HAMLFONT COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES

Our Mission: Promote and support opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to live, work, learn and fully participate in their communities.

VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING
(per provisions within House Bill 197 enacted 03/27/2020)

Tuesday, November 10, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Nestor Melnyk, President
Dr. Andy Magenheim, Vice President
Mr. Alan Abes
Ms. Rene Eisele
Dr. Tasha Faruqui
Ms. Deana Taylor

ABSENT: Mr. Stephen J. Jones, Secretary

Mr. Melnyk called the November 10, 2020 meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Mr. Melnyk asked for approval of the minutes of October 13, 2020 meeting.

Ms. Taylor moved approval of the minutes of the October 13, 2020 Board meeting as presented. Ms. Eisele seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

HEARING THE PUBLIC – By email

None

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – Reported by Ms. Pavey

A. School News

Rost enrollment 33 (21 in person, 8 remote learners plus 4 in person at satellite)
Fairfax enrollment 28 (19 in person, 9 remote learners)

Activities continue with safety precautions:

- Knights of Columbus Free Throw shooting contest held in early October. It was a huge success; 8 different basketball hoops were set up so that every student had a chance to make free throws. Every student received a plaque and a T shirt from the K of C.
Board Minutes – November 10, 2020

- School House Symphony performed for all the students and staff via Zoom on 10/14.
- Spirit Week!
- Halloween Zoom Parade
- Playhouse in the Park Zoom “Wind in the Willows”
- Limited outings to Kuliga Park Recycling Center, Threads of hope, Matthew 25, St. Vincent DePaul, Goodwill, Gorman Farms and A Child’s Hope to name a few.

Upon request of the Program Committee, Duerk Zinn, Director of School Programs developed a tip sheet on what we have learned are best practices on remote learning for children with Developmental Disabilities. (See attached) The suggestion was made by the committee to then share this with the school districts. Great job Duerk!

B. SWOCOG- South Western Council of Governments

The COG manages several programs for HCDDS and those have grown over the years. See latest update on the programs managed by the COG:

Family Support Services (FSSP)
# of people authorized for FSSP 764
Total dollars paid out for FSSP YTD $452,282.00

Locally Funded Planned Respite
# of people authorized for Respite 153
Total dollars paid out for Respite YTD $133,183.00

COVID 19 Assistance
# of people authorized for COVID 19 72
Total dollars paid out for COVID 19 YTD $57,125.41

C. Towards Independence Homes

Going back in history, people with Developmental Disabilities were sent to institutions if families were unable to care for them. In the 80’s deinstitutionalization began and those individuals started coming back to their communities. At that time the County Boards were permitted to develop group homes for those individuals with the help of state funding. Hamilton County developed three such homes that came to be known as Geier, Manney and Tehan. Hamilton County DDS became the provider and the license holder for those three homes. Fast forward a few years when Medicaid waivers came to Ohio, County Boards were told they could not bill waiver services for people they also were providing services for. The homes were then spun off to a residential provider agency which is now Towards Independence. HCDDS owns the facilities and continues to be the license holder.

These homes need significant updating. We are currently working with the County to evaluate each home and determine the updates that will be made. Renovation costs will likely require a bidding process. Contract Manager, Dave Buchanan and Facilities
Manager Kevin Maue are collaborating on this project. They both toured the homes with representatives from the County. We'll continue to provide updates as this work progresses.

D. HCDDS Facility Update

Each year DODD shares an update with us regarding the pay-off balance of the state participation of HCDDS facilities. See the report of 03/31/2020:

E. COVID-19 Update

As of 10/31/20, Hamilton County has the following data for people we serve:
- 668 people were tested (reported)
- 137 positive
- 528 negative
- 3 pending
- 41 average age
- 4 deaths

F. PRSA Blacksmith Awards

Once again, the Community Relations team is a finalist in two categories for the Public Relations Society of America Cincinnati Chapter's annual Blacksmith Awards. Our successful LinkedIn social medial campaign as well as People for DD Services' 2019 levy campaign are the entries under consideration. Winners will be announced at a virtual event on November 12. Congratulations to Lisa Danford and Ryan Braun for such creative work!

