

Greene County CYS Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

May 22, 2023

Meeting called to order at 9:11 AM by Mark

Roberta- I was hoping Sam would be here to approve the chair committees since we have our quorum for today. Let's look at the discussion of financials.

Mark- We had issues with names on accounts which was discussed in the last meeting.

Roberta- I went to the bank and Anthony spoke with you Mark. Four officers need to have signatures there are currently only two.

Mark- Those approved to have signatures on the account are Sam as the chairperson, Roberta as the vice chairperson, Sierra as secretary, and Jeanette is treasure.

Roberta- We need to have that put the information on letterhead.

Betsy- Officers names should be on the letterhead and everyone on the board has to sign off.

Mark- Also I think Brandy pulled the money from the Community Foundation.

Betsy- There was \$14,000 in it and those who donate to the Community Foundation get a charitable break on taxes.

Mark- Brandy sent an e-mail about the agreement and we will get more information off her next meeting.

Roberta- As far as the auditor's report I think we have too many questions to approve it.

Betsy- We will just table it then.

Beth- We currently have 74 children in care

Mark- Beth and the foster care group had an event Betsy and Pam went as well we got one maybe two more foster parents from the event.

Beth- I got an e-mail and someone in Clerk of Courts was interested in being a foster parent.

Mark- We extended an invitation for different departments to attend as well to pass along the message.

Pam- A print out of the Conneybeers will come out here soon it's great that they want to take teens.

Mark- We are trying to keep placements minimal and trying to work in the home and with foster placements. State wants us to have as many evidence-based programs as possible to help.

Beth- Lisa and the girls have had some kinships come in and now they want to be foster parents and are fostering due to their exposure to kinship.

Mark- We should be close to 14 foster parents now.

Betsy- That helps the county; we used to have kids in care four years plus. Are we now in a certain number of months trying to get them reunited?

Beth- We average a child to be in care for roughly 12 to 15 months.

Mark- At 15 to 22 months we are required to do something whether it be reunified, terminate parental rights or SPLC. We are not going to say we are perfect but we are on the right path.

Betsy- Are we noticing anything that is lacking that we need to try and find or bring here into the county?

Beth- Transportation is our biggest hurdle a lot of parents have multiple kids and if they have mental health appointments and can't take the kids on the bus with them, they are liable to miss their appointments due to not having someone to watch the other kids. They have to go through CCIS through Westmoreland to get childcare and it takes more time.

Rachel- The ECRC also help provide childcare.

Mark- We are also working to try to get more services for our clients.

Beth- PPP we have through Blueprints but the state wants us to separate them so we are working to get that done and put out proposals to see who else might offer it as well. It stands for positive parenting program it is a one-on-one in-home program. We would use this to try to prevent placement outside of the home. Another thing that is very hard to work with is truancy which is where the WhyTry program comes in. Some parents really struggle with making their kids go to school and hopefully these programs will help.

Mark- These programs can help with bullying dropout rates etc..

Beth- Usually we send cases like this through justice works as well.

Betsy- Most issues start in elementary school and become habitual as far as attendance. What is so special about the WhyTry program?

Mark- It is a systematic evidence-based training for in-home use with the child and family to help with these truancy issues.

Beth- It helps the kids understand why they need to go to school and continue to have good attendance.

Mark- It's in the name WhyTry getting them to understand why they should try.

Roberta- Sadly many kids get up before their parents do and a school employee may be the first one to even acknowledge the child that morning.

Mark- We will have a new caseworker at the end of the month. Ayanna has been 1 of our better employees really trying to get to know the kids and connect with them and help them as much as possible.

Beth- Unfortunately she is moving at the end of summer.

Mark- She has reached out to other people in order to help the kids for example she reached out to a friend for one kid who didn't have very good shoes at all and got him five pairs of brand-new shoes and additional clothing.

Beth- She will be a huge loss to the agency.

Mark- Beth has come up with an idea instead of having a departing lunch when someone leaves, we have one for when people start. We are doing this with the new person and we are having a potluck.

Betsy- That's a nice way to let them know they are appreciated and welcome to the team.

Mark- Myself, Beth, OCYF, and Betsy. Have been talking about retention issues and ways we can resolve them. I can say that we have heard from OCYF retention issues are statewide it's not just us. We have been discussing giving an incentive for retention we are trying to use federal money for the incentives to help with retention this doesn't change their base pay So it doesn't hinder the county.

