

MEMORANDUM

TO: Advisory Board Members
FROM: Crystal A. Gingrich, MSW, LSW
DATE: January 13, 2009
RE: Agenda for the January 20, 2009 Meeting

A G E N D A

Meeting Location:
Children & Youth Agency
900 East King Street
Conference Room #1
Lancaster, PA
7:30 a.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES
3. OLD BUSINESS
4. NEW BUSINESS
5. COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - Community Relations
 - Children's Services
 - Nominations
 - By-laws
6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT
 - Needs Based Budget Reduction
 - Filling Vacant Positions
 - National Governor's Academy Placement Reduction Plan
7. FISCAL REPORT
8. PUBLIC COMMENT
9. ADJOURNMENT

**THE MISSION OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY IS
TO PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMOTIONAL WELL BEING OF
CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT RISK OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT,
AND TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTHY FAMILY FUNCTIONING.**

**LANCASTER COUNTY CHILDREN & YOUTH AGENCY
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

January 20, 2009

Board Members Present:

Amy Jo Lutz-Phillips, Roger Glick, Karen Jaskot, Edward Tobin, Fr. Allan Wolfe, Alice Yoder, Dr. Brian Young and Commissioner Scott Martin

Staff Present:

Crystal Gingrich, Amy Campbell, Betsy Frame, Greg Landis, Ann Long, Kurt Miller, Pedro Rodriguez, Lisa Runge, Nancy Schuyler, and Kali Kunkle

Excused: Kimberly Ibarra, Nancy Valkenburg, Dolores Reidenbach, Attorney Daniel Lieberman

Public: None

Guests: None

Call to Order:

Board Chair Karen Jaskot called the meeting to order at 7:43 a.m.

Approval of Board Minutes:

Alice Yoder made a motion that the minutes from the November 2008 meeting be accepted, after correction of a typographical error. Dr. Brian Young seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business: If anyone is interested in contributing money to the donation of Christmas cookies that Karen purchased for the Children and Youth staff, please let her know.

New Business:

- Fr. Wolfe led the Board in saying grace for the change in national leadership with the inauguration of Barack Obama scheduled for later this morning
- We have received resignation letters from Board members Patrick McBrearty and Kathy Gregoire, who was also the vice-chair of the Advisory Board. Nancy Valkenburg, current secretary, was unable to attend today and mentioned the possibility that she too may resign. Karen will touch base with her on her availability for future meetings.
- Amy Campbell will be drafting a protocol when there is inclement weather on a morning that Advisory Board is scheduled. If the County is delayed or given the day off due to weather, the Board meeting will be postponed. Everyone will be contacted via e-mail and given a possible alternate date. If a date is not agreed upon, business will be postponed until the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

- Orientation for new Board members will be held immediately following the February Board meeting, at approximately 8:30 am.

Committee Reports:

- ❖ **Community Relations:** There will be a meeting next month. Amy Campbell will send out reminders.
- ❖ **Children's Services:** The committee will be meeting immediately following the Board meeting. Steve Welters, Independent Living Coordinator, and several youth will be meeting with the committee to talk about services we provide the youth.
- ❖ **Nominations:** Karen is attempting to contact two possible candidates, one who works with truancy in the School District of Lancaster and the other person who is a social worker for schools in Columbia.
- ❖ **By-laws:** None

Director's Report:

- Crystal updated the Board on the placement of the eight year old boy with MR, behavioral issues and significant medical issues. A home was located through one of our purchased providers and he is doing very well.
- The State reduced the 2008/09 Needs Based Budget by \$330,000. Two updated budget sheets were distributed for everyone to review the reductions. It is unclear what the 2009/10 Budget will look like at the present time, as the State is still reviewing it. The Office of Children, Youth and Families has requested 0% increases from all county child welfare agencies.
- The County has instituted a new hiring process for the review of all vacant positions. It is not guaranteed that the Agency's mandated positions will be approved to be filled. Each county department must submit all vacancy requests to the County Administrator for approval. Each department then must present the requests to Salary Board (County Commissioners & County Controller) which meets once a month, to approve hiring for the position. Three placement caseworker positions were recently reviewed by the Salary Board on 1/12/09. Two of the vacancies were approved to hire for at the current time.
- The County and the Union came to a tentative agreement on December 16, 2008. The final draft of the contract is still being reviewed by the Union. Hopefully it will be ratified and signed by the Commissioners in the next month.
- Act 109 of 2008 goes into effect in February 2009. Act 109 gives resource families the right to be heard by submitting a written report to the Court prior to schedule hearings. The plan is to send each resource family a notification and a copy of the report form, along with the permanency review petition. Resource families may return the completed form to the Judge, if they choose to do so.
- The format for the Placement Review Committee has changed effective January 2009. Cases taken before the committee will now be heard by the four Directors of Social Services; Amy Campbell, Greg Landis, Kurt Miller and Betsy Frame. Crystal will also participate when her schedule allows. This format change is to enhance a consistent structured decision making process.

