

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

April 26, 2018, 4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Weber called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Present:

Thomas Bean

Paulette Burdick

Tom Lynch

James Martz

Debra Robinson, M.D.

Jose Luis Rodriguez

Thomas P. Weber

Excused: Donald E. Fennoy II, Ed.D.; Vince Goodman; Vern Melvin

A. Invocation – led by Chair Weber

B. Pledge of Allegiance – led by Chair Weber

C. Presentations

1. Presentation of 211 – Amy Blechman, Program Officer; Sharon L'Herrou, President/CEO of 211

CSC funds the 211 HelpLine (also described as a crisis call center) together with United Way and Palm Beach County. CSC collaborates with 211 as a resource for the EveryParent campaign.

- Lines are answered 24/7, can phone, text, chat, or email
- Answers calls for National Suicide Hotline (with trained suicide prevention counselors)
- Staffs both the Rape Crisis and Violent Crime Hotlines, works with the Substance Awareness Coalition
- Accredited by: Nat'l Suicide Prevention Lifeline, American Assn. of Suicidology, Alliance of Information & Referral Systems, Contact USA, Fl. Council Against Sexual Violence
- Infrastructure grant in 2017 allowed new computers, phones, roof and email migration
- Participates in community task forces: opioid, Community Health Improvement Plan, hunger, elderly, special needs, poverty, homelessness, Birth to 22, etc.
- In 2017 responded to 100,000 calls, of which over 60,000 were in Palm Beach County
- Needs: mental health/substance abuse - 27% of calls; seniors – 28%; housing – 18%
- Provides daily sunshine phone calls to elderly community (approx. 500 calls per day)
- Part of nationwide organization to handle a pandemic

Q: Do you work closely with 911?

A: 211 works closely with PBC Sheriff's Office and many municipalities. Because it's a confidential service, if a person is in imminent crisis 211 first seeks permission from the caller then sends help.

Q: The number of total contacts, is it a single count?

A: Each contact is a request for help, so if a person calls multiple times they are being helped every time.

Q: What do you see as a barrier to more awareness in the community?

A: There is one outreach person for all of Palm Beach County. Staff is needed to attend community meetings, and money is needed to provide advertising materials. Funders tend to not want to fund the outreach, they want to fund the service.

Q: If a funder provides additional funding, in which areas would you spend it?

A: The more staff on hand, the faster calls can be answered. There is only 50 staff to manage calls from a population of 2 million people. 211 is rich in data, but there is no time to digest the data, and to use it to inform decision making.

Q: As CSC is a data-driven organization, what can CSC do to help 211 in this area?

A: CSC's Chief Technology Officer has been helping 211, and there is a process for Program Officers to meet with individual agencies to determine their needs.

Q: Do you have additional demographic breakdown of the contacts?

A: There are different snapshots. Information regarding children was mostly provided. More data will be provided.

Q: In what amount does CSC fund 211 on an annual basis?

A: The contract is currently \$176,405 for the crisis call center.

Q: If someone called from another state, if there was no local 211 for them would they get transferred to you?

A: 211 is a national number, but depending on where you are when you dial it, you will get the local dispatch center for that area, similar to 911.

When someone calls the National Suicide Prevention Helpline (800 number) it gets routed only to the local (Palm Beach and Treasure Coast 211) center.

2. ChildNet – Marsha Guthrie, Community Planning & Partnership Lead; Larry Rein, Interim CEO, ChildNet, Inc.

- ChildNet is the lead agency for community-based care in Palm Beach County, operating the system of foster care and related services
- ChildNet is subcontracted by the Department of Children and Families with a current contract for \$42 million; services have been provided in this manner for 5½ years
- Contracts with DCF are fixed-price: no matter how many children are placed in care the funding remains fixed. ChildNet has been operating at a constant deficit, in the past 2 years it was bailed out by Special Appropriations
- In the past year the Legislature provided funds to wipe out accrued deficits and has put together a risk pool of \$15 million
- Legislature changed the funding formula in the Statute which had previously led to great differences in funding year-to-year. Changes in the funding formula will ensure that Palm Beach County will share equitably in future increases
- ChildNet is receiving more local support than ever before through the Community Alliance
- Nearly a 30% increase in children being removed from homes in the past 3 months
- Great strains on foster homes and relative caregivers/kinship caregivers – need more foster homes and better support to kinship caregivers who don't want to be licensed as a foster home
- Dually dependent and delinquent teenage population is underserved

- At least 50% of children entering care enter because of the substance abuse of their parent(s). Need to figure out how to support the parents as they go through the recovery process, so they can continue to care for their children
- CSCs Legal Aid project gets kids back to their families more quickly, without which ChildNet would be totally overrun
- Triple P parenting program is accessible to every child in foster care
- Child First program serves families in the dependency system or investigation phase through the Early Childhood Court
- The time is right for more involvement and expansion of CSCs services in the Foster Care system
- CSC wants to get a better understanding of:
 - What are the characteristics of families coming into the system?
 - How is the disproportionality/overrepresentation of some groups vs. others explained?
 - What plans/programs do we have in place to support these areas?

