

Minutes

July 14, 2022

Commissioners Present: Michael Pepple, William Bateson and Timothy Bechtol.

Also Present: Lynn Taylor, Cindy Land, Phil Johnson and Adam Witteman.

Commissioner Pepple opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' 1st floor conference room. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Minutes from the July 12, 2022, meeting was read with Timothy Bechtol making the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Clerk presented the following resolutions for consideration:

Resolution #423-22 – Additional appropriation within the Auditor's certification – Commissioner's to appropriate to Capital Projects. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #424-22 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation – ADAMHS. Cindy Land inquired if this transfer was from a restricted fund. Adam indicated that it was from a transfer account and has been done previously. Lynn indicated that the resolution was reviewed by Kim and she indicated approval. Cindy suggested to remove the word Levy from the title of the resolution and have the Commissioners acknowledge via initials. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #425-22 – Transfer of funds from ADAMHS Levy – Substance Abuse. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #426-22 – Additional appropriation within the Auditor's certification – Commissioner's to appropriate to Substance Abuse. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve the 2 Warrant Journals. William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0. Payroll for the Commissioner's Office and JFS was approved. The letter from JFS seeking approval for a \$5.99 interest charge was approved. Adam stated that his office requested this approval even though the interest charge will be reversed on the next months bill. The Commissioners signed the recommendation of the ARPA Committee for nonprofit awards. Bill inquired about the decision-making process in regards to the requests from the non-profits. Mike explained that it was important to him to use the funds for organizations that had the biggest impact on the community. Cindy stated that it was also important to analyze the longevity of the nonprofits. Adam indicated that the sustainability of the nonprofit mattered as well. Furthermore, Cindy stated that there was a lot of conversation and thought put into each request. Meetings were lengthy and detailed for each nonprofit. Adam detailed the due diligence that was performed on each nonprofit request. For example, there were times that additional information was needed to further the review. The nonprofits were very willing to provide the additional information that was requested by the Committee. Mike indicated that the letter of approval will be going out to the nonprofits this week. Tim inquired if any nonprofit was given 100% of their requested amount. Cindy stated not all requests were

give at 100%. Cindy suggested that the Commissioners also sign the denial letters that will be sent to the nonprofits that did not get any ARPA funds. Tim thanked the Committee for the work and Bill concurred.

Cindy Land presented the following resolutions for consideration:

Resolution #427-22 – Authorizing an agreement with First Insurance Group of the Midwest, Inc., for insurance consulting services. Cindy stated that the committee that was formed to review the RFP's for this process was also very committed to selecting a consultant that would benefit the county. Five qualified vendors provided RFP's and after intense interview, the members of the committee ranked all consultants. The committee then came to a consensus and chose First Insurance Group. The rate per employee for 2022 and 2023 will be \$16.00 per employee. Mike stated that they also communicated with Doug Anderson, an attorney from Squire, Patton and Boggs who advised them as well. Doug has many years of experience working with HR consultants. Bill inquired about the selection process and Cindy stated that again, a lot of due diligence was done and First Insurance are a more local company who also provides services to the City of Findlay. They have been happy with their performance and Adam stated that First Insurance works with other counties as well. Tim and Bill both thanked the committee for their hard work.

Phil Johnson requested an executive session in regards to potential real estate acquisition, potential real estate sale, pending litigation and potential litigation.

Adam Witteman stated that a lot of good collaboration was shared between all the committees recently. Mike congratulated Adam for a good preliminary report of the recently completed audit.

Meetings and Reports

Timothy Bechtol stated that he attended the LEPC meeting and has received supportive comments from the public in regards to the recent hourly increase to the Corrections Office staff. Tim also stated that Kraig Kutschbach has been in contact with him in regards to a follow up on the CR 140 solar panel discussion. Tim explained that he thinks this is not the right time to continue with Kraig's proposal. A lot of moving parts along CR140 will make it difficult to get a good projection of the benefits of solar panels. Cindy explained that the one-page contract she received did not give her a lot of details to formulate a recommendation. Mike and Bill agreed with Tim's decision.

Bill Bateson stated that he attended the Public Defender's monthly meeting.

