

Richland County Youth and Family Council Meeting

April 4, 2024

1:30 p.m.

Richland County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board/Microsoft TEAMS

The following members were:

Present: Joe Devany, Sherri Ramsey, Kevin VanMeter, Lori Bedson, Mark Abrams, Dan Varn, Nikki Harless, Lisa Benson, Kevin Kimmel, Darrell Banks, Hannah Crouch, Stan Jefferson, Sherry Branham-Fonner

Absent: Michele Giess, Meghan Wheeler, Wendy Thompson

Administrative Staff Present: Michelle Miller, Rico Woods, Toby Borders

Present via Microsoft TEAMS: Sherry Gibson, Richelle Ettel, Jessica Caughlan, Terri Carter, Jeanette Smith, Alex Goff

Guests: Patricia Dollisch, Amanda Soliven, Holly Christie, Ashley Leadingham, Kaye Clark, Bobby Rhea, Siera Marth-May, Danielle Timmons, Katie Gatten, Jean Taddie, Jamie Vanderpool, Julie Litt

1. Call to Order & Introductions

President Joe Devany called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and began introductions. A quorum was established with six voting members in attendance.

2. Approval of March 7, 2024, Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting (March 7, 2024) was made by Lori Bedson and seconded by Kevin VanMeter. The motion passed by voice vote.

3. Treasurer's Report

Toby Borders reviewed the financial statement and revenue report through February 2024. Toby directed members' attention to the receipt of DYS assessment funds (revenue report) and recent school voucher expenditures (financial statement). There were no questions regarding the financial report. Sherry Branham made a motion to approve the financial report and Dan Varn seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

4. Old Business/Director's Report

A) Executive Director/FCFC Updates

1) *Service Coordination*

Michelle informed members newly hired Service Coordinator Rico Woods passed the state CANS assessment training, enabling him to conduct CANS assessments for the Council. Michelle stated six youth are currently utilizing state FCSS funding and she hopes to expand this number to 20-25 youth (families) working with Rico.

2) *State Allocation for Local Youth Advisory Council*

Michelle informed Council members the Council has received a state allocation of \$7,812.50 to implement a Youth Advisory Council. Michelle added the funds can be used to pay stipends to youth for participation on the Advisory Council. The funds will roll-over into SFY 2025.

3) *Upcoming Community Events*

Michelle will represent the Council at several upcoming community events.

May 4, 2024 - 11:30 AM-2:30 PM: NAMI/YFC-sponsored Resource Fair

Council agencies wishing to have information shared at the Resource Fair should send flyers/brochures to Michelle.

April 15, 2024 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon: Pre-natal to 5 Years Collaborative (NCSC-OSU Child Development Center)

Announcement – Jeff McCoy, Hoops for Youth, needs sponsorships to get youth involved

4) Strong Families Update

Michelle advised members Strong Families funds are being used to assist youth transitioning from high school to college. Youth must provide verification of college enrollment and may be eligible to receive funding to purchase a computer or other required items for college. Additionally, funding is being used to assist high school graduates transitioning to work. Funds may be used to purchase work-required tools/equipment, work boots, etc.

Strong Families funds are being used to purchase caps and gowns for 13 graduating seniors involved with the Mansfield Senior High S.A.F.E. program (homeless youth).

Funds have been used to provide gates, diapers, cribs and various other items through the Kinship Closet. To date, 48 kinship families have been assisted.

5) Michelle stated she is continuing to participate on a state-wide workgroup to address the concern that a high number of directors representing local youth and family councils have left their positions.

6) Michelle and several parent representatives will be attending the OFCF Annual Conference at Deer Creek Lodge in October 2024 (October 21st and 22nd).

7) Michelle stated the R.I.S.E events have been going very well with an average of 25-35 attendees at each event. Hosting agencies have provided information, tours of their facilities and the opportunity for attendees to network. The next R.I.S.E. event will be held at Richland Public Health on April 10th.

5. New Business

EI Report

Julie Litt reviewed the Early Intervention report with Council members. Julie informed members the program received a 100% compliance rating for referral timeliness in a recent state review. As of April 1, 2024, EI Service Coordinators are working with 164 children (actively enrolled or referred). According to Julie, local physicians and parents continue to provide the majority of the referrals into the Early Intervention program.

Youth Services Proposals

Michelle informed Council members she received five (5) proposals for youth services in the current round of Requests for Proposals (for services beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025). Michelle stated several proposals are still under review. However, during the April 2nd Finance Committee meeting, the Finance Committee voted to approve a proposal submitted by Richland Public Health and issue a contract in the amount of \$75,454 for Newborn Visits.

