

**ALLEN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES
BOARD MEETING
January 17, 2017**

Members Present: Dr. Hughes, Mr. Howard, Mr. Stolly, Mr. Long, Dr. Holmes, Ms. Fox.

Not Present: Mrs. Buckley-Skaja, Mr. Hayne, Ms. Provaznik, Mr. Reiff, and Mrs. Eggert.

Dr. Hughes called the Board meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

The Board minutes of November 15, 2016 were approved as written.

Guest Speaker: Allen County Prosecutor Juergen Waldick

Prosecutor Waldick provided an update for the high profile foster child case. Prosec. Waldick invited Board Members to contact him with any further questions.

Mr. Long thanked Prosecutor Waldick on behalf of the board for the support the Prosecutors office gave to ACCS. He stated it speaks volumes to the partnership that exists between both agencies.

Dr. Hughes wanted to thank all ACCS staff for the work and determination that occurred during this situation, you endured an immense amount of stress during this time. The work you continue to do, is recognized and appreciated fully. The board members are proud to sit on the board with you, as you continue to serve the community.

AGENCY BUSINESS

- ***COMMITTEE REPORTS***
 - Budget and Finance Committee –

RESOLUTION 0117-01: Ratifies the payment of bills for the month of November 2016.

Mr. Howard made a motion to approve, Ms. Fox seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-02: Ratifies the payment of bills for December 2016.

Dr. Holmes made a motion to approve, Mr. Long seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-03: Authorizes assigning authority to the Executive Director of Allen County Children Services to serve as their designee and therefore grant that party authority to sign the inter-county adjustment on behalf of the Agency for calendar year 2017 in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code Section 5101:9-6-82(F)(2)(a).

Mr. Long made a motion to approve, Mr. Stolly seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

- Community Engagement Committee – did not meet.
- Donated Funds Committee – did not meet.
- Nominating Committee – did not meet.
- Personnel Committee – did not meet.
- Program Services Committee – did not meet.
- By-Laws & Policy Committee – did not meet.

All committees will meet in the first quarter 2017, these meetings have yet to be set.

- ***PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORTS***

Ms. Scanland stated Intake and Assessment data is not reported at this time.

Mr. Bruni presented Placement Statistics as of January 17, 2017

First List: Children in Placement.

This list breaks down the counties our children are placed in throughout Ohio. There are children that you will notice are placed in counties quite far away, which is due to the location of some of our Child Residential Centers (CRC), for example there are two children in Ashland County, on child in a CRC and one is in a family foster home. The child placement numbers have decreased from 134 in July 2016 to 114 as of today.

Second List: Child Placement Type

We have 84 children in Allen County approved homes, 7 in Network homes, 12 CRC/Institutional placement, 5 group homes, 5 relative placement and one in Juvenile Detention.

Dr. Hughes stated she would like to point out that we have a high number of children in Mercer counties homes, and she would like to see this number decrease. The legal system in Mercer does not respect Allen Counties' legal system. We should not have children placed in Mercer County homes. Children are placed due to the child's needs, this is governed by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). Location is one of these factors, the child should be kept as close to their birth parents as possible, to enable the child to attend the same school system (if needed). We should ensure we are looking at all factors prior to placing. Some of the children in Mercer County have already been in these placements, or a child has been placed in a Mercer county home with a sibling already in this placement, which is also ORC. We should be trying to place with families if possible. In the high profile case, the child was not allowed to stay with a relative, and this is an issue.

There is a legislative fix that is required to close a loophole that exists in adoption law, which was used in this case. The fix will ensure when a case has a child abuse, neglect and dependency overlay, there will be exclusive jurisdiction with juvenile court. There also need to be a fix with foster parents. In the high profile case foster parents would not have anything to do with birth mom for the first 8/9 months of the case. When reunification was no longer an option, foster parents ceased the opportunity to manipulate birth mom. The attorney that was used in this case, was very seasoned and skilled at adoption work arounds, which includes plotting, and advising social media attacks. There are cases that are occurring in some other states, with one in Ohio. The same things are occurring in these case. They are selling items, such as trinkets and mugs to raise money, and they are all connected to American Attorney's Adoption Association. It is a movement that is evolving. In this situation the agency followed mandates, law and best practice. We are looking at addressing our timeliness in these decisions in current and future cases.