Mike Pepple stated that he attended the Habitat for Humanity Executive meeting and the ARPA meeting. Mike announced the Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, July 19th will be held at 2:30 due to the quarterly insurance meeting that will be held.

At 10:40 a.m., the Commissioner's met with Becky Smith, Captain Kidwell and Lieutenant Mark Price from the Sheriff's Office. Lynn Taylor, Mike Thompson, Adam Witteman and Cindy Land were also present. Randy Galbraith was present later in the meeting. Bill stated that the Board would like to further discuss their recent request for additional funds for fuel and outside housing. Captain Kidwell explained that they are still dealing with the staffing shortage and not

rebounding as quickly as they had hoped. 30 beds are still not open in the Justice Center. As of Thursday, Captain Kidwell stated that 17 inmates are housed out of county. Two are housed at CCNO in Stryker and 15 are being housed at Mercer County. Current population at the jail is 55. Max inmates is 68. Mike inquired if Mercer County would be able to accommodate Hancock County long term. Captain Kidwell stated that Mercer County has only a certain amount of beds. CCNO has more space to accommodate and they provide travel to and from. Which aids the deputies here in Hancock County. Furthermore, Captain Kidwell stated that he is constantly looking at inexpensive ways to deal with this issue. Bill inquired what the cost per mile is for the out of county housing inmates. Becky stated that she can get back to him with that information. Bill stated that he suggests to not allocate all the funds at this time in hopes that the situation gets better. If the situation gets better, they may not need all the funds. Mike inquired if funds were available in their current budget to use since the hiring of correction officers has not been filled yet. Becky stated that they are down about 10 correction officers. Mike stated that if they are not paying those wages, are there funds available to redirect to outside housing? Becky stated that they can do that. Becky stated that based on the projections they have now, they should have money to do that. However, there may be a time when the Sheriff's Office hires more employees and they will need money added to the salaries budget. Mike stated that they can add money if need be for salaries. Captain Kidwell stated that they don't need 11 correction officers to get the 30 beds back open. Mike acknowledged. Becky said that she can get a transfer letter over to the office. Mike stated that he appreciates all that they do. Tim and Bill agreed. Bill stated that the funds requested for fuel are also important. Driving in today, he noticed that fuel is down and is hoping that will lessen the funds needed for fuel. Bill inquired if funds are available within their budget to transfer? Becky stated that they can do that as long as they can come back if additional funds are needed. The board concurred and stated their willingness to be a back stop if necessary. Tim requested an executive session in regards to security.

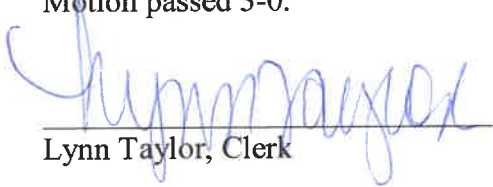
At 10:19 a.m., Mike Peple made the motion to enter in executive session to discuss security. Bill Bateson seconded. A roll call vote resulted as follows: Mike Peple, yes; Bill Bateson, yes; Timothy Bechtol, yes. At 10:33 a.m., Mike Peple made the motion to come out of executive session regarding security. Bill Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

At 10:34 a.m., the Commissioner's met with Randy Galbraith. Lynn Taylor, Cindy Land, Adam Witteman and Phil Johnson were also in attendance. Randy provided an agenda and the report of the number of children in care as of June 2022. Currently, there are 77 kids in care. The financials look good so far. Randy stated that they are working with AR Marketing and the recent advertisement in The Courier ran and looked great. Tim referenced the advertisement and stated that it was nicely done. A discussion was held regarding housing kids at the agency. Randy explained that currently at the JFS building they have rooms built and set up for an overnight stay. Their staff are in shifts to oversee the child until a placement is found. A recent event happened and brought attention to this matter. Randy stated that this is a national problem and Mike inquired if talking to state representatives would be appropriate. Randy applauded this suggestion. Randy sought approval from the board regarding an Employee Appreciation Day that he is looking to arrange on a Friday in September. This would be held at the Brugeman Lodge and allow the JFS employees to be together for Randy to show his appreciation to them for their hard work. The Commissioners agreed. Randy also stated that he will be changing some job responsibilities for some of his employees. Those forms will be forthcoming. Mike thanked Randy for his work and willingness to help.


