

## Department of Family and Children Services, Clayton County

### Board of Directors Meeting

held

Wednesday, June 26, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

#### Board Members Present:

Tia Simon - Chairman (via phone)  
Quen Howard - Vice Chairman  
Charlton Bivins - Board Member  
Dr. Chantara Carter - Board Member

#### Absent Board Members:

Dr. Barbara Pulliam - Board Member

#### Staff Members Present:

Deneka Manning - County Deputy Director  
Ashley Stallings - OFI Administrator  
A'Kera Clay - Recording Secretary  
Nancy Ward - Program Coordinator

#### 1. Call to order and Invocation

The meeting was called to order at 10:16am. Dr. Carter performed invocation.

#### 2. Audience Participation

No audience.

#### 3. Approval of Minutes

There was a discussion held concerning the clarity of the verbiage used to capture specific conversations held during the last meeting. A motion was posed to accept the minutes as written. A vote was done and resulted in 3 members agreed to accept with no revisions and 1 disagreed. A further discussion was held and concluded that moving forward, decisions made and specific information requested to be recorded by the attendees of the meeting will be captured in the minutes.

#### 4. Program Reports

##### a. Ashley Stallings – OFI Administrator

(29 minute mark) The expedited SOP met the state expectations at 96% which was maintained from the previous month. There was no increase nor decrease. The unexpedited SOP only went up 4%, which reflected 82%. The county did not meet state expectations. Noted issues included system issues beyond the county's control (Gateway), incorrect routing of the tasks, and staffing. Some solutions implemented to address noted issues are as follows: Administrators are establishing work groups surrounded around Gateway issues, statewide veteran trainings, and reporting system issues timely.

There is a statewide veteran training that all Clayton OFI staff must complete. This is a three-day training that will be done in increments to keep staff at the office.

The Medicaid SOP experienced an increase last month to be 87%. Pregnant Medicaid was at 90% which met State expectations.

**b. Deneka Manning – Deputy Director**

(20 minutes mark) CPS - Ms. Manning discussed CPS reports assigned from April 2019 to May 2019. There was a small decrease in that number of cases that have been called in and assigned out. The number of screen outs has increased. Concerned constituents call in [cases] that they presume require DFCS's involvement. The screen outs are the calls that central intake determined that the situation does not show a safety threat or rise to the level requiring a DFCS investigation. Ms. Manning praised the Division's effort in screening calls and performing follow up assessments with the reporting source to gather more information to determine the validity of the report.

Mr. Bivins asked about the meeting with Clayton County Public Schools. [During the last Board meeting, Ms. Manning informed the board that Dr. Cantey and herself would be attending a meeting with schools to educate and be informed on the proper protocol for reporting safety issues with children. Ms. Manning discussed the success and ongoing efforts with the Board to include the tentative plan to establish DFCS casemanagers (2-3) to act as liaisons between DFCS & the schools for assessing potential abuse/neglect situations before deciding to make an intake referral.

Foster care - In Clayton County, the number of children in care has decreased from April 2019. This means that the case managers are establishing some type of permanency to include reuniting them with parents. The most recent report showed the county having 250 children in care. The county has observed a steady decrease. The number of children that are free for adoption has increased. There is a correlation between parents that have termination of parental rights and the number of children who become free for adoption.

Mr. Bivins asked about the purpose of Resource Development, more specifically whether it involved recruitment of foster care parents. Referring to the Social Service document, Mr. Bivins asked if there were 6 more people to complete the impact class. Ms. Manning stated that 6 have finished between April and May. There are background checks involved and other intricate steps. Mr. Bivins stated he noticed a decrease in some months and asked what the cause was. Ms. Manning stated that the decrease is linked to foster care parents deciding to not

continue being a foster care parent or DFCS making a decision to close homes that violate any of the federal, state, and county policies.

*(Approaching Executive Session 11:07 at a.m.)*

## 5. Executive Session

### a. Personnel Report

Discussion was held about Personnel Hires, Rehires, Resignations, Retirees, and Demotions. Mr. Bivins asked about the training and certification process for case managers. Mr. Bivins asked if there is an exit report. Ms. Manning stated that she usually has exit conference. Human Resources sends a survey afterwards.

### b. Budget Clarification

The last \$11,625 was received in June. Chair opened the floor for clarification. Mr. Bivins expected an explanation for the foster parent appreciation event spending/costs. Dr. Carter spoke with Dr. Cantey prior to the meeting to obtain clarity. According to Dr. Carter, Dr. Cantey was receptive and stated because the spending was under 1,000.00 for different vendors she presumed that there was no need to request approval. The Board is asking to address the policy of whether board approval is needed for spending over 1,000.00 per transaction or per event at a later meeting.

Chair asked, "what happens to the remaining balances, would it go to fund balance?" County funds must be used or given back to the County Commissioners office. Manning stated that there are invoices still coming in from prior fy 2017-2018. She also stated that Accounting is supposed to place some monies back into the fund balance due to moving monies from the fund balance to cover the costs for PRN's last year until county funds were awarded for Fy 2018-2019. The regional accounting office has closed the books for the prior fiscal year. A more up to date summary of expenses and balances should be available by the next board meeting.

*(Executive Session ended 11:21 a.m.)*

## 6. Other Matters

### a. Road Show with Director Tom Rawlings

There was discussion about the upcoming Road Show. The Road Show will be held July 25<sup>th</sup> at Tabernacle of Praise International Church starting at 8am-5pm. Ms. Manning gave some brief information about the event. She stated that this initiative started by Former Director Bobby Cagle. Current Director

Tom Rawlings continued in the same efforts. This event is open to community partners, staff, and state legislators.