2024-2025 School Year Bookbag and School Clothing Voucher Program

Lori and Michelle advised Council members the bookbag/school clothing voucher program will operate a little differently this year. Lori stated applications for the program will be accepted online during the period April 15, 2024 through May 3, 2024, contingent upon funding available. Lori added the process was changed after discussions between Michelle, agency representatives involved in the program and community agencies involved in the program (The New Store and Crossroads Church). Historically, there has been a very low show rate of families deemed eligible because they were receiving SNAP assistance (notified by letter they were eligible to receive the voucher) and a higher show rate of families who were able to request

to be added to a waiting list (contingent upon funding) who also met SNAP eligibility. Having families apply for the program should result in a higher show rate at the voucher distribution event. Additionally, distribution times were thought to be problematic for some families. This year, bookbags and vouchers will be distributed in the afternoon and early evening on Friday and on Saturday morning.

6. Updates/Announcements/Guest Speakers

Regional Planning Commission Presentation

Jean Taddie with Regional Planning informed Council members the Commission has been working on the Commission's ten-year transportation mobility plan. It has been a two-year process involving work groups, focus groups and feedback from various community representatives. According to Jean, as a result of the process, the Commission has determined the majority of public transit riders are "need riders". Jean identified several services the Commission is considering such as readjusted fixed routes; same day dial-a-ride service; online tracking/apps to track buses online; Final Friday service (service to weekend events); and "on-demand zones". Additionally, Jean stated the Commission is considering submitting proposals for two grants, one federal grant and one state grant. Both grants would be planning grants; one would require local matching funds. Jean asked anyone who would be willing to provide a letter of support to contact her for more information.

Council Agency Updates

Dan Varn reported the United Way Campaign raised \$1.525 million.

Nikki Harless reminded Council members April is Abuse Awareness Month. Agencies are encouraged to wear blue to work next Wednesday (April 10th) and share photos with Brigette Coles. Nikki reported higher numbers of children are testing positive for drugs as a result of drug use by parents in the homes. In 2023, 129 children were removed from their homes; 180 children were placed in kinship care.

Lisa Benson reported there are currently 190 youth involved in court supervision; gun violence is on the rise in the community.

Stan Jefferson expressed his concern about the growing threat of gun violence (shootings) in the community among youth, not high school students but community youth. Stan stated Crossroads, the City of Mansfield Mayor and others have convened a "Peace on My Block" community fair for students K-8 to be held on May 16th. Another such event is being planned in August for students in grades 9-12. According to Stan, the Ohio School Board Association has impressed upon school systems to address gun violence throughout the course of the school day, in the classroom, on the bus, etc.

Sherry Branham reminded Council members May is Mental Health Month. In late April (April 26th), the county will offer "Drug Take Back" for prescription drugs at various locations around the county. Sherry informed Council members the Mental Health Board is embarking on several construction projects: a) state-assisted renovation of eight (8) upstairs apartments (90% of costs covered by the state/10% of costs covered locally). The apartments will be short-term and long-term units rather than permanent units. Additionally, a new building is being constructed across the street from the current apartments. The building will house 12 permanent, supportive units.

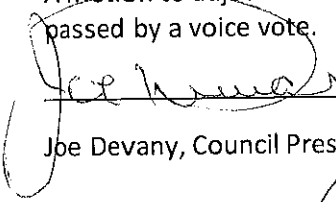
Katie G. informed Council members the Library has eclipse glasses available for adults. Katie let members know COSI experiments are currently traveling from Library to Library so be watching for local events.

Danielle/YWCA advised Council members the YWCA is recruiting foster parents, adding 16,000 children in Ohio are currently in foster care.

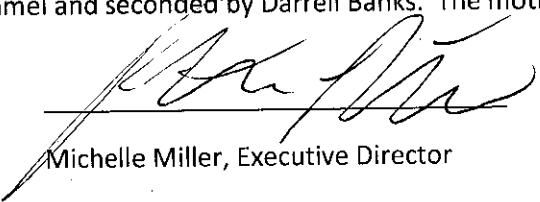
Amanda Soliven informed Council members Family Life Counseling is providing services through the Mobile Response Services unit. Services are available to individuals seven (7) days a week from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM. Individuals may access services by calling 419-564-7305.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kevin Kimmel and seconded by Darrell Banks. The motion passed by a voice vote.



Joe Devany, Council President



Michelle Miller, Executive Director