

**Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Board Meeting
October 26, 2021
Minutes**

Call to Order

A meeting of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities was held on Tuesday, October 26, 2021, at 2950 Whipple Avenue NW, Canton, Ohio. The meeting was called to order by President Dan Sutter at 6:07 p.m.

Roll Call:

Board Members:

Present:

President Dan Sutter
Vice President Carmelita Smith
Recording Secretary Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang
James Anderson
Maria Heege

Absent:

Cindi Sutter
Jennifer Moff

Also Attending:

Bill Green, Superintendent
Ed Lewis, Provider Compliance and Support Manager
Leigh Page, CFO/Business Manager
Lisa Parramore, Communications Manager
Connie Poulton, Director of Human Resources
Kristen Quicci, Director of Early Intervention and Nursing Services
Paula Kovach, Assistant SSA Director – Funded Services

In Memoriam:

A moment of silence was observed for the following: Dean Everett Ferguson, age 51, passed away on Wednesday, September 22, 2021. He received services from the SSA Department; Timothy Michael Metz, age 64, passed away on Wednesday, September 22, 2021. He received services from the SSA Department; Zoriannah Elektra Kwit, age 24, passed away on Friday, September 17, 2021. She received services from the SSA Department; Bridget Lorraine Puderbaugh, age 48, passed away on Wednesday, September 1, 2021. She received services from the SSA Department.

Minutes of the Previous Board Meeting:

President Dan Sutter requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the Board meeting held on September 28, 2021.

James Anderson moved for approval. Maria Heege seconded.

The Board duly adopted.

Recognition of Retirees:

Connie Poulton, Director of HR, announced that two employees retired during the month of October. Diane Mace, a Bus Rider in the Transportation Department, retired on October 15, 2021, with 33 years of service. Diane was not able to be present at the meeting, but Connie wished her many years of happy and healthy retirement on behalf of the Board. Kristen Quicci gave a brief presentation honoring Victoria Ridgway-Dickey, a Physical Therapist in Early Intervention, who retired on October 8, 2021, with 17 years of service. Kristen shared that Vicki began her career with Stark DD in August of 2004 at Eastgate as a Physical Therapist. In 2013, Vicki moved to Early Intervention, which was at the same time that EI was moving from direct service to the model of coaching and teaming. Vicki was one of the EI team members that was sent to a training where they announced this model- Victoria was present for her recognition, stating that she was thankful for the opportunity to spend her time helping families throughout her career at Stark DD. President Sutter thanked the retirees on behalf of the Board for their years of service and commitment to serving people with DD and their families.

Disability Employment Awareness Month Recognitions and Presentation:

Lisa Parramore shared a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting topics around Disability Employment Awareness Month, and our Ambassadors. We celebrate the people in our community that have been a part of bringing us back to work. She noted that these people, as mentioned in last year's presentation, many people with disabilities are some of the front-line workers who worked throughout the pandemic, keeping our local businesses going. Lisa shared that theme this year for Disability Employment Awareness Month was "Recovery Powered by Inclusion". In Stark County, we have been a part of America's recovery, and our stories will highlight this.

Paula Kovach, Assistant Director of the Service and Support Administration, spoke about community employment in Stark County. Paula shared that by education, she is a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, so when she has the opportunity to share her passion and the work she does every day, she is always excited to do so. Work is more than just making money and having a job. Work is a meaningful life activity, creating pride within oneself, provides self-satisfaction, an important feature and helps to build a part of your identity, our daily routines, how we make and spend money to get the things we need and want. It helps to build confidence, and contributes to your physical and mental well-being. As we close out Disability Employment Awareness Month, we celebrate. We celebrate Employment First, the concept that employment should be the first option for people with disabilities – celebrate the jobs – providing a real job and real wages for people we serve. We celebrate our Ambassadors, the employers that provide the jobs for our individuals, Vocational Habilitation providers, Group Employment providers who provide employment supports and help fine tune skills for people. We are grateful for the job-training program, EPIC, which is a collaboration between Stark DD, Siffrin, Aultman Hospital, and OOD that came into inception date of 2019. Though the pandemic slowed things down, 10 people participated in this program at Aultman Hospital, with six receiving job offers to work at Aultman at the end of the program, and four accepting. Through our working relationship and partnership with OOD for the collaboration efforts, we are pleased that we can share 268 individuals are employed with community jobs. Not each County is as fortunate to have such a great collaboration with OOD, as we are; and for that, we are grateful.