At 11:01 a.m., Mike Pepple made the motion to enter into executive session to discuss potential real estate acquisition, pending litigation and potential litigation. Bill Bateson seconded. A roll call vote resulted as follows: Mike Pepple, yes; Bill Bateson, yes; Timothy Bechtol, yes. At 11:22 a.m., Mike Pepple made the motion to come out of executive session regarding potential litigation. Bill Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

At 11:22 a.m., the Commissioner's met with Lizzy Essigner. Lynn Taylor, Cindy Land, Phil Johnson and Adam Witteman were also in attendance. The Clerk advised that the mailroom was checked and that no additional bids were received. Tim stated that one bid was received. Tim also stated that this bid was not in a sealed envelope. Phil Johnson stated that this bid opening was for the HVAC system only. The bid received was from Positive Trade Group for \$338,280.00 for project #2. Item add ons included were 1a; \$26,331.00 1b; \$63,467.00 and 1d; \$17,778.00. Tim acknowledged that all addendums were received. Tim stated that this bid will be taken under advisement.

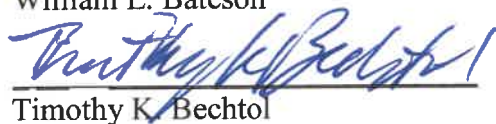
At 11:31 a.m., Mike Pepple made the motion to enter into executive session to discuss potential real estate acquisition, potential real estate sale and pending litigation. Bill Bateson seconded. A roll call vote resulted as follows: Mike Pepple, yes; Bill Bateson, yes; Timothy Bechtol, yes. At 12:02 p.m., Mike Pepple made the motion to come out of executive session regarding potential real estate acquisition, potential real estate sale and pending litigation. Bill Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.


Lynn Taylor, Clerk

Reviewed and approved by:


Michael W. Pepple


William L. Bateson


Timothy K. Bechtol



Hancock County
Job & Family Services

P.O. Box 270
7814 Co. Rd. 140
Findlay, Ohio 45839
TOLL FREE (800) 228-2732
PHONE (419) 422-0182

Randall L. Galbraith, Esq., Director

Commissioner’s Report – July 14th, 2022

- 1) Children in CPSU Custody
- 2) Placement Costs

Balance Brought Forward (end of December 2021 placements)	(530,528.80)
2022 YTD Foster Care Placement	707,142.72
YTD Shared Placement Costs	46,650.00
ADAMHS and Juvenile Court Share	(31,100.00)
SCPA and Title XX used for shared	(15,550.00)
YTD Adoption (county share)	45,322.76
IV-E Reimbursement for Placements	(242,109.93)
Title XX Reimbursements for Placements	(61,229.20)
SS & Child Support	(33,203.69)
MSY Reimbursement (May)	(117,342.00)
MSY Reimbursement	-
SCPA SFY22 used for foster care services	-
Levy funds received	(979,616.11)
30-Days to Family Salary, Benefits, & Shared Costs	39,386.55
Balance	(1,172,177.70)

3) Foster Parent Recruitment Allocation

~\$40,000.00

Have awarded outreach campaign to AR Marketing
Inserts have gone out in the Courier; Multimedia spots are being created

- 4) Housing Kids at Agency
- 5) Proposed Staff Training Day

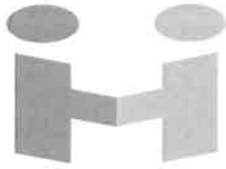
Providing Help Today and Building Hope for Tomorrow