Q: What does “dually dependent” mean?

A: The clients are both involved with the justice system (delinquency) and the foster care system (dependency). It happens in two ways: either they are delinquent and are such a challenge to their families that they are abandoned, or they come into foster care, and while in care they engage in delinquency.

Q: How many children are in foster care in Palm Beach County and what is your annual budget?

A: Currently just over 1,500 in foster care with an annual budget of \$42 million.

Q: Given the 30% increase in removals from the home this year, are you able to handle that increased intake? What happens if you don't have a home available?

A: We resort to residential group care and shelter which is not the preference, especially for younger kids. When ChildNet was contracted 5½ years ago Palm Beach County had the fewest number of foster homes per child in foster care. In five years the capacity of foster homes has nearly doubled but there is now stagnation. There are currently 350 kids in foster homes and another 150 in residential group care. There is a challenge to create more foster homes, it will take a community-wide effort and both funding and effort. We need to invest in more astute market research as those efforts are made. The influx can be handled, but it is not being handled in the best possible way.

Q: Is there a difference in finding appropriate foster parents, those who will care for the special needs children where residential care is not an option?

A: In Palm Beach County the challenge is finding homes for (non-special needs) teenagers. The special needs population is fairly well served, working with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, their group homes are more like foster homes.

Comment: The fiscal responsibility of ChildNet has been a topic of discussion for years, and I have not seen a more creative approach to the various challenges and the limited funding of ChildNet. Mr. Rein has been very creative in addressing logistics of the system which had not been previously addressed. The least favorable group home in Palm Beach County would not have been removed from service if it were not for the efforts of Mr. Rein, and it was replaced with a much more therapeutic and comprehensive model.

A: The average cost of serving a child in a group home is in excess of \$57,000 per year; the average cost of serving a child in a foster home is \$17,000 per year; the average cost of

servicing a child with a relative is essentially \$0 because there is a separate fund that pays relative caregiver stipends. Every effort we can make to get children into foster homes or with relatives, including increasing the capacity and support for them, enables ChildNet to 'save' money. In saving money we can create a better program for teenagers. Largely thanks to Judge Martz a pilot project is in place to serve four teenagers in a unique, intensive way. Staff will take them to school and stay with them in school, and bring the learning and gains from school back to the home. In addition there will be an on-site therapist. The cost is more than twice the price of the group home that is closing, but if the foster home capacity and relative caregiver care can be increased this pilot program can be expanded.

Q: If it is (in general) better for a child to be with a family member, why aren't incentives offered to encourage this?

A: Relative caregivers currently get a stipend which is a fraction of the group home room and board payment. The Florida Legislature in the last session created an option for licensing relative caregivers which will allow ChildNet to pay them room and board comparable to the foster home rate. The question is whether the relative caregiver would want to become licensed.

Q: Do you work with the School District's Court liaisons?

A: Yes, and every school has a foster care liaison.

Q: There are urban legends about people who make a living providing foster care. How are they monitored?

A: They need to be licensed through a very thorough licensing process. Agencies such as Place of Hope or Kids in Distress will do background checks, home studies, and train the parents. The parents are then presented to ChildNet which follows up to ensure accuracy, upon which DCF has final review. Over the course of the year there are mandatory home visits performed by the other placing agency which is subcontracted by ChildNet, and visits by ChildNet, and by DCF licensing people. We are confident that we are performing appropriate oversight. The face of foster parents has changed: examples were given of a former Councilman (running for County Commissioner), head of pediatrics, etc.

Q: Do you plan to look at the root cause of a child being removed – what was the stressor that caused the parent to misbehave? Will this be disaggregated?

A: The characteristics of who is inclined to be a part of the foster care system will be reviewed by examining demographics: race, ethnicity, education completion level, geographic location; this information will be forthcoming. There are so many calls to the hotline that only get investigated and not substantiated, many of which have repeated hotline calls which continue to be unsubstantiated, until there is eventually a verification. We need to understand the conditions that lead up to the maltreatment, because if there is one call to the hotline it is likely there will be more until there is eventually verification of abuse.