Lisa then shared a PowerPoint slide highlighting our first Ambassador, Matt Luther. Lisa shared that Matt and his SSA, Denise Frangos, participated a 20-minute radio interview with Pam Cook from WHBC to discuss how people with DD get jobs, and Matt spoke to his own job on-air. Denise shared how people with disabilities get jobs, and how employers can incorporate techniques to employ more people with disabilities. Matt has been working for Perry High School in the cafeteria for 14 years, plus two years as a student worker. Matt talked about how he got the job, how he gets to work, etc. Pam then asked Matt what his dream job was – to which Matt said it would be to be a DJ. While on air, Pam told Matt she would be giving him a call, which was a highlight of the interview.

The first Ambassador, Melissa Meister, and her SSA, Courtney Downey, were present at the Board meeting. Courtney shared that she has been Melissa's SSA since 2018, when Melissa moved to Stark County. If there's one thing to know about Melissa and her family, it's that they're always prepared and reliable. Prior to Melissa's relocation to Stark County, Courtney was in touch with Melissa and her family to make sure that this would be as smooth of a job transition as possible for Melissa. Melissa came with 17 years of work experience in nursing homes, always shows up for work, and does a great job. She has worked in dietary, housekeeping and laundry. She uses her job coach for any difficult transitions, help with organization, and advocating for herself. Melissa was one of those front line workers who showed up throughout the pandemic. Melissa thanked the people who nominated her to be an Ambassador, and shared that she is honored to be one.

The second Ambassador, Shawn Neubauer, our next Ambassador, alongside his SSA, Karen Winans, talked about their experiences together throughout the nine years they have been working together. Karen shared that Shawn is great at making sure he has a well-balanced life, and noted that while he is a hard worker, it is very important to have balance in his life, allowing time for the things he desires to do, and travel to places he wants to go. Through group employment, Shawn shared that he has worked at Kimble, cleaning crew, Design Mold and Plastics, helped out Stark DD with other jobs, amongst other jobs where he has filled in, allowing him to strengthen his skills and build confidence. As these skills have been built, they were always working on Shawn's confidence to get a community job. Shawn is an amazing bowler, loves to travel, and has overcome many obstacles throughout his time in community employment. Shawn travels, makes plans to do activities with his HPC provider, and works 10-hour shifts four days a week. Though he started with NMT, he now drives himself to work at Shearer's. Shawn's job coach shared that Shearer's loves Shawn, and excitedly shared that he is eligible for promotions within the company. Karen shared that his employers always make

mention of Shawn's QA control, and mindfulness of the pieces he makes each day, and the people he's around while he's at work. Shawn shared that he got the job at Shearer's because he heard some of his friends from TWI were working there, which built his confidence to look into it as well, and then he went and got the job, and has been there for 1 year and 3 months. Shawn shared that when he heard about being an Ambassador, he was excited, surprised and shocked. He also shared that Shearer's put his "Know Me, Know My Story" on the TV in the front of the building, which he thought was awesome, and was very excited to see, as it was unexpected.

Lisa shared PowerPoint slides highlighting Ambassadors, Robert and Seth who both work at Papa Bear's in Belden Village. Robert has been at Papa Bear's for 5 years, and Seth has been there for 22 years. She noted that they are baked into the Papa Bear's company fabric, and if you ever visit – Seth is the greeter, so you'll certainly get the chance to meet him, and it will be amazing. Papa Bear's embraces both Seth and Robert, and absolutely loves them.

Next, Shayna Garrott, who is an amazing young woman, said five years ago she did not have the courage to do things on her own. With the support of Stark DD, her SSA, and her provider - she now works at Walmart where she is proud to be the only female cart pusher, lives with a roommate that is like a sister to her, and uses SARTA all over the community to travel as she pleases. Shayna also wrote her Know Me, Know My Story completely on her own, which can be found in the "Our Stories" section of the Stark DD webpage.

Lastly, Lisa shared a slide highlighting Robin and Adam, who both work at Culver's. These two people are great examples of those employees who are dependable. Through a conversation with the owners, it was found that Culver's employs people with disabilities, welcoming job coaches as well, throughout their locations. That being said, when the Culver's opened in June, Robin and Adam both applied and got jobs there. Robin and Adam both received the 30-day bonus once they completed their first 30 days (just as all Culver's employees are eligible for), and have both received additional "Culver's Bucks" (incentive bucks) for picking up shifts when people call off or no-show, and for helping just as all other employees do.

Lisa concluded the presentation by reminding everyone that these stories are run in newspapers, and social media, but are always available on the Stark DD website, under "Our Stories", where over 60 stories are published and available to read. The reason we tell these stories is so that you can understand our mission through getting to know our people, and how we are working to create opportunities for employment in our community.

