

**LANCASTER COUNTY CHILDREN & YOUTH AGENCY
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 17, 2006**

Board Members Present: Joanne Castner, Dr. Kathryn Gregoire, Karen Jaskot, Dr. Peter Ross, Gwen Scalyer, Nancy Valkenburg

Staff Present: Amy Campbell, Gregory Landis, Patricia Lee, Pedro Rodriguez, Lisa Runge, Nancy Schuyler, Patty Shiffler

Public: None

Guests: Fred Bogner, Thomas Fasnacht, Donna Howe, James Laughman

Karen Jaskot, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. and asked Board members if they wanted to continue the selection of a timekeeper for each meeting. After some discussion, it was decided that this meeting would be conducted without a timekeeper.

Kathryn Gregoire proposed the October 3, 2006 minutes be accepted as written. Joanne Castner seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business: None

New Business: The issue of assessing staff morale came from the discussion of the resolution proposed to be presented to the County Commissioners. Kathryn Gregoire requested the Board be clear on the purpose of the process and that it be helpful in nature and not negatively impact CYA staff. It was suggested that a group of board members speak directly with staff or with representatives from each unit on a yearly basis. A follow up focus group will meet if indicated.

Thomas Fasnacht clarified his suggestion that Board members attend various Agency meetings or events to interact directly with staff. During his term as Board Chair, he asked Board members to commit to attending 2 or 3 meetings or events, including Placement Review Committee, Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings, Permanency Planning Committee, etc. Board members then provided feedback to the committee at the following board meeting. In addition, sub-committee members met with program staff from contracted providers to hear first hand about their programs and services.

Amy Campbell suggested an Advisory Board ad hoc committee be formed to interact more closely with direct service staff. The committee could create a brief survey for staff and speak directly with them.

Kathryn Gregoire made a motion to develop an Ad Hoc Committee to look at staff morale. Joanne Castner seconded the motion. Motion passed. Joanne Castner and Kathryn Gregoire volunteered to serve on the committee. Demetra Baber had expressed interest at the last meeting and will be asked to serve in this capacity. Board members not attending today are invited to join this committee also.

Community Relations: No Meeting

Children's Services: Nancy Schuyler announced this committee will meet on November 21st, 1 hour prior to the regular board meeting. An overview of the Agency will be given to new members. Speakers are scheduled from various units, starting with Intake and following the process of referrals through Protective or Placement Services. Karen Jaskot encouraged new board members to attend these informative committee meetings.

Nominations Committee: No meeting

By-laws: No meeting

Karen Jaskot reported that last spring, the board decided the committees would meet as needed. Fred Bogner clarified the role of the Community Relations committee as sharing positive news about the Agency. Karen Jaskot volunteered to take responsibility for leadership of this committee.

Peter Ross suggested each Board member become active with at least one committee.

Director's Report:

Amy Campbell updated the Board on the recent internal move of staff and offices at 900. This phase of the move is almost complete. There are still some problems with phone lines, but they should be resolved soon.

CYA staff met with the Sheriff's Department regarding concerns about how visits are conducted at the 900 East King Street site and the Church site. Safety issues were discussed.

Two memorial funds have been set up with Children and Youth Agency as the beneficiary. The family of Anne Daniel, Protective Services Supervisor who passed away last month, has established a fund earmarked for renovating and furnishing visitation rooms at the Agency. The theme selected for one of the rooms is the Elizabethtown Fair, an event where Anne volunteered her time annually.

Also, foster parents, John and Diane Ryan, have established a memorial fund in memory of their adopted son, John Ryan, who tragically lost his life in an automobile accident recently. The funds received in his memory will be used to finance a scholarship for a foster child who is aging out of care and seeking ongoing education. The scholarship will be presented annually at the Foster Parent Appreciation Banquet in May.

MEPA (Multi-Ethnic Placement Act) was passed in 1994 and amended in 1996. Three agencies in PA, including the Lancaster County CYA, were audited last fall for compliance with MEPA. MEPA addresses the issue of the time children spend waiting for an adoptive placement, and the practice of racial matching of children with foster and adoptive parents. It was made clear in the language of the act that this practice of racial matching is forbidden. Lancaster County CYA was generally found to be in compliance. The Agency had been distributing literature about cultural sensitivity and diversity to foster parents involved in cross-cultural placements. This literature was deemed valuable and a decision was made to distribute it to all foster parents. The Agency's position had been that it was

beneficial to children to be placed with families of their own ethnicity. MEPA is counter to this policy.

The Agency has instituted two new programs using Human Service Development Funds. Bethanna will soon be providing a visitation program, with an intensive, more planned visitation process.

The Mentoring Program is already up and running. Children who are aging out of care and have no immediate family or relatives, or those whose parents had their rights terminated, are offered support and assistance with various areas including therapeutic services, life planning, grief and loss, etc.

Greg Landis reported that child abuse reports are up this year following a five year decline.

Staff interviews are underway. Nancy Schuyler announced that one person has been hired and several interviews will be conducted in the next few weeks.

James Laughman updated the board on the search for an Executive Director. The deadline for applications was yesterday at 5:00 p.m. The search committee is comprised of David Mueller (Juvenile Probation & Parole), Scott Martin (Youth Intervention Center), Roger Glick (Foster Parent Association), Leslie Hyson (Human Relations), and Karen Jaskot (Advisory Board). The committee will review resumes and submit names of three candidates to the County Commissioners for the final selection.

Amy Campbell announced that the Annual Plan, developed over the summer while the Board was on break, has been completed. The two year cycle includes the 2006-07 Implementation Plan and the 2007-08 Fiscal Year Needs Based budget. Board members will receive a copy of the plan when it is printed.

Pedro Rodriguez distributed copies of the County Budget - Calendar year, requesting \$38.8 million to cover 2007. The overall budget increased by .55%, however the Youth Intervention Center increase is 4%. A 2% increase in the County share has been requested due to increased costs in the Youth Intervention Center budget. Some of the YIC increase has been offset by out of county placements.

Public Comment:

It was suggested that the Community Relations contact the media to request coverage of the John Ryan Scholarship award and also the completion of the finished visitation rooms, financed by the Anne Daniel fund.

The Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency has been honored as the "Agency of the Year" by the State Foster Parent Association.

Tom Fasnacht announced a change in the annual Lancaster County Project for the Needy. The date has been changed from the night before Christmas as this year it falls on a Sunday. The food basket giveaway will be held at the Lancaster Square (The Ramada Inn/The Old Brunswick Hotel) on **Saturday**, December 23, 2006. Volunteers will distribute approximately 1200 boxes of food to needy families. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 6:00 a.m. Families receiving boxes are asked to arrive by 8:00 a.m.

A tour of the Youth Intervention Center and Children and Youth Agency South will be held immediately following today's board meeting.

Meeting adjourned 1:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2006
at the Children and Youth Agency
Conference Room #1
900 East King Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

(If you are unable to attend this meeting,
please call Patty Shiffler at 299-7925)