Ms. Manning also mentioned that the regional road show is being held currently with other counties, Gwinnett and Cobb. So far, the structure of the Road Show will include a Town hall meeting with youth in care. One segment will be dedicated for foster care parents. This allows Director Tom Rawlings to hear from foster care parents and youth in care. Ms. Manning attended the Road Show held in other counties and stated that local providers came to engage.

**b. Vote**

There was a vote for Vice Chair and Board Chair. Dr. Pulliam was not present, therefore, the Chair stated that her absence forfeits her right to vote because the terms end June 2019 and a decision must be made in this meeting. Current Chairperson, Tia Simon placed her name on the ballot to continue being the Chairperson. Dr. Carter, Chairperson Tia Simon, and Vice Chair voted for Tia Simon to remain as Chairperson of the Clayton County DFCS Board. Mr. Bivins placed his name on the ballot to be Vice Chairman. Quen Howard declined to be considered to continue being Vice Chair. Mr. Bivins was voted as Vice Chairman unanimously. At 11:25am, Mr. Charlton Bivins and Ms. Tia Simons are new Board Chair and Vice Chair.

**c. Tabernacle of Praise International Church 14<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Anniversary**

Several Board Members and DFCS staff attended the church's 14<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Anniversary and presented the church with a token of appreciation for their community service and partnership. This event took place on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Manning presented the award to Pastor McBride and First Lady McBride.

**d. OFI Tour**

Dr. Carter and Mr. Bivins toured the OFI area on Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bivins stated that the experience was "eye-opening". Mr. Bivins stated that DFCS Leadership does not offer OFI enough support. To further elaborate, he reflected on the community block grant, which he stated is given to Clayton County DFCS. From assumption, OFI is considered part of DFCS, so the issue is with the appearance that funds are being spent solely on Child Welfare projects (according to the budget analysis presented monthly). The budget seems to exclude OFI.

Ashley Stallings (OFI Administrator) stated that there was a more detailed conversation with Merion Luke (OFI Administrator) who expressed her concerns. Ms. Stallings proceeded to explain that ultimately, OFI and Child Welfare operate "under the same umbrella". However, the county directors are responsible for the building. OFI does have leadership located off-site. OFI Administrators located in the building do not report to the County

Director and Deputy Director, presently Dr. Nia Canteley and Ms. Deneka Manning. There are things not within county director and deputy directors' control because OFI and Child Welfare are two separate programs. Other administrators in other counties experience the same issue. Ms. Stallings stated that there is a need for more morale building in Clayton County. That, however, is something that leadership on both sides have control of.

(34-minute mark) Mr. Bivins feels that the next grant opportunity needs to include OFI because leadership utilizes a portion of OFI statistics to get the grant funds. Mr. Bivins stated there needs to be clarity around the spending of county funds to ensure OFI is included. This will be part of the agenda at a later meeting.

The board members asked for clarity around bonuses issued last year. Ms. Manning said that OFI was not a part of the "bonus", one-time monetary fund, but she does not have the details on the process. She is not sure what happened in leadership to get it approved. The County Commissioner, Chairman Turner made it clear that the county monies awarded after he was in office cannot be used for bonus or supplements for staff. During staff appreciation week, OFI is invited. Every agency staff meeting includes OFI. Ashley stated that anytime that she has gone to Dr. Canteley or Ms. Manning for support, they delivered. She stated that OFI is supported by the county. Maybe there should be more awareness of the OFI needs. She is not sure that Merion Luke and herself have had a strong advocacy for such.

Board elected to follow up on this topic at a later meeting when Dr Canteley can be present.

Discussion continued with Ms Manning stating that OFI is part of the appreciation meeting/events. OFI is always invited & welcomed to participate. She has created an open door policy and has mentioned that whatever OFI needs within her authority can be brought to Dr. Canteley and her attention. Ms. Manning stated that County Leadership is very clear about the line of leadership between OFI and Child Welfare. Ms Manning stated that County Leadership was not aware that there were communication gaps between OFI and Child Welfare within the county office. Both Ms. Stallings and Ms. Manning agreed that OFI Administrators or designee will attend meeting with County Leadership and Child Welfare Administrators on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month to touch basis & address any outstanding concerns.

There was more discussion on Employee Appreciation events and incorporation of activities. Sometimes, it is difficult of OFI staff to leave to participate due to the work environment (most of their clients come to DFCS

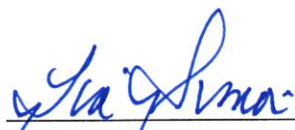
and the OFI lobby is full from the 8am-5:30pm), allowing little time for OFI staff to enjoy certain agency activities.) Therefore, the logistics may need to be planned better and will be addressed at the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday meetings as needed.

#### 7. Date of Next Board Meeting

The date of the next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 24, 2019 at 10:00am – 10:30am This will be a short board meeting to cover regular agenda items. At 10:30am, the meeting will be dedicated to board development. The goal of the board development meeting is to set a plan for the new budget year and the responsibilities of Board Chair & Vice Chair.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:28am.

Respectfully yours,



Tia Simon, Chairman  
Clayton County, DFCS Board



Dr. Nia Cantey  
County Director, Clayton County  
DHS – DFCS



Deneka Manning  
Deputy County Director, Clayton County  
DHS – DFCS



A'Kera Clay

**Recording Secretary**