Recognition of Brad Vincent, retiring CEO, for 50 Years of Service to People with Disabilities:

Bill Green, Superintendent, honored Brad Vincent, who could not be at the Board meeting, who is retiring with 50 years of service to people with DD. Bill presented a plaque for Brad, that was made by Stark DD employee, Randy Rogers, recognizing his service. Brad started working with the DD population at 16, when he worked in the summers at Apple Creek Developmental Center. He continued to work with the DD population in Michigan, and eventually landed at Siffrin, where he worked for the last 30 years and is retiring as their CEO. Brad has been a leader in our community making sure people's needs continue to be met. We are thankful for his many years of service and support to the people in our community.

Public Speaks:

None.

President's Report

President Sutter welcomed everyone again to the meeting. As a reminder for Board Members, the Relias online training has been assigned, and Board Members should have this online training completed by November 30th. If there is need for any assistance, please contact Connie Poulton.

We are continuing to lay the groundwork for what we hope to be our 2023 Levy Campaign. As a reminder, we will be seeking a renewal of our 1.9 mil and 1.4 mil levies that are expiring in 2023. We also continue to assess the service delivery system, and are providing feedback into proposed Medicaid Rate increases, to ensure that we can stabilize the workforce. Concurrently, we are working to balance those increases with the ever-increasing addition of home and community based waivers, and the support they provide to people. He concluded his report noting that we believe this delicate balance will be with us for the foreseeable future.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Green began his report sharing that this week, on Friday and Saturday, we will host a Runner's Expo, where over 1,500 people are expected. Our Great Pumpkin Race is Saturday, and we have more people registered than ever before. We are excited as people will come in and will see the images of the people we serve, and in light of this, have the opportunity to raise more awareness. This is always a great event, and serves our public awareness efforts to make people aware of what we do, with proceeds going to Special Olympics. On Friday, November 12, we will be hosting three of our State Representatives: SR Oleslager, SR Roemer, and SR Stoltzfus, to talk with them about the direct support professional labor issues, as well as other state priorities. Joining us will be representatives from provider associations OACBDD and OPRA, and providers from our Gold Star Collaborative. Bill shared that all are welcome to join us – it will be at 11:00 in the Ernest Cohen Room at Whipple-Dale Centre. Please know in addition to celebrating this month, we continue to be laser focused on the “work of the board”, which is made up of so many things – but all relate to ensuring we are meeting the needs of people and their families. Our reach is far, and we would like to highlight a few numbers from our outcome measures report for September:

- Served 319 families with infants/toddlers;
- Served 78 preschool students;
- Served 98 students in our school age program;
- Served nearly 2,000 people through our case management functions, and at least 125 ISP meetings;
- We enrolled four people on a home and community based services waiver;
- Investigated 94 MUIs;
- Performed 8 RNQAs;
- Performed four provider compliance reviews;
- Trained 32 provider staff;
- And coordinated 190 background checks for the provider community, which certainly illustrates the need to recruit and train people.

This is always a notable month, as we celebrate employees with disabilities and the companies who employ them. We relish in the success of now having 268 people competitively employed and a solution for many companies as they look for dependable employees. In closing, he wished all a great day and a good week.

Committee/Department Reports:

- A. Finance Committee – Minutes in Board packet
Next Meeting: December 7, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.
- B. Personnel Committee – Minutes in Board packet
Next Meeting: December 10, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.
- C. Ethics Council – Minutes in Board packet
Next Meeting: December 14, 2021 at 5:45 p.m., if needed

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Connie Poulton shared information on the 2022 Table of Organization Review of Authorized Positions, noting that this is reviewed each year per Policy. The Table identifies each authorized position in the organization. The only recommendation is that Human Resources is granted approval from the Board to change the position control numbers (PCN). Connie expressed that revising these numbers will allow the PCN's to align with specialized jobs more clearly, through revised numbers and letters that would correspond with the positions.

Presentation –Provider Survey and Workforce Strategies Review

Ed Lewis, Provider Compliance and Support Manager, shared a PowerPoint presentation comprised of feedback from the Provider Community on the current state of the Stark County Workforce Shortage. Ed shared that we started meeting with providers, and conducted a survey with private providers in Stark County to help educate others on the shortage and struggles providers are facing. Out of the 35 respondents, a well-rounded group of providers, some with 1-10 employees, and others that employ over 100 people, representing all providers, not just a specific group.

The first question on the survey was "How many people do you hire each month?", with 67% of respondents choosing 1-5 new employees are hired each month. The message we are putting out through this, is to show that we are doing the best that we can to get people hired. Ed noted that if an employee doesn't know, they could be a new employee, to be kind and cognizant, share with them information that is correct, as they could still be learning.