Betsy- At this point 20 % would hit the county so that's why it's on hold plus the union issues OCYF said it is an epidemic with retention. They also mentioned it's an epidemic with children that are hard to place.

Mark- I recently went to a meeting where they said we are lucky we only have a few hard to place kids some have many more than us.

Gene- We even still need beds for some of our juveniles. We have placements that can help but only so much.

Betsy- That's the thing you struggle to find places to put these kids in when you do the cost is \$500 a day or more for the placement and delinquent children can't be placed with adults in a facility making it even harder.

Gene- Detention centers cost roughly \$500 a day and up. The longer they are there the less the percentage that will be covered by the state and more falls on the county.

Betsy- Something that has been discussed is wanting to bring something like our own facility into Green County and charge other counties to house with us. like when the YDC was there that probably helped a lot of kids.

Mark- We were housing Philly kids at some points at that facility. One of our first things is the interview process and how partnerships with Waynesburg University, California University of Pennsylvania, and Pittsburgh University. There are even incentives out there that can reduce the cost of their senior year if they stay longer. I've also met with the criminal justice department and talked about foster parents having training through them for partnerships. A lot of these kids are not dealing with the same things that the kids we had 10 to 15 years ago did.

Betsy- I am all for foster parent training and talking to them about it. If the foster parents are trained for harder cases would we pay them more?

Mark- It wouldn't be as easy as just training them to take harder cases they would have to have different licensures in order to take most of the harder cases.

Betsy- Whatever we could do to help kids go to foster parents and not placement is helpful.

Mark- The \$300,000 grant over the next three years for the satellite forensic interview to come to Greene County is what we're hoping on. It would be located in the bottom of the Ben Franklin building. We are still currently in the financial stages to submit the grant and if approved would start to put it in our budget.

Betsy- Is this for any abused child?

Beth- These are for serious physical and sexual abuse. This will help with transportation issues to the interviews.

Betsy- How many of these cases do we have?

Beth- About 120. We send the kids for these interviews as well if we think they are holding back.

Betsy- So the grant pays for staffing?

Beth- The grant pays for the building equipment, set up, and staffing. They would probably only be there once or twice a week based on need.

Mark- I would not like to use this every day thinking maybe once or twice a week are there any questions about the grant? May 31st we will turn in the information needed to apply for the grant they don't see u not getting it but they cannot guarantee anything.

Betsy- If we get it when would all of this start?

Mark- Probably in October we are trying to be Innovative. We have had several different programs that we are very appreciative for. We recently recognized Jessup Boat Club for donating 21 bikes maintenance picked them up and put them in the hanger. Beverly's birthdays is also another great program. We had another one recently an Ella Scott did a clothing drive for her volunteer work we got 12 to 14 bags of donated clothes. We will do an appreciation at next month's meeting.

Joyce- We also need to think about supervisor retention we appreciate all that they do.

Mark- We are still working with the CWRC on on-boarding to break it down by expectations that are week by week. We want to have a minimal turnover rates and are really working on retention and helping employees understand what we all have to do for work daily. We can't have caseworkers do a half-butt job.

Roberta- Was the proclamation made for caseworker appreciation and what was the plan?

Mark- Yes and we want to have a Luncheon to celebrate them.

Pam- We can have it at the Denny house I need a date and ideas. I will offer the space for free and get the food.

Mark- We are keeping it hush hush to surprise them.

Betsy- Is this something we should look into putting in the bylaws to fund?

Beth- The Advisory Board has always been the ones who funded it.

Betsy- Is it used by funds or was it personally funded by the members? If we use funds Pam could get cut a check. Who paid for it last year and do we need to put it in the bylaws?

Mark- I was the one who paid for it last year.

Roberta- In order to address the employees the section above in bold in the by-laws handout that you were given I added that. I feel it should be in the mission statement to take care of the employees as well. This by-laws hand out is just a draft. As a board we don't have anything to address the staff directly. I think we need to address the by-laws in the next Advisory Board meeting.

Please see the attachment of the rough draft by-laws for reference

Roberta- I also added in the by-laws needing to submit clearances for members.

Betsy- Would we be hurting ourselves with board members if we required them to have the backgrounds done?

Mark- My only concern would be if we are having an event where the board members would be around children, they would need their background checks done.

Beth- Most of our board members work at schools and are required to have them anyway and if we are at an event or if they don't already have it we could even look into getting the volunteer background check done which are free.

