

Tidewater Youth Services Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2023

Attending: Mr. Harry Cromer, Mr. Kevin Curling, Ms. Kimberly Jennings, Mr. Rusty Jordan, Ms. Katy McCurdy (substituting for Mr. Gregory Smith), Mr. Al Steward, Ms. Deanna Valentine, and Dr. Cynthia Blakeslee.

Not attending Mr. Gregory Smith and Mr. Carl Faison.

Staff: Ms. Jenny Hodge, Ms. Vicky Hubbard, and Mr. William Wimbish

Guests: None

1. **Call to Order:** Kim Jennings, Acting Chairman due to the recent retirement of Katherine Grimm, called the June 5, 2023 meeting of the Tidewater Youth Services Commission to order at 11:34 a.m.

2. **Review of the previous meeting minutes:**

The minutes of May 1, 2023 meeting were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Mr. Cromer and seconded by Mr. Jordan. The motion to accept the minutes was voted on and carried unanimously.

3. **Items Carried Forward:**

A. Tidewater Youth Services Foundation:

Ms. Hodge announced that the position of executive director of the Tidewater Youth Services Foundation has been filled by Sarah Wray. She will be in attendance at the next board meeting.

Ms. Hodge updated progress on The Second Chances Renovation Campaign. The Blocker Foundation awarded the Commission the grant of \$50,000 for the roofing needs at Crisis and Lynnhaven group homes. This grant puts the Commission ten to fifteen thousand from achieving the Campaign goal of \$300,000.

B. Tidewater Youth Services Commission Update:

Ms. Hodge updated progress on obtaining approval by the City of Virginia Beach to obtain an extended term lease for the Lynnhaven Group Home. Discussions relative to this continued in the meeting of May 12 with Tim Copeland, who is in charge of leasing for the City of Virginia Beach, and the city manager. The city manager indicated that he wants the issue to be decided by city council. This decision will be discussed in closed session by city council on June 12th.

Ms. Hodge discussed staffing issues currently existing at the Crisis Home arising from retention among some new hires for the facility. This situation has resulted in keeping the resident population less than full capacity. In a two week period, there were four full time employees who put in letters of resignation. These included an assistant director, residential counselor, group home worker, and a cook who did not actually start. Since then a group home worker and cook have been hired and interviews for the remaining openings are planned this week. Eleven interviews are planned for this week. Full staff patterns are still contingent on the time necessary for background checks and completion of required 40 hours of training for new hires.

Ms. Valentine suggested the utilization of the online background CPS system may speed up background

checks to a one day to 48 hour turn around. The cost of each background check is \$10.00. Ms. Valentine will forward information related to this system to Ms. Hubbard per Ms. Hodge's request.

Ms. Hodge discussed staff capacity improvement since last year. Comparing staffing from last year, 23% reduction in position vacancies and increase in staff capacity has occurred. This improvement was explained as resulting from improvements in both the hiring practices and increases in salaries based on information from market study on incomes of comparable positions provided by Ms. Hubbard. It was also noted by Ms. Hodge that Ms. Hubbard has been instrumental in addressing staff morale and guiding renovations in the main building.

Ms. Jennings asked if there is a contingency in place for substitute workers. Ms. Hubbard discussed the role of relief counselors used in the past as substitutes and how this position could be revitalized to serve agency on call needs in the future. Ms. Jennings suggested having trained relief staff in place with the reopening of Lynnhaven.

Ms. Hodge revisited market studies to address changes she sees in incomes in settings that have similar services. Mr. Jordan recommended that instead of a market study to compare settings that a market study to compare services would best meet our needs. He recommended the services of the Evergreen Consulting firm from Tampa, Florida.

Ms. Hodge asked if anyone has access to someone on Virginia Beach City Council, who could provide a positive word for us to be approved for the extended lease for the Lynnhaven Group Home. Mr. Steward stated that he would ask the director of Social Services in Virginia Beach to speak or allow him to speak with Mr. Berlucchi, who serves as the city council liaison to social services, in order to inform him of what is coming up regarding the lease for Lynnhaven.

C. Items from Members or Staff:

Dr. Blakeslee asked for an update on what the Commission did for Public Service Week. Ms. Hubbard indicated that part time workers were given \$300 and full time workers were given \$500 as additional income.

4. New Business

A. Financials

Ms. Hubbard provided the following update for the FY24 budget:

- Plan includes Crisis Home and Lynnhaven for ½ year.
- All employees will receive a 5% cost of living increase
- 11% health insurance increase; Commission will absorb some of this expenses.
- Interest rates increase now \$9,000 per month compared to \$600-\$700 per month in previous budgets.
- CCC monies remain the same
- Current total revenue is \$5,959,262 which is 18.3% greater than last year.
- \$14,000 per month for the current year.
- Line item supports services shared by all programs

Mr. Jordan suggested that the Commission look into serving as an agency to provide emergency placements for foster home children who are difficult placements. Ms. Hodge indicated that there are current meetings with social services to address this situation. Discussion centered on considering the possibilities for addressing this population as a future project.

Mr. Jordan motioned to accept the FY 24 budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Valentine and approved by the Board with a unanimous vote.

B. Items from Members or Staff:

Ms. Jennings suggested that future meetings revert back to the Commission's main office set for July 10 at 11:30. There was no disagreement on this suggestion.

C. Closed Session:

There was no business necessary for closed session.

D. Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the chair at 1:06 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia D. Blakeslee

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Secretary/Treasurer (Interim)

Tidewater Youth Services Commission Board