Mr. Bruni stated our current practice is to look at Allen County homes first, if we have to go outside, Mr. Bruni is involved, if they are going to place in Mercer County, Executive Director Scanland is involved.

Ms. Scanland stated it is worth referencing the reduction in custody numbers, 114 today down from 134 in July 2016. Supervisors and managers are working diligently to reduce these numbers. Once the 12 children that are referenced in the adoption subsidies on the agenda this evening are adopted, it will reduce our numbers close to 100 children in custody.

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Confidentiality reviewed and the foster parent licensing process.

Ms. Scanland asked if Board Members would like a copy of Chief Justice O'Connor's decision, as it lays out the pathway of child abuse and neglect and the reason she was against the decision that was made. This will be sent to board members.

Mr. Stolly asked if relative family in high profile could use the fix that is being sought to help gain custody if child. The family cannot use the fix, although they are able to use the procedural errors that were made during the Mercer County probate court proceedings. Other families that this may affect will benefit from the fix. The Supreme Court used the linear private adoption pathway, there are no laws or precedence when there is a child abuse and neglect overlay. The Supreme Court used private adoption in this case.

Communication: We are looking at a joint public media collaboration. We are partnering with Richland County in a shared service agreement on an interim basis with their Public Information Officer (PIO), who has 15 years in child welfare. We are already developing a communication plan. Internal Communication initially, Planned External Focused in the Community to follow, and lastly Social Media.

- **MEDIA REPORT** - None
- **OLD BUSINESS** - None
- **NEW BUSINESS**

RESOLUTION 0117-04: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for T.G.

Mr. Long made a motion to approve, Dr. Holmes seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-05: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for A.M.

Mr. Stolly made a motion to approve, Dr. Holmes seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-06: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for J.M.

Ms. Fox made a motion to approve, Mr. Long seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-07: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for J.J.B.

Dr. Holmes made a motion to approve, Mr. Stolly seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-08: Approval of Non-Recurring Adoption Request for C.A.

Mr. Howard made a motion to approve, Mr. Long seconded, Motion carried, resolution

adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-09: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for H.M.

Mr. Long made a motion to approve, Ms. Fox seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

The following six subsidies are a result of mediation with adoptive parents, which involved the State of Ohio. This process is used when an adoptive parent and the public children service agency cannot agree upon adoption subsidies. This process is governed by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), the method on how to reach an agreed upon amount is spelled out. The State of Ohio will not assign a dollar amount, they will push it back down to agencies to mediate prior to becoming involved. A mediation agreement was signed that encompassed all six children.

Mr. Bruni, Mr. Rabley and Caseworker Kirkman did a fantastic job during the mediation process.

RESOLUTION 0117-10: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for D.P-F.

Dr. Holmes made a motion to approve, Ms. Fox seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-11: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for J.L.

Mr. Stolly made a motion to approve, Mr. Long seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-12: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for K.T.

Dr. Holmes made a motion to approve, Ms. Fox seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-13: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for J.T.

Mr. Long made a motion to approve, Mr. Stolly seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-14: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for E.T.

Mr. Stolly made a motion to approve, Ms. Fox seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION 0117-15: Approval of Adoption Subsidy Request for A.T.

Mr. Howard made a motion to approve, Dr. Holmes seconded, Motion carried, resolution adopted.

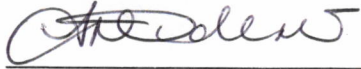
- ***EXECUTIVE SESSION*** - None
- ***CHAIRMAN'S REPORT***

Dr. Hughes requested an update on the positive public relations campaign at the next meeting, who is on the committee, and if you would like any board representation.

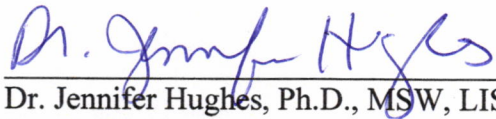
• **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Long made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Howard seconded, Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

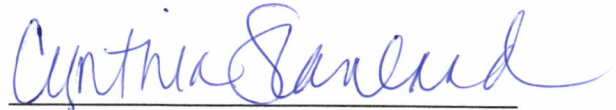
Respectfully submitted,



Joanne K. Sidener
Administrative Coordinator



Dr. Jennifer Hughes, Ph.D., MSW, LISW-S
Board Chair



Cynthia M. Scanland, MSSA
Executive Director