G. Future Events

11/11/20 – Veteran's Day-all HCDDS Offices and Schools are closed
11/12/20 – Intelligent Live’s Movie Screening, 7 p.m.
11/16/20 – Leia Snyder's first day
11/17-19 – OACB Virtual Convention Begins
11/20/20 – FCFC Committee Meeting, 12 p.m.
11/25/20 – Thanksgiving Recess Begins-Schools are closed
11/26-27 – Thanksgiving Observed-All HCDDS Offices are closed
12/21-1/1- Winter Recess for both schools
12/25/20 – Christmas Day-All HCDDS Offices are closed

H. Board in-service – Matt Briner, Annette Stagge, Denise McMillan and Pheetta Wilkerson will be presenting on the Early Intervention Program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Program Committee

Dr. Faruqui shared some highlights from the Oct. 22 Program Committee meeting. She reported we have over 20 students in each school. The students thus far have been COVID free. Both schools have each started two new students each.
We have 8-9 students at each school in remote learning. On Fridays food, supplies and learning bins are delivered to each student in remote learning.

Our teachers developed a remote learning plan for all 62 students at the beginning of the year so we are prepared to do everything remotely should the need arise. Mr. Zinn and the teachers to put together a one-page resource guide/tip sheet of lessons learned to share with other schools of things we have learned that help with remote learning.

Ms. Freudenberg provided the committee with an update on our progress on our goals around family engagement. We have actually exceeded our goal this year to host at least 12 family sessions. We have learned a lot by listening to families and we have responded.

- We heard that more respite is needed so we increased our respite dollars.
- Additional benefits family sessions were added to clear up confusion about benefits and the 2020 changes.
- HCDDS joined task force through UC UCEED to address support and engagement for black and brown families.

For individuals who are isolated and feel lonely, Community Navigation has hosted COVID blues buste virtual meet ups. We have also done advocate virtual sessions led by the advocacy team; planning for Inclusive Schooling, a model for implementing inclusive practices throughout grades school and high school. We also obtained a grant for tablets to give to providers to use for virtual connections.

We added reunion opportunities for families who participated in Future is Now so they can stay connected. We hired Spanish speakers for intake and added a Spanish Speaking SSA.

We offer Charting the Lifecourse as ongoing support to parents of young children age 3-5. Staff now use these tools in tandem with others to support families as they plan for a connected future for their babies. What we have experienced since March is that the needs are more immediate and almost daily (need rent, food, wellness care). Less long-term discussions and more immediate concerns are being addressed.

We are targeting underserved communities to proactively support all eligible at-risk babies for better future outcomes. Our EI/I project director, Julie Brem, works with CHMC DDBP, PPC, and Good Sam NICU as well as all 22 school district contacts, to keep them informed of the availability of EI services during the pandemic. In addition, we have also connected with My Neighbors Place Board on the West side and have an intentional presence at Su Casa events for outreach to Spanish speakers.

We are connecting with Beech Acres “Parent Connect” program to see how we may partner for a presence in community pediatrician’s offices alongside our Beech Acres mental health counterpart. We would like to have our Early Intervention staff work with them. The education portion of what EI does would be very helpful—who to refer and what situations should be referred.

From January to October, the Community Navigators have received and supported 203 referrals for support community and friendship connections. Our goal is to connect to 250. In addition to the individual connection work, the community navigators are also hosting meet ups twice a week. Tuesday/Wednesday Connection hours tend to have 8-10 friends connecting. Another meetup, “Neighbors in Action”, draws 6 or 7 advocates per session and is offered twice a month and focuses on advocacy skill building.
We have a goal to share advocacy opportunities so 90% of newly referred people receive support in accessing at least one advocacy option. All advocates who have been referred to the ALIFE team are offered at least one advocacy option. When a HCDDS advocate contacts a new person served, they will start with discovery and value first. In doing so, they may team up with another ALIFE Team Member like a Community Navigator or Family Engagement Coordinator. Fewer than 5% have turned down any action with any of our advocates or team with this approach.

