

Department of Family and Children Services, Clayton County

Board of Directors Meeting

held

Wednesday, September 22nd, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. via Teams (virtual)

Board Members Present:

Tia Simon-Wade	-	Chair
Quen Howard	-	Board Member
Charlton Bivins	-	Vice Chairman
Mr. Sidney Richardson	-	Board Member
Dr. Barbara Pulliam	-	Board Member

Staff Members Present:

Deneka Manning	-	Social Services (SS) County Director
April Booker	-	Office of Independence (OFI) Supervisor/Admin
A'Kera Clay	-	Recording Secretary
Rita McLendon	-	SS Regional Director Assistant

1. Call to order and Invocation

Chair Simon-Wade called the meeting to order at 10:09 am. VC Bivins performed the invocation.

2. Audience Participation

Rainbow House's Director Mia Kimber presented on their origin, mission, purpose, funding, and services. Rainbow House's Board Member Danielle Smith was present.

Director Kimber stated that Rainbow House intends on assisting not only the children, but parents as well:

1. Rainbow House will have a new certified substance abuse counselor on-site. She will be able to assist the parents and children that have substance abuse issues.
2. They also have a parenting class.
3. There is now have an academic coach to assist the children with their homework and anything school related.
4. There will be group coaching to address different issues the child may have such as transitions to foster care.
5. There will be angry management classes for both the parents and children.
6. Rainbow House will bring on a new set of staff who will be more certified and trained to deal with the challenges presented.

Director Kimber discussed the facility's requirements such as how many children can be on-site at once (up to 22 children). Rainbow House provides temporary housing other children that aren't from Clayton DFCS; those referrals come from other counties. Rainbow House typically accepts children who have foster care homes awaiting their arrival. They are not yet taking children that require higher level of care, so they have had to reject those referrals. These

children are considered those with suicidal ideations, those who have serious offenses, etc., who require additional surveillance.

Dr. Pulliam asked if there are incidents that Rainbow House must reject children due to funding issues, space limitations, etc. Director Kimber stated that that has not been at issue yet due to the cap of 22 children; they must be strategic when they receive even those referrals. However, she stated that they are awaiting approval to become authorized to also take higher level care children. Dr. Pulliam asked how Rainbow House was funded. Kimber stated that they are state funded, grants, and partnerships with those in community (donations).

3. Approval of Minutes

The VC placed on a motion on the floor to approve the minutes. Mr. Richardson seconded this motion. The minutes approved unanimously at 10:12am.

4. Program Reports

a. April Booker – OFI Report

For SNAP, there was a SOP of 96%. There was an influx of applications due to children going back to school and those who are unemployed. For Medicaid, there was a SOP of 89%. For TANF, there was a SOP of 100%.

Ms. Booker reported the monthly county active cases. For TANF, there were 311 active cases, 591 active clients, 246 applications processed, and a total of \$79,402 monthly TANF benefits issued. For SNAP, there were 31,886 active cases, 69,912 active clients, 3,877 applications processed, and a total of \$15,977,188 monthly SNAP benefits issued. For Medicaid, there were 41,781 active cases, 87,388 active clients, and 2,451 applications processed.

Ms. Booker discussed federal and state updates:

1. P-SNAP was approved for September.
2. The P-EBT plans are being finalized to distribute.
3. DFCS is working closely with the Department of Education.
4. Benefit interviews have been waived effective September for all renewals and applications that do not fit the expedited category. Therefore, the department can process these renewals, send out application checklists if more information is needed, unless there is something questionable. In that case, an interview must be scheduled. VC Bivins asked if the interview step being suspension was due to COVID or inefficiencies. Ms. Booker responded stating that during the pandemic on last year, the renewals were extended. That meant that the applications were automatically updated and processed without an interview. As a result, there was an influx of renewals from both new clients and former clients, that were due around the same time. The number of renewals overwhelmed workers. Therefore, there was legislation approved to waive the interviews.

The OFI personnel report was discussed.

b. Deneka Manning – SS Report

In August 2020, there were 262 CPS Reports assigned. This August, there were 85 CPS Reports assigned, which is a significant difference. However, more investigations to determine the accuracy of that number will be conducted.

The children in foster care during August 2020 were 215 and there were 195 children in care for the month of August 2021. This is an increase compared to July 2021. There were 2 adoptions finalized in August 2020 and the state reported indicated that there were 2 adoptions finalized for August 2021.

Currently, there are no placements at Rainbow House. Dr. Pulliam asked for clarity about the removal of the children when Rainbow House was temporarily closed. Ms. Manning stated that there were approximately 6 children placed there between March and April of this year. Other placement arrangements were made for the children. However, the children were not returned to Rainbow House upon its opening to reduce the amount of trauma the children could potentially experience from being moved. Dr. Pulliam asked for the approximate number of children since its partnership with DFCS. She then inquired when Rainbow House's establishment began. Ms. Manning stated that over 7,000 children were placed with Rainbow House. Ms. Manning stated it has been in establishment for about 25-30 years.

(Approaching Executive Session at 10:36 a.m.)

5. Executive Session

a. Personnel Report

The SS personnel report was discussed. Continuous hiring is still occurring until the state advises otherwise.

b. Budget Clarification

The budget was discussed. The Commissioner's Office granted an extension to the end of September. Ms. Manning stated that there will be possible surplus of funds due to the PRNs are not utilized as anticipated. She requested for an additional extension of funds or not to be required to require the funds. VC Bivins and Chair Simon-Wade stated that he supports the effort to ask for an extension and or to retain the surplus funds. Ms. Manning stated to also include the request to place the money in the fund balance.

(Executive Session ended at 10: 50 a.m.)

6. Other Matters

a. Past Involvements and Projects/Events

b. Future Involvements and Projects/Events

1. Commissioner's Block Grant Extension Request
 - a. VC Bivins placed a motion on the floor to draft a letter of extension for remaining funds. Dr. Pulliam seconded the motion. The request was approved unanimously.
2. Chair & Vice Chair Elections
 - a. The board voted unanimously for Mr. Charlton Bivins become the Chair.
 - b. Discussion on VC at 11:20 am.

- c. The board voted unanimously at 11:25 am for Mr. Sidney Richardson to become Vice Chair.
- 3. Breast Cancer & Domestic Violence Event Planning (DFCS Balloon Release and Walk on October 29th)
 - a. Charles Brooks to reach out to DFCS about “Hands Off”. VC Bivins stated that this will be a community event to bring awareness about domestic violence. The schools, Clayton State University, DFCS, and other agencies will be a part of this event.
- 4. October Agency Meeting on the 28th
- 5. November 17th Thanksgiving Request from the Board
- 6. Winter Fest on December 15th and 16th
- 7. Board Annual Report due in December
- 8. Foster Care Parents’ Birthday Cards – Board Project starting in January 2022

7. Date of Next Board Meeting

The date of the next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 27th, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully yours,

 Tia Simon-Wade
Tia Simon-Wade, Chair
Clayton County, DFCS Board

 Deneka Manning
Deneka Manning
County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS

 not present
Kimberly Scott
Deputy County Director, Clayton County
DHS – DFCS

A'Kera Clay _____
A'Kera Clay
Recording Secretary