- The Agency is participating in the State's National Governor's Academy Initiative, which is designed to safely reduce out of home placements by 15% by the end of 2010. Lancaster's identified reduction number is 101 youths. The NGA reduction plan is being developed. The Plan includes strategies to prevent placements, and more timely reunifications for families or finalized permanency for youths. The NGA plan is a strategic plan for counties to be more purposeful in developing policy, practice and programs that will positively impact children and families and achieve the goal of safely reducing the number of children in care.
- The Agency has identified Agency goals for 2009. Some of the goals are the implementation of safety assessments, Family Group Decision Making conferencing, Implementation of Act 109, family finding, making transfers of cases more efficient and implementation of a new case management database.
- It was noted that the lease on our 900 East King Street office location, expires in five years.
- Crystal distributed a report from the Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children entitled, "Large Percentage of Foster Children in Limbo in PA".

Placement Department: Betsy Frame

- Betsy Frame updated the Board on the Adoption and Placement units. There were 94 adoptions in 2008, 24 youth released from custody who had reached 18 years of age, two were released into Subsidized Permanent Legal Custodianship, and 61 families were reunified. Also during 2008, there were 60 Termination of Parental Rights petitions filed, approximately 110 cases transferred to the placement department and 68 cases were transferred to the Protective Division or Adolescent Response Unit.

Intake Department: Greg Landis

- Greg Landis updated the Board on the Intake units. There were 871 reports of suspected child abuse during 2008. Of those, 37 were regional investigations conducted by the Office of Children, Youth and Families. Since the number of substantiated cases has not gone up in equal proportion, it appears the 871 cases represent an increase in reporting. There was a discussion with the Board members regarding the reasons for the increase in reports. Father Wolfe reported that the Diocese has intensified their training and reporting requirements, due to the change in the CPSL specific to the criteria for mandated reporters.
- The current criminal trial involving an alleged child abuse death was also discussed. The father of the baby was charged with inflicting the fatal injuries to the baby which caused her death.

Fiscal Report

- Pedro Rodriguez distributed an Act 148 State Expenditure Report and a quarterly Child Welfare Report.
- Pedro mentioned that contracts are becoming more difficult this fiscal year. The State also wants billing to be done differently, which is also more complex.

Protective Department: Kurt Miller

- Kurt Miller updated the Board on the Protective and Resource units. He also distributed a monthly reporting form, documenting the statistics and changes in his department. He included the number of families and children the Protective units are currently serving and the types of issues they are addressing. The Protective Division accepted 25 new cases during the month of December, the highest number since August 2007. There was also a 5% increase in the number of families needing mental health services.
- Kurt recognized Willow Valley and everyone who donated gifts during the Christmas season.

Quality Assurance Department: Amy Campbell

- Amy Campbell distributed a current staff organizational chart. There are vacancies for 4 placement caseworkers, 3 protective caseworkers, 1 fiscal technician and 3 clerical positions. Amy is using temporary staff for the clerical positions.
- The Safety Assessment trainings are beginning next week for supervisors and caseworkers. The majority of the training sessions will be held at the Public Safety Training Center.
- The Agency will begin program contract renewals in February and will be reviewing current services and budgets.
- The Agency recently mailed out thank you letters for all gifts donated at Christmas for the families we serve.
- The PA Right To Know Law was implemented on January 1, and the agencies Limited English Proficiency policy was updated and shared with staff.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ There are no upcoming events.

Public Comment

- ❖ None

Meeting was adjourned at 9:22 am

**NEXT MEETING: February 17, 2009
7:30-9:00 am
at the Children and Youth Agency
900 East King Street, Lancaster, PA**

Respectfully submitted,

Kali Kunkle