The committee members shared their thoughts for more opportunities to continue to engage families. There seems to be a gap between medical needs and the social needs an individual’s life and this is something the agency can explore further. It was also recommended that the agency reach out to the Down Syndrome Association and the family advocate for DDBP.

Policy Committee

Ms. Taylor reported that the Hamilton County Commissioners added Juneteenth as an additional paid holiday for county employees. The DDS board would like to mirror the county’s policy and revise section P4.5 Holidays to add Juneteenth as the eleventh (11) paid holiday for HCDDS employees. The committee members also would like to revise/clean up the list of holidays in the policy as follows:

- Memorial Day- re-write this to read last Monday in May
- Remove Columbus Day as this is not a holiday observed by employees. It was traded and is used to take the day after Thanksgiving off
- Add Day after Thanksgiving Day (Columbus Day observed) to the list

Mr. Melnyk asked for a vote to modify the holiday schedule (section 4.5) with the proposed changes. As this item came from the committee, no second was needed.

All board members were in agreement and voted in favor of adding Juneteenth as a paid holiday and for cleaning up policy 4.5 as proposed.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Reported by Ms. Pavey

Ms. Pavey reviewed the financial report for October 2020.

Approval is requested for actual operating expenses of $11,068,397 for the month of October 2020 with cumulative totals amounting to $75,188,197 as confirmed by the Hamilton County Cash Disbursement Journal.

Mr. Abes moved that the Board approve the actual operating expenses for the month of October 2020. Dr. Magenheim seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval was requested for estimated operating expenses of $3,856,406 for the month of December 2020, subject to final approval by the Board upon confirmation by the Hamilton County Cash Disbursement Journal.

Dr. Magenheim moved that the Board approve the tentative operating expenses for the month of December 2020. Mr. Abes seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Ms. Pavey requested approval to enter into multi-year contracts with the following staff:

   Doris Knue, Office Manager
   2-year contract: 11/22/20-11/21/22

   Chase Hurst, SSA Supervisor
   2-year contract: 12/01/20-11/30/22

   Dr. Magenheim moved approval of the request to enter into the multi-year contracts as presented. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion and all were unanimously approved.

2. Appointment of Nominating Committee for Officers

   Mr. Abes volunteered to serve as the nominating committee for the 2021 officers. Board members who have an interest in an officer position should contact Mr. Abes.

3. Distribution of 2021 Board meeting dates

   The 2021 schedule was distributed to the committee members in their packets. Board meetings will continue to be held on the second Tuesday of each month with the exception of February and July. The half-day, annual retreat will be scheduled in 2021 after the new superintendent is on board.

4. Announcements

   None

INSERVICE

Mr. Briner, Ms. Wilkinson, Ms. McMillan and Ms. Stagge gave a presentation on Early Intervention, 3-5 yrs. Life Course.

Early Intervention (EI) provides a variety of services to children from birth to age 3 who have a developmental delay or a qualifying diagnosed medical condition. EI is grounded in the philosophy that young children learn best from familiar people in familiar settings. Ohio’s Early Intervention program is a statewide system with coordinated supports at the local level. Once the child is determined eligible for services, our team will find ways to support the child and family during everyday activities. Now that we are doing most things virtually, we have found that parents are doing more activities with their child and are actually learning more from doing versus our staff just “talking”. A couple of brief video clips showed exactly how EI helps families and how the virtual learning is occurring.
Finding no further business, Mr. Melnyk asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Eisele, so moved and Ms. Taylor seconded. Mr. Melnyk declared the meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully,

Mr. Nestor Melnyk  
President

Mr. Stephen J. Jones  
Secretary