Child Support Enforcement
(419) 424-1365
Fax (419) 424-7288

Workforce Development
(419) 422-3679
Fax (419) 422-8349

Ohio Works First
(419) 425-6375
Fax (419) 422-1081

Childrens Protective Services
(419) 424-7022
Fax (419) 424-7485



Hancock County
Job & Family Services

Children's Protective Services Unit

June 2022

Date of Report: July 11, 2022

Total Number of reports Received:	
April 2022	149
May 2022	144
June 2022	98
Screened In/Out	
April 2022	IN=38, OUT=111
May 2022	IN=48, OUT=96
June 2022	IN=26, OUT=72
Breakdown of case Type Screened In:	
TR/AR/FINS	
April 2022	TR=16, AR=18, FINS=4
May 2022	TR=33, AR=13, FINS=2
June 2022	TR=15, AR=8, FINS=3
Total Number of Kids in Care at months end	
April 2022	70
May 2022	74
June 2022	77
Breakdown of <u>Current</u> Placements (77)	
Family Foster Homes	39
Kinship Placement	27
Group Home	5
Residential	4
AWOL	1
JDC	1
Total number of Children Entering Care/Exiting Care	
April 2022	Enter=3, Exit=4
May 2022	Enter=12, Exit=8
June 2022	Enter=11, Exit=8
Total number of Children Receiving In-Home Services	
April 2022	123
May 2022	122
June 2022	107

PLACEMENTS SUMMARY STATEMENT *

Hancock County Job & Family Services

Providing Help Today and Building Hope for Tomorrow

7814 County Road 99
Findlay, OH 45840

DATE: 7/13/2022

To:

Honorable Board of Hancock County Commissioners
300 S. Main Street
Findlay, OH 45840

MONTHLY TOTALS **	Foster Placement	Shared Placements	Adoption	IV-E	Other reimb	Total County Owed
January	167,250.63	1,550.00	6,446.47	(49,690.90)	(19,725.01)	105,831.19
February	127,656.88	1,400.00	6,431.62	(46,677.31)	(18,707.11)	70,104.08
March	137,862.96	3,483.33	6,431.62	(49,068.36)	(22,479.89)	76,229.66
April	136,413.40	3,500.00	6,431.62	(47,979.91)	(22,583.02)	75,782.09
May	137,958.85	3,616.67	6,621.69	(48,693.45)	(24,487.86)	75,015.90
June	-	2,000.00	6,443.49	-	(2,000.00)	6,443.49
July	-	-	6,516.25	-	-	6,516.25
August	-	-	-	-	-	-
September	-	-	-	-	-	-
October	-	-	-	-	-	-
November	-	-	-	-	-	-
December	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	707,142.72	15,550.00	45,322.76	(242,109.93)	(109,982.89)	415,922.66

Bal brought fwd	(530,528.80)
County Paid	
MSY	-
MSY	-
SCPA Applied	(979,616.11)
Levy funds February	-
Levy funds February	-
Levy funds March	-
Levy funds April	(117,342.00)
Levy funds August	-
Levy funds September	-
January	6,147.04
February	6,181.20
March	6,181.20
April	8,492.04
May	6,204.51
June	6,180.56
July	-
August	-
September	-
October	-
November	-
December	-
TOTAL REC'D	(1,057,571.56)
Balance	(1,172,177.70)

30 Days to Family Personnel exp

NET BALANCE DUE (1,172,177.70)

* Detailed placement log report available upon request.

** Includes invoices and reimbursements known as of date of report.

All expenses and receipts will be recorded in month accrued/obligated, even if received at a later date.

Children and Family Services workers allege rape, unsafe conditions for youth and staff at the county office

Published: Jul. 07, 2022, 5:30 a.m.



The Jane Edna Hunter Social Services Center, 3955 Euclid Ave., is headquarters for Cuyahoga County's Children and Family Services offices. It also where many children

in custody call home, when the county is unable to find them other placements.
(Kaitlin Durbin, cleveland.com)

1,148
shares

By Kaitlin Durbin, cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio – Two Division of Children and Family Services workers are pleading for Cuyahoga County Council’s help protecting staff and children at the Jane Edna Hunter Social Services Center, alleging rampant violence, abuse and sexual assault.

Cristina Sarsama and Marilyn Henderson, both longtime call takers for the county’s child abuse and neglect hotline, gave disturbing testimony during the public comment portion of council’s regular meeting on Tuesday about unsafe conditions in the county’s DCFS headquarters over the last four years.

