

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

November 21, 2016

Board Members Present: George Pappas, Rebecca Sollenberger, Brett Cole, Christine Connelly, Dawn Horst, Jim Doughty, Theresa Stauffer, Karen Rice, Mary Ann Gerber and Ellen Hurston

Staff Present: Crystal Natan, Amy Campbell, Robin Boyer, Betsy Frame, Kelley Zipp and Kali Kunkle

Excused: Commissioner Dennis Stuckey, Richard Rush, Ryan Aument, Sally Metz, Joshua Keller, Randall Miller, Eric Pettis and Corrie McKenna

Public: None

Guests: None

Call to Order: Board Chair George Pappas called the meeting to order at 7:38 a.m.

Approval of Board Minutes: Ms. Gerber made a motion that the minutes from the August 2016 Board meeting be accepted as presented. Ms. Sollenberger seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Everyone introduced themselves.

Director's Report:

- Ms. Natan discussed staff starting salaries in comparison with other counties in the state of Pennsylvania. Ms. Natan reported that Lancaster County has one of the lowest starting salaries for caseworker trainees and caseworkers in the state. The salaries for clerical staff are also extremely low. Ms. Natan reported that Lancaster County does not offer competitive salaries when compared with other county child welfare agencies and human service organizations. Ms. Natan noted that prioritizing increased salaries and possibly standardizing salaries for caseworkers across the state could assist in eliminating the current variability between agencies.
- Ms. Natan reported that the Agency is averaging 3-4 resignations per month and has approximately 10-12 vacancies currently. Ms. Natan stated that most of the Agency's postings are for casework trainees. These candidates are not required to have a social work degree, but are required have a bachelor's degree in another human service field; such a criminal justice, psychology or sociology, with 12 credits in social services. Ms. Natan also reported that the longevity rate for employees at the Agency has continued to erode. The Agency has been able to fill vacancies, but struggles with retention. Approximately one-half of the Agency's staff have under 1 year of experience.

- Ms. Natan reported that new casework staff have to initially participate in 120 hours of state mandated training. Accordingly, caseworkers undergo approximately 3-4 months of training before they are permitted to carry cases. Due to the lack of available staff, the Agency has been forced to assign cases to supervisors. Ms. Natan additionally reported that many staff in the intake and permanency departments are working overtime hours each week, and that intake numbers continue to remain high.
- Ms. Natan reported that the Agency will be adding an additional intake unit to the staff compliment starting in January 2017.
- Mr. Doughty and additional staff asked if there is anything that the Board can do to assist in remedying the problems described by Ms. Natan. Ms. Rice suggested that Children and Youth salaries be compared with o positions in other County departments that require similar degrees. The possibility of a state budget impasse in 2017 and its effects were also discussed.
- The County continues to offer CWEL (Child Welfare Education of Leadership) to caseworkers/supervisors who are wish to pursue a master's degree in social work. CWEL pays for the cost of books, classes, travel, etc. for workers accepted into the program. After a worker earns his or her degree through the CWEL program, he or she is required to “pay back” the program by continuing to work in child welfare for 18 months.
- Ms. Natan reported that the Union has yet to set up an initial meeting to begin negotiations. The current contract ends on December 31, 2016.
- Ms. Connelly shared a new book that C.A.S.E. designed.

Upcoming Events: None

Announcements: None

Public Comment: None

Meeting was adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

<p style="text-align: center;">NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, February 21, 2017 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. at Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, PA</p>

Respectfully submitted,

Kali Kunkle