The next question was "How many people leave your agency each month?", to which 85% of respondents reported that 1-5 people are leaving each month. So providers are hiring faster than they're losing, which was alarming at first – but after discussions with providers, it became clear that they were already shorthanded before the crisis, and they're still trying to catch up.

The third question, "At your current retention and recruitment rate, how long before your agency is no longer sustainable?", which did show some good news, with 55% of our providers stating that they are not concerned about long-term sustainability based on personnel alone. The other side of that, is that 45% of our providers do not think they will be sustainable past 18-months. This becomes of the utmost importance to try and support our providers in the best ways that we can, so that they can stay afloat and continue to provide services.

Next, "What is the largest obstacle in recruiting and retaining talent?" On the recruiting side, the overwhelming response was pay rate. We do not have control over this, as this is based on the Medicaid Rates. However, though providers understand this, they noted that they are grateful for all of the people, including Mr. Green and our Board, for advocating for the Medicaid Rate Increase. Through the section of "retaining employees" responses, pay rate is still a main component – but job duties comes in at a close second. This tells us that once people are on the job, they are overwhelmed with the duties of the jobs. This led to a meeting with the SSA department, to discuss looking at ISP's, is it possible to decide what is an absolute must, what we would like to achieve, and what experience allows, along with what staffing allows.

Ed shared a slide based on the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) survey that was conducted nationwide in August of 2021, with 449 responding agencies. In this survey, 58% of providers are discontinuing programs altogether, 77% are turning away new referrals, 84% are delaying new offerings, and 81% are struggling to achieve quality standards. This shows that this is happening across our nation. Through our excellent provider network in Stark County, we are not experiencing this, but we are edging in that direction.

On the next slide, he shared quotes from the CEO of ANCOR, Barbara Merrill, "This is the first time since the deinstitutionalization movement that we are actually going backwards." What she means by that is that we are striving for community integration, passionate providers, but staff is slim, which creates the concern. Merrill also stated, "Services aren't being staffed at the levels that they need to be staffed to be safe and to allow people to experience the community. We're concerned about basic human safety here. That's why providers are moving to close and consolidate programs. They're not going to run programs where people aren't safe."

In the focus group we held with private providers, a large provider stated that they are struggling to make sure that their people are fed, clean and safe. These other things that we want to achieve, providers are struggling. What can we do? The SSA's and County Board staff are working to see where supervision levels can be safely decreased. Doing so will create more independence for our individuals, and will also save on staffing. We are working to simplify ISPs where safe, working on remote supports and assistive technology, having a "Plan B" for if providers need. Stark DD does have a Plan B, with a list of people who are ready to step in at a moment's notice in a situation like this. Provider Compliance and Support is also scheduling frequent well-being checks, considering all options for volunteers, and checking in on individuals and families served, and helping them connect with local mental health agencies. We are supporting provider staff by meeting 1:1 with providers to determine their risk of staff shortage, developing a triage plan for vulnerable providers, inclusive of emergency housing and staffing. Developing ongoing provider support plans to help with meals, cleaning, lawn care, groceries, transportation and medical appointments when needed. We have established an ongoing DSP appreciation plan, which has been going on for a couple of years, and are contacting providers regularly to offer support where needed for current staff vacancies.

In conclusion, Ed shared a slide highlighting specific efforts by SCBDD. Efforts include supporting providers through advocating for the competency/longevity add on grants, to help with funds while DSP's go through 60-hours of training, and also provide an additional \$1.00 an hour for DSP's who complete the training. We offer our providers, we offer BOOST Employee Network, and they also have access to the same EAP offering that our employees receive. We provider payment for background checks for all DSP's and independent providers,

trainings, DSP monthly recognitions, distribution of meals to DSP's for COVID relief and appreciation of service. We formed an Independent Provider collaborative to assist in gaps of service, gathered initial interest for applicants, and referred them to provider agencies for DSP hires, have helped with COVID relief grants and funds, and have distributed PPE and COVID rapid tests to providers.

First Reading of Board Policies:

Connie Poulton, Director of Human Resources, gave the first readings on the following policies. These policies will be presented during the October Board meeting for second reading and Board approval.