They reported staff being pulled from their jobs to provide childcare for youth being housed at the building – some for weeks at a time or until they age out of the system. Officials say the children have nowhere else to go, because either their families are unable to care for them or they’ve been denied placement elsewhere. Usually, those are children with severe mental health, medical or criminal issues.

But staff say they’re not equipped to provide proper supervision and are being subjected to extreme violence. They also say a lack of accountability in the office has enabled youth to commit crimes, including prostituting themselves and recruiting or forcing other children in the county’s care to perform sex acts.

“The problem is that these kids that come in, they go out of the building and come in as they want,” Sarsama said during the meeting. “So they go here, they steal food at Dave’s (Market), come back. They go out, they prostitute, they come back. They come back and take this new one (child) that came in and take her out to prostitute or to get raped.”

The employees said they’ve previously raised concerns with supervisors, DCFS administration, their union and even members of county council, but they believe all have fallen on deaf ears. Now they question whether the agency -- meant to prevent children from being neglected and abused -- is causing more harm.

“We have children living in an office building,” Sarsama said. “We cannot protect them.”

Joseph Nanni, county council’s chief of staff, said that was the first council had heard about the rape allegations, but they were aware that children were leaving the building without permission. It’s an issue that, he said, David Merriman, director of the Cuyahoga

County Department of Health and Human Services, has been struggling to address, given the county's limited recourse to stop a child from leaving.

"From David's perspective and (county) attorneys', we don't have any legal ability to restrain a kid from leaving," Nanni said.

Cleveland.com on Wednesday reached out to Merriman, through the county, for comment, along with Executive Armond Budish, but was told the county would not be releasing any information that day. It's unclear if the county intends to respond later. However, following Tuesday's meeting, Merriman acknowledged the problem in a conversation with Budish and council staff in council chambers. He stressed that he feels the department's hands are tied. Other agencies and for-profit hospitals would have the authority to keep youth in custody, he said, adding that he has told them to name their price, but they say they're getting the same calls from every other county in the state.

"They can accept another child for the same rate, but with lower risk," Merriman said.

Most of the other issues raised, however, regarding kids being housed in the building, understaffing concerns and violence have long been known. Nanni said he met with another employee who recounted similar concerns last month, and complaints led at least two council members to tour the building in recent years.

Media has also been reporting on youth living at the facility since 2020.

Council and Executive Armond Budish did propose using American Rescue Plan Act dollars this year to fund alternative housing solutions, Nanni said, issuing a request for proposals from agencies willing to provide safe housing for youth that the county cannot otherwise find placements for.

"No children should be staying overnight in an office building. None," Budish said in announcing the funding.

Two agencies have since responded to the county's request, Nanni said, though he's been told that at least one of them still seek restrictions that would allow them to decline a child under certain circumstances. "And usually those are the kids we need to place...which is not a solution to the issue we have," he said.

Council cannot recommend contracts on their own, Nanni said, so they have been waiting for Budish to bring forward solutions.

"That's where the administration has to provide that answer," Nanni said. "It's not being ignored, but we've also indicated that we are ready, willing and able to partner and try to figure this out, which for council means approving a contract."

A tearful Henderson begged the county for help now. She has worked for DCFS for 25 years, eight of which, she said, she has spent manning the child abuse and neglect

hotline. But she said the job has become so dangerous and taxing that she has been diagnosed with anxiety and dreads going to work.

They're so understaffed, she said, that instead of answering the emergency line, she and other hotline employees "are forced to be childcare workers" for the youth being housed at the building. It has put staff in a position where they are being hit and spit on, she said, describing the conditions as "torture."

In May, the county reported 47 vacancies for child support officers and 124 for DCFS social workers. There were also down 108 case workers at Job and Family Services.

"No one is helping us. We don't feel like anybody is listening to us," Henderson said. "The administration leaves at 4:30 and don't look back, but we're stuck there 16 hours a day dealing with these kids."

And while staff is providing childcare, both employees said, the child abuse hotline is going unanswered.

"So, when you call 696-KIDS, nobody will be there to answer your call, for hours at a time," Sarsama said. "We are struggling really, really bad."