

HAMILTON 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 RETREAT

(per provisions within House Bill 404 enacted 11/22/2020)

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Nestor Melnyk, President
Dr. Andy Magenheim, Vice President
Mr. Stephen J. Jones, Secretary
Mr. Alan Abes
Ms. Rene Brinson
Dr. Tasha Faruqui
Ms. Deana Taylor

Welcome

The meeting began at 9:03 a.m. Ms. Snyder reviewed the agenda and thanked the Leadership Team for their help putting together these materials.

Retreat Focus

Develop our next strategic plan which begins January 2022. This process will include

- Looking at our past key strategic achievements
- Reflecting on the current federal, state and local trends
- Discussing all of these items and your recommendations as a group
- Finalizing and identifying our next steps.

Review of Our Past Key Strategic Achievements

Some noteworthy things we have accomplished include:

- Partnered with Cincinnati Health Department to host a COVID vaccine clinic administering 3700 vaccines (and counting)
- Opening both schools on Aug. 31 to more than 40 in-person students and offered very enriching remote learning for more than 16 students.
- More than 10,369 contacts with EI families which were face-to-face until mid-March
- Successfully implemented the FFCRA to support staff through COVID
- Collaborated with the COG to implement multiple COVID related programs for families, including COVID Fund for Families, the Extended COVID Fund, and increased planned respite.
- Passed our levy with 76% support from voters, highest level of support ever, on a limited budget
- Completed all waiting list assessments
- Bought and remodeled the Bramble House property, serving those hard to house, to open in 2021
- Purchased and remodeled the accessible "Alice's House" Respite Home opening in 2021
- Successfully created the regional Smart Home so people can imagine possibilities with tech.
- Created Home Think Tank's Housing Options Guide on our website
- Initiated new partnerships with UC and CHMC Transition Clinics and behavior support
- Launched "Neighbors in Action" & "Zoom Connection Hour" Meet Ups facilitated by ALIFE team and people served
- Created social and racial justice mentors (black, brown, and those with DD) for families who find their children, siblings, or other family members scared, worried, and needing support

Key Federal and State Trends that May Impact our Strategic Planning

Financial/Fiscal Trends and Factors

- DSP wages- Current proposal from stakeholders for a 5% rate increase for each year of the biennium across all waiver services from state GRF
 - Estimated statewide cost is \$39 million/year
 - If approved, this will likely to impact county board cost in the future
 - Influx of one-time funds from COVID relief –may result in pressure to increase rates based on this one-time revenue stream
- Minimum wage discussions- Current rates based on paying DSPs an average of about \$13.23/hr. in 2021, many organizations aiming for \$15/hr.
- There is an increased demand for County Board fiscal responsibility and transparency
 - The State has required a more detailed cost report, cost/cash projections and updated business manager certification requirements, etc.
 - Some County Boards are in financial trouble which could impact us down the road
 - The Waiver Match calculations are not something written in statute and could change as more counties struggle financially with passing levies. The state makes the decision about how to allocate the funds.
 - Do we have a contingency plan in place in the event of funding reductions? Over the past year our costs have dramatically decreased. Our cash balance is higher than our projections. We believe we will have time to make adjustments should challenges arise.
 - Services are shifting from congregate services to more individualized services
 - Projecting transportation costs will be challenging given the changing service environment

State and Federal Priorities in Services

- Multi-system youth
 - This is a legislative priority and an area we expect to see additional funding
 - Increased focus on collaboration across systems/family centered supports
 - Growing numbers of children and adults have intensive needs that may require residential and respite needs
 - Behavior Support Staff have seen 54 new referrals in the past 4 months
 - 40% of these new referrals are for young adults with intense/severe needs
 - More new intakes (3 a week on average) that have complex needs
 - Many have mental health/DD dual diagnosis needs and supports
- Community employment
 - Integrated employment definition/14c discussions at the federal level
 - Basic Employment Skills & Training (BEST)- 5 years to move individuals out of legacy programs to community based employment
- Ohio Individual Service Plan (ISP)
 - Statewide assessment and ISPs are being developed to increase consistency across counties
 - We must use the new ISP but there are some things we may need to adapt
- Statewide streamlining and simplification efforts-we are very supportive of these efforts
 - Streamlining services in waivers and clarifying information about our system
 - Reducing administrative complexity for SSAs and providers
- Possible renewed focus on regionalization
 - CB history regarding shared services and regionalization/COVID pressure

Lessons from COVID

- The future of work
 - More emphasis in teleworking/working off-site
 - Boards are looking at how to do this moving forward
- Technology and the digital divide
 - Leveraging technology- benefits and challenges

- Virtual meetings have allowed more individuals to participate out of convenience
- Addressing disparities in access to technology/technology skills
- Reimagining advocacy and emerging post-COVID

Other trends?

- Tax Levy Review Recommendations need to be addressed and incorporated into our planning
 - One recommendation was to explore other revenue streams
 - The mid-term review is coming up
- Create the solutions we seek for the people we serve (Eric Metzger)

Pressures or Opportunities We Want to Focus On?