Three years ago the State of Florida implemented a formalized and structured way of completing an abuse investigation whereas previously it had been up to the individual investigator's decision for removal. Investigators need to continue to get more adept at it, but they now look more closely at identifying root causes and solutions to the problems.

Q: Can we roll that data into your analysis?

A: We will make our best effort, we have access to the records for child welfare cases. We have familiarity with the family function assessment described. We will be able to take a

snapshot and consider both verified and unverified cases. It will involve some case analysis and review of data and repeat interaction with the system.

Q: Do you perform both announced visits and unannounced visits to the homes?

A: Yes.

Q: I know that you will be looking at income levels, although income levels are not always a good predictor of abusive parents. Have the caseloads of social workers improved, and are they being better compensated?

A: Their caseloads at 1,500 kids in care are better than they were at 1,800 kids in care. Their compensation is a little higher than it was. Social workers or Dependency Case Managers in the states of Connecticut and Massachusetts are paid double the salaries paid in Florida, it is \$38,000 per year here for a starting salary.

Q: Do you think the caseload may be a factor in a case not being substantiated?

A: The caseloads of the protective investigators is one thing, they have received several raises and their caseloads are fairly manageable. The dependency case managers is where the challenge remains. Case managers can be lost by them seeking better pay, however, they can also equally be lost because of the demands of the job.

Q: There was a recent case in Loxahatchee where a two year old child was the size of a six month old. How does this happen? What do we need to do to ensure these things don't happen?

A: It's hard to describe how any of these things happen. Families get isolated, there are generations of dysfunction and abuse, and there are external family members who knew about it and allowed it to continue. The investigators didn't push hard enough and needed to. The family was home schooled.

A: Another issue is retention of child protective investigators (CPIs). There are always brand-new CPIs, we try desperately to have a CPI reach three years on the job. If you don't have skilled people who are out looking at families, those that know abuse/neglect and understand it, that's how things like your example can happen.

A: The community based care organization and the protective investigators at DCF can't do it alone. CSC, through various programs, and other community partners, are also in family homes; prevention can be improved through stronger partnerships and greater attention and awareness. When we raise awareness about child abuse we try to engage those who are outside of the system, to help a family, friend, or neighbor realize that it can happen in their own families or their own neighborhood. We need to be collegiate in our support.

Q: Have you reached out to the faith-based communities?

A: Yes, the majority of foster homes are through faith-based agencies, For Kids of Florida, and Place of Hope.

3. Dashboard Presentation – Amy Lora, Ph.D., Evaluation Lead

There are a number of different approaches employed to look at CSC's progress and performance in reaching its outcomes. At the program level CSC employs its annual CPPA (Comprehensive Program Performance Assessment) to look at how it is meeting intermediate outcomes: that program-level data is aggregated to determine CSC's performance in meeting the longer-term outcomes. The CSC Goals Dashboard is the higher-level look at the longer-term outcomes.

CSC's four goals are outlined below and have outcomes monitored in each of the four areas.

For the **born healthy** goal the indicators that are measured are:

- the percentage of premature and low birthweight births

For the **safe from abuse and neglect** goal the indicators that are measured are:

- the percentage of children (birth to five) with a verified finding of abuse or neglect

For the **ready for kindergarten** goal the indicators that are measured are:

- the percentage of children scoring ready on the state kindergarten readiness assessment

For the **access to quality afterschool and summer programs** goal the indicators that are measured are:

- the number of children enrolled in quality afterschool or summer programs.

The Dashboard is an annual snapshot answering two primary questions: i) how is CSC doing over time? and ii) how is CSC doing compared to others like CSC over time?

- To answer i) – client outcome data is used
- To answer ii) – propensity score matching is used, whereby a CSC-funded child is matched to a Palm Beach County child with a similar demographic profile but whose family was not served by CSC. This helps with apples to apples matching when considering trendlines.
- There are additional questions considered around racial, ethnic and gender disparities (to be presented at June's Planning Session).

Dashboard page presented, shows trends from 2013 through 2017. CSC-funded children trend line presented in blue, propensity score matched group presented in green. First graph (with solid blue block) shows **all** CSC-funded children in programs addressing the specific goal, the second line graph shows a **subset of clients** for whom an appropriate match was made.

Born Healthy:

- In 2017 – 7.2% of CSC-funded children were born low birthweight. Although this figure showed a downward trend, there was an uptake in