

## DCYF Advisory Board Minutes September 18, 2023

**Attendees:** Mike Adamkowski, Sandra McGonagle, Rep. Long, Rep. Raymond, Jeff Fleischer & Melissa Wardner. Member of the public – Longene Pelletier

Mike is going to check with the Senators (Senate Office) that have been appointed to the Board to see if they will be able to attend or whether someone else should be appointed. To this date, only 1 Senator who has been appointed for over 2 years has attended twice.

**Approval of August Minutes:** There is not a quorum so the minutes could not be approved.

### **Update on Hampstead:**

- 6 youth placed at this time.
- They have very difficult behavior and they have been a handful.
- There are locked doors in place and a fence is going to be installed.
- Meeting with community in re. Hampstead:
  - ✓ Very upset
  - ✓ Not notified in a timely fashion
  - ✓ Concerns about resale issues of their properties (lower costs)
  - ✓ Apparently some youth escaped and went to a 55 community. Nothing happened but it scared the residents.

### **OCA statement about 10 kids placed outside of New England:**

- There are 75 kids in out-of-state placement in residential facilities
- Some of those placements are due to the fact that in-state facilities are rejecting our youth b/c of their behavioral issues
- Some youth need a very specific services and there are no places within NH available
- There is a lack of staff at the facilities
- Working on getting wrap-around for the youth and makes sure they have what they need to succeed.
- Looking into paid mentorships (G&C). Working with Robert Moore and Finance on this and hoping to get every non-profit agency to apply. Need to get the RFP sent out.
- Spoke about a youth that's been there for a year and really working on getting him home (hopefully within 30 days).
- BCBH oversees Hampstead.
- Jeff discussed the CAT 4 and 5 youth – you need to meet the child/youth not their file, not the report or the CAT.
- 70% of youth in out-of-state care are for Level 3
- DCYF has to visit once a month whether a youth is in or out of state in any facility. Some youth are BCBH and they certify the placements.
- Permanency workers are diligently working on finding the child/youth a permanent connection before they are out of the system.

- The large states/facilities don't work with the family. We need to do more with the family before the youth returns.
- "Credible messengers", not necessarily with degrees but have lived experience.

**Staffing Update:**

- 13 vacancies
- Other staff within DCYF/DHHS have been volunteering to assist
- Staff are NOT being mandated
- Hoping to send a notice to the faith-based community for them to share with congregation on the need for Youth Counselors at the center.
- 18 youth are currently at SYSC – 9 are committed
- Hoping to do some anti-violence trainings in Manchester (gangs) to try and prevent the violence
- Discussed the Heat Map that was sent out. We are trying to create a day program with lived experience workers (from the community) to help elevate the violence.
- The transition has been going well – DCYF has a great team, a lot of long term employees.
- Community based infrastructure
- Service Array (need to get some of the providers to up their services)
- 2% of youth are being "hoteled", in the ER, at Cottage House at SYSC due to lack of services. Need to get wraparound for them.
- 9 were waiting in the ER for a couple of weeks.
- Foster homes – a certain % want to adopt
- We have a fictive/relative event coming up to celebrate their dedication to the youth

**Public Questions – Longene Pelletier**

Asked about Harmony Montgomery – which of course, DCYF cannot talk about.

If someone has an issue with DCYF, who do they go to?

- ✓ Ombudsman's Office
- ✓ DCYF Constituent Relations – 603-271-4451
- ✓ Strength to Succeed

Who speaks for the child if the court won't let anyone in (non-public)?

- ✓ The family is allowed to have certain people in the court room – they will stand up for the youth.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Wardner  
 Administrative Assistant II  
 DCYF