The examples provided for discussion include-

- DSP wages
- Minimum wage
- Increased demand for CB fiscal responsibility and transparency
- Multi-system youth
- Children and adults with intensive needs/growing numbers
- Community employment
- Ohio Individual Service Plan (ISP)
- Statewide streamlining and simplification efforts
- Possible renewed focus on regionalization
- The future of work post-COVID
- Technology and the digital divide
- Reimagining advocacy and emerging post-COVID

Pressures ...Opportunities Identified by the Board and Leadership Team
• Educate the medical community so they can be more responsive to individuals with DD
• Improvement is needed for the transition from pediatric to adult care in complex patients
• Transition from EI - school districts -back to the county board is poor
• Look for resources/grants to support EI-School-Adult Services transitions
• The 3 pronged approach to transition should be services, school and medical-make it the standard to involve the school, the physician and service providers during transitions
• Eric, Sean Bostic, and advisors with disabilities have been asked to provide input to UC Doctors/Workgroup who aim to create a disability medical center as a national, best practice model
• Educate the medical community to help doctors become more comfortable treating patients with DD
• Be a resource for physicians who want information and aren't sure where to go
• Change the culture by educating medical students
• Think long-term about what we want from our partnership with the state and advocate

Policy/HR Perspective

The following questions were used to prompt the discussion.

- How might we incorporate lessons from COVID to modernize the way we support people? To modernize our work environment?
- How do these factors impact us from a HR/policy perspective?
- What other HR/policy related issues will be crucial to our success moving forward?

Five guiding values we will follow as we plan the future of work.

1. Service will not be compromised
2. We will continue to be good financial stewards

3. Support employees so they have opportunities to connect with other employees
4. Update our policies and procedures so expectations and process is clearly defined
5. Maintain employee safety

Policy/HR Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey staff to get a pulse on the culture to see how it has been impacted by COVID & solicit staff input on how to move forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for <i>Top Workplaces</i>. Their surveys are employee and culture centered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a dialog with employees around safety-are there any special or unique concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Cultural Competency and Empathy training-focus more on training efforts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify our future leaders and develop our “bench”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimize the use of virtual meetings to minimize wasted time traveling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define who is going to work in the system-this is as important as building the system around staff. Some positions are able to work remotely and some are not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to create a “normal” work environment-normalcy will help retain the culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for how many people can be in the office and who want to be in the office

Finance

The following questions were used to prompt our discussion

- What are some key areas we need to consider in our financial planning for the future?
- What data will help us monitor our work and progress?
- How can we take the next steps to having cleaner data to drive decisions?
- How do we communicate and highlight our stewardship/fiscal responsibility?

Financial Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instill a level of understanding of the importance of timing on our cash balance. Having a balance can be deceiving. Over time, we are looking at an eventual deficit and our service obligations are not flexible. Determine the true financial need.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-range financial forecasting is extremely helpful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to respond to any questions from the TLRC Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Stress test” our financial projections especially related to services for the aging population. Changing projections may steer our efforts toward more appropriate work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie costs to proposed projects to see the financial impact for informed decision making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present an update of the financial picture of the schools since the last board update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the associated costs of our buildings and determine how they benefit the organization

Programs & Services

The following questions are not all inclusive but were used to prompt our discussion

- How can we strengthen community partnerships to expand our ability to support people with DD?
- Thinking about our stakeholders and crucial points in lifespan, what partnerships will be most helpful—where might we target our attention?
- What are valued supports to our stakeholders?
- What are some key areas for growth and innovation?

Programs & Services Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MUI staff are building partnerships with police and will explore expanding this to fire departments Alan will connect Jennie to the Hamilton County Fire Chiefs Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need programs that fill the gap school districts have with developing social/emotional skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ODE trend is to focus on the whole child. We can look at this area more and build relationships with schools. Is there an ODE grant out there that could help?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for organizations that do a great job incorporating individuals with DD into the workforce well and highlight those employers

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diverse by Design-5/3rd program, LADD- build on the connections already out there to be more effective with employment attainment for individuals with DD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Disability In</i> has a large network of employers who are the choice for people with disabilities. Maybe we can partner with them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a better understanding of the population we are serve, whether individuals are in legacy settings or independent settings, and track that over time. Prepare for additional costs as the population ages.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How much should we focus on crisis intervention vs. streamlining and integration? What is the effort and cost involved for both
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transportation is a stressor on families. We need to look at families as a whole and support them by working with other organizations to find a way to relieve this stress point.

The Strategic Planning Process Workflow



Conclusion and Wrap-up

The 2022 Strategic plan will focus on our values which are

- Innovation
- Stewardship
- Collaboration
- Respect
- Equity

To prepare the plan, we are committed to obtaining local stakeholder feedback by

- Hosting listening sessions with staff, families, individuals and providers
- Looking at annual surveys and trends for the services we provide
- Conducting a 2021 strategic planning survey

The retreat adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

Respectfully,

Mr. Nestor Melnyk
President

Mr. Stephen J. Jones
Secretary