Joyce- I think it would be a good idea to have the background checks for members.

Roberta- Would they have to pay for the background checks or would it go through our funds?

Beth- The volunteer background checks are free.

Joyce- You could use the word should instead of must in the by-laws then it's not a requirement.

Roberta- **Reads off duties of board officials in Article 5 of rough draft by- laws.** I also added the signature portion as soon as all of this is voted on, we will give a copy for the office to keep.

Makayla- We can put it in the advisory book for this year that has all the advisory information and meeting minutes in it.

Roberta- Is there a need to address the sub fund with the commissioners or should this be covered by our vote?

Betsy- I think it would be covered under our vote since it would be the advisory boards fund.

Mark- This is an opinion it's the little things. Today's staff are dealing with different things than what we had. The adults are getting just as complicated as the kids we need to change the culture and adapt.

Betsy- What days would be best for the appreciation luncheon?

Mark- June 5th through 9th is caseworker appreciation.

Beth- We could do a Monday lunch.

Pam- At noon how many people will there be?

Mark- I'd say 40 to be safe.

Roberta- We have to keep it hush hush that the Advisory Board members are coming as well.

Pam- I don't mind paying for the food maybe we could do a no pay auction and the advisory members bring the gifts or baskets.

Mark- Put me in for a basket.

Roberta- So it's agreed Monday June 5th 11:30 to 1:00 at the Denny house

Mark- Sierra did you have anything to add?

Sierra- I have always thought that the board was for the children and the employees.

Roberta- This is something to bring up and talk to Sam about in the next meeting.

Sierra- Maybe we should make donors aware of the job the staff do to get funds just for the staff.

Betsy- I don't believe our donors would be obstinate to use some of it on the employees. It's not something we're doing every month but once a year.

Roberta- Is this something as a board we could just vote on and approve?

Betsy- As long as we vote and it's approved. I think we are good.

Sierra- We could get donations for general expenses versus specific for example the Blue Knights their donation is for Christmas only we can't use that money on anything else.

Betsy- The Blue Knights is a little different that money goes directly to CYS it doesn't go through the community fund.

Roberta- Is this something the Commissioners could talk about or vote on to add a sub fund for general expenses or employees.

Pam- I feel like if we vote on it it's just going to be splitting hairs.

Betsy- I say put it in the by-laws and as long as we vote and it's approved, we're good

Roberta- Motions to adjourn meeting?

Betsy- motions

Pam- seconds

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM

By-Laws
Greene County Children and Youth Services Advisory Board

Mission Statement

The Greene County Children and Youth Services Advisory Board is dedicated to making recommendations on matters referred to the Board and shall suggest policies for the Agency's operation and development to promote safety, permanency and well-being for the children **as well as the acknowledge and well-being of the employees** of Greene County involved with the Agency.

Article I
Name

The name of this organization shall be the Greene County Children and Youth Services Advisory Board. The Board shall be directly responsible to the County Commissioners.

Article II
Purposes/Duties

- A. Consult with the Administrator and advise on matters pertaining to the development of the annual Children and Youth Services Needs-Based Plan and Budget.
- B. Review and make recommendations pertaining to the Children and Youth social service program and the operation of the County Agency.
- C. Establish a fund for the purpose of receiving gifts and **monetary** donations from the community. Such gifts and donations shall be used for the benefit of the children served by Greene County Children and Youth Services. This shall in no way offset the county's financial responsibilities to the program.

Auditing of this Fund will be conducted annually and a written report will be submitted at a Children and Youth Services Advisory Board meeting.

- D. Receive suggestions and advice from Resource Parents, community organizations and individuals. After considering them, the suggestions may be forwarded to either the Children and Youth Services Administrator or the County Commissioners as deemed appropriate.
- E. **Community Foundation of Greene County categorized as a 501C organization has an established fund for the non-profit Children and Youth Services Advisory Board. Donations given by individuals or companies would benefit in receiving tax credit through this Foundation.**

