are vacant

Also present were:

Kristi Hagen, Children's Services Coordinator  
Melissa Bomar, Human Services Analyst  
Brenda Marquez Facio, Human Services Analyst  
Denic Gunic, Human Services Analyst  
Mark Dillon, Senior Human Services Analyst  
Lorrie Ruggiero, Administrative Specialist Temp  
Hannah Bishop, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

1. Chairman Bailey called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

**AGENDA/SIGN-IN SHEET**

CS20250917DOC001

2. **ROLL CALL**

A quorum was declared.

3. **MINUTES**

A motion was made by Member Shingledecker, seconded by Member Felton, and carried 9-0, to approve the minutes of June 25, 2025.

4. **ALICE UPDATE**

Douglas Griesenauer, United Way Suncoast, utilized a slide presentation to provide an update regarding Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) report, data, what is ALICE, continued growth of ALICE and poverty-level households in our Counties, current percentage trends, workforce conditions, household survival budget for Manatee County in 2023, takeaways for 2025 and comparisons to previous years, charts and graphs of Counties, ALICE rates, families with children, and households by age in both Manatee and Pinellas Counties in 2023, and households by race and ethnicity in Manatee County.

Discussion ensued regarding the data, funding concerns, comparison of the household budget in other Counties, growing number of households falling within the ALICE

threshold, homelessness among the elderly, workforce distribution, the rising cost of living, funding and process for businesses, knowledge of services available to the community, best practices, incremental change, housing expense, the need for affordable housing, value of trade schools, concerns with the gap between education and employment, access to community services, and key takeaways from the study presented.

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(Enter Vice-Chairman Pierce)

5. **SLEEP BABY SAFELY UPDATE**

Rachel Spivey, Early Learning Coalition, utilized a slide presentation to provide an update regarding Sleep Baby Safely, overview of the program, including the numbers, outreach events, trainings, materials distributed, highlighted community collaborations, training with Lakewood Ranch Hospital nursing staff, and West Coast Women's Specialists, one child death in 2025, preventable sleep-related deaths reported in October of 2023, local data from the Department of Child and Families (DCF), a First Responder action plan, social media campaign, and shared a promotional video.

Discussion ensued thanking Rachel for all efforts accomplished, and community collaboration.

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6. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/UPDATES**

Commissioner Ballard noted that there was significant discussion during the September 16, 2025, Board of County Commissioners meeting regarding non-profit funding, the Just for Girls program was pulled for further clarification. Furthermore, the updated language was (overall) approved, just that paragraph that references 8 U.S.C. § 1621 was removed. Commissioner Ballard clarified that although it was removed from the template, this only removes oversight as a requirement placed on the County. It remains that the nonprofit agency is still required to maintain 8 U.S.C. § 1621.

Discussion ensued regarding Just for Girls program, and the contracts for the Non-Profit agencies.

7. **STAFF UPDATES**

Denic Gunic, Human Services Analyst, introduced himself, and expressed excitement to work with agencies.

Brenda Marquez Facio, Human Services Analyst, re-observed Safe Children Coalition (SCC) Youth Intervention program for the second time, as this is a new program, and stated the client has made changes since the first visit, the client and the case worker have created a relationship, and found no issues or concerns.

Melissa Bomar, Human Services Analyst, is still in the process of negotiating Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 contracts with Agencies and creating contracts for the new programs, since June's meeting, site visits have been conducted for Iron Sharpening Iron, Healthy Teens, Dream Oaks, Meals on Wheels, Next Generation Academics, and Manatee Children's Services- Residential program with no concerns, and compiled the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) audit information.

Mark Dillon, Senior Human Services Analyst, completed compliance visits for two programs, in August, the Manatee County Summer Blast Program was found to be well-

organized and compliant with no concerns, however, the June visit to the Palmetto Youth Center's HYPE program revealed several issues, including incomplete client files, missing attendance verification for December of 2024, and delayed notification of service gaps in April of 2025, additionally, the program used Millage funds to pay weekly stipends to some participants, as a result, the grant manager initiated a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), and Manatee County Government withheld funds from July to September of 2025 pending a fiscal audit scheduled for September of 2025, and follow-up visits in August confirmed that the HYPE program addressed all concerns, and the CAP was closed.

Discussion ensued regarding the Palmetto Youth Center audit action plan, and compliance visit.

Kristi Hagen, Children's Services Coordinator, reminded the Children's Services Advisory Board (CSAB) about the upcoming retreat at the Lakewood Ranch Library on October 3, 2025, where three new members will attend, requested formation of two subcommittee's to review overall CSAB procedures and update budget data for application guidance, this meeting marked the last for Dr. Charles Logan and Patricia Miner, thanked Lorie Ruggiero for her support in digitizing historical documents, and improving accessibility, and noted that recommendations were accepted and approved during yesterday's meeting, pending the County's final budget hearing on September 22, 2025.

8. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

9. **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

There was no new or old business.

10. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will occur October 15, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., in the Manatee County Administrative Building, 1112 Manatee Avenue W, Bradenton, in the 5th Floor Manatee Room.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Bailey adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