Policy 3.03 Lockout – Tag out Program – Reviewed
Policy 4.56 Table of Organization – Reviewed
Policy 5.10 Preschool Program Discipline – Revised
Policy 5.12 Wellness – Reviewed
Policy 5.15 Suspensions-Emergency Removals for Adults with DD – Revised
Policy 5.16 Administration of Medication – Reviewed
Policy 5.23 Employment First – Reviewed
Policy 5.28 Food Services Staff Illness Reporting – Reviewed

Financials and Board Resolutions:

10-35-21: Operating Fund #071

A. Three Payrolls for September	\$1,813,223.55
B. Bills for Payment in September	\$1,306,258.94
TOTAL	<u>\$3,119,482.49</u>

Maria Heege moved for approval of Resolution 10-35-21. Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang seconded.

Discussion:

Leigh Page, CFO/Business Manager, reported that for the month of September 2021, we did receive our second real estate distribution, total local revenues were \$15.1 million, total State revenue was \$292,402; and total Federal revenue was \$285,371, with total revenue for the month totaling \$15.7 million.

September 2021 expenditures included three payrolls totaling \$1.8 million; total benefits paid of \$766,618; and total other expenditures of \$539,640, with total expenses at \$3.1 million. Our revenues for the month exceeded our expenses by \$12.6 million.

Cash at the beginning of the year was \$52.46 million. Currently we have \$8.3 million in 2021 open purchase orders; we have canceled \$886,764 in 2020 purchase orders; adding in our positive net financial position of \$14.6 million, gives us \$59.6 million in unencumbered cash at the end of September. Leigh noted that we now have the Reserve Balance Account with \$10 million dollars, which reduces our unencumbered cash balance as that money is reserved for future operating expenses, so our unencumbered cash balance at the end of September is \$49.6 million.

Looking at the September budget versus actual statement, year-to-date we have received \$52.3 million in revenues, which is 102.43% of what we expect to receive. We have spent \$37.7 million, which is 71.26% of total expenditures budgeted, with our target at the end of September being 75%. The available budget at the end of September, mostly made up of personnel expenses, was \$6.9 million.

The Board carried over purchase orders from 2020 in the amount of \$1.14 million. To date, we have paid \$255,033, and canceled \$886,764. The outstanding encumbrances from 2020 at the end of September is \$0.

For Resolution 10-35-21, the Board paid three payrolls during the month of September, with nothing to note for those payrolls. The week-by-week breakdown of non-payroll expenses totaling \$1.3 million.

The Board duly adopted.

10-36-21: Resolution to approve the renewal of Liability and Fleet Insurance

Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang moved for approval of Resolution 10-36-21. James Anderson seconded.

Discussion:

Leigh Page, CFO/Business Manager, this resolution is requesting approval to acquire liability and fleet insurance with a cost not-to-exceed \$201,946.92. We have again secured this insurance with Philadelphia, as we have for the past few years with the Schauer Group Inc. All of the limits are the limits that we have maintained. Schauer Group Incorporated has been able to secure rates with a one-year policy (October 2021 through September 2022) that expands coverage to include full collision on all vehicles and adds defense costs outside the limit of liability for additional premiums. Lastly, the policy includes Cyber Insurance at a cost of \$60,395.92, which is a 22.5% increase from 2020 premiums. Given the current market, this increase was expected.

The Board duly adopted.

10-37-21: Resolution to approve the 2022 Policy Manual

James Anderson moved for approval of Resolution 10-37-21. Carmelita Smith seconded.

Discussion:

Connie Poulton, Director of Human Resources, stated that this resolution is requesting approval for the Board's Policy Manual, which has been on the Agency's Intranet since December 2013. The Board Policy Manual has six chapters that include Governance, Agency Administration, Safety and Facilities, Human Resources, Program Services, and Information Technology.

The Board duly adopted.

Second Reading of Board Policies:

Connie Poulton, Director of Human Resources, gave a brief summary of the policies presented for second reading:

- Policy 2.02 Individual Service Planning Process – Reviewed
- Policy 2.03 Functional Departments – Revised
- Policy 2.09 Corporate Compliance Program – Reviewed
- Policy 2.14 Abuse Awareness and Prevention – Revised
- Policy 2.23 Research and Experimental Programs – Reviewed
- Policy 5.19 Non-Routine Use of School Buses – Reviewed
- Policy 5.20 Ohio Pupil Transportation Operation and Safety Rules – Revised
- Policy 6.03 IT Confidentiality Policy – Reviewed

10-38-21: Resolution to approve the Board policies presented for second reading.

Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang moved for approval of Resolution 10-38-21. James Anderson seconded.

The Board duly adopted.

Adjournment:

Dan Sutter, Board President, requested a motion to adjourn. Maria Heege moved for approval. Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang seconded. The Board adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in the Ernest Cohen Room at Whipple-Dale Centre.