Article III Membership

1. The Advisory Board must be representative of the demographics of the county's population. It will consist of up to 15 members who are committed to actively participate in committee activities and gain an understanding of Agency operations and responsibilities.
2. Members are appointed by the County Commissioners upon recommendation by the Board. The County Commissioners are ex-officio members of the Board.
Members who are appointed by the Commissions must submit a copy of PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CERTIFICATION.
3. Each member shall be appointed for a period of (3) years and may be reappointed by the County Commissioners. Up to (5) members shall be appointed each year.
4. At least one member of the Advisory Board shall represent the Greene County Children and Youth Parents.
5. In case of vacancies, the Board may recommend new members from names which have been presented by the Nominating Committee. Such recommendations shall be submitted to the County Commissioners for approval.
6. It shall be the duty of each member to attend at least (4) of the six(6) scheduled meetings each year. Failure to do so without a good excuse shall result in action by the Board which may include removal from the Board. The Board will notify the County Commissioners and the member of the action. Excuses acceptable for neglect of duty of a member are personal illness, illness or death in his/her immediate family, work, school, military service or absence from the membership area (Greene County). All other excuses shall be approved by a majority vote of the members at a regular meeting when the excuse is presented.
7. Each member shall notify the CYS Administrative Assistant within 24 hours prior to any meeting if they cannot attend.
8. If quorum cannot be reached based on the notices received, the Chairperson may elect to cancel the meeting.

Article IV Officers

1. The Officers shall be Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall hold office for a period of one (1) year.

Chairperson will conduct the meetings with the purpose of being in great support to the Children and Youth Services director and staff as they perform the duties for the well-being of the children of Greene County.

Vice-Chairperson will conduct the meetings upon the absence of the Chairperson and will be of support to the Chairperson in his duties.

Treasurer is office of trust and will assure all payments are made that are authorized obligations.

Secretary will reassure that all business items and actions conducted at the business meetings are recorded and maintained.

All officers may be designated as signatories on the Advisory Board Checking Account.

2. Officers shall be elected in November and take office in January.

Article V Meetings

1. The Advisory Board shall meet six (6) times per year on the last Monday of January, March, May, July, September and November. Meetings will convene at 9:00 A.M. unless otherwise changed by the Chairperson. **Notifications** shall be sent out about one (1) week prior to the meeting along with the prior meeting's minutes to all board members and invitees.
2. Five (5) members shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson, Administrator, or upon request of five (5) members of the Advisory Board in writing to the Chairperson.
3. Executive session may be called by the Chairperson or any member of the Executive Committee.
4. Parliamentary Authority: The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the meetings of the Greene County Children and Youth Services Advisory Board in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws and any special rules of order the Advisory Board may adopt.

Article VI Standing Committees

The Chairperson shall appoint all Standing Committees, unless volunteered and be a member ex-officio of each. Each Committee except for the Executive Committee shall consist of at least three(3) Board Members. Each member will serve for one (1) year with the possibility of reappointment by the Chairperson.

Executive Committee: Shall be composed of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

Nominating Committee: Shall be responsible for the nomination of new Board Members and shall meet prior to the November Meeting.

Activity/Fund Raising Committee: Shall be responsible for planning and raising funds for activities of the Agency.

Publicity Committee: Shall be responsible for keeping the public informed of the services and activities of the Agency.

Budget Committee: Shall advise the executives officers and the agency administrator on the development of the County Children and Youth Services Plan and Budget Estimate.

By-Laws Committee: Shall initiate and/or consider all proposed changes, additions, deletions, amendments, or revisions to the Advisory Board's By-Laws and present the same to the membership at a regular meetings for review and consideration.

For the Kids Committee: Shall receive and approve, by majority vote of the committee, any request for funding. The committee shall report any requests and/or expenditures of the past month(s) at each Advisory Board meeting.

Foster Parent Liaison: This individual shall be a resource parent responsible for creating and maintaining key relationships with faith communities, while identifying, pre-screening, mobilizing and cultivating families who are serious about becoming approved resource parents. This resource parent, in conjunction with the agency's Foster Care Caseworker, shall meet with and communicate with agency resource parents regularly to deepen relationships, increase foster care awareness and broaden the agency's Foster Care Program.

VII
Fiscal Year

For State Budget reporting shall be from July 1st through June 30th. For County Budget reporting shall be from January 1st through December 31st.

Article VIII
Amendments

The By-Laws may be amended as follows: An amendment in writing may be proposed at any regular meeting, at which time it shall be read and laid on the table for one (1) month. The members shall be advised in the written minutes of the meeting of the proposed amendment before the next regular meeting, at which time the amendment may be adopted by a majority vote of members present.

Rough Draft for Revision
March 27, 2023

Rough Draft for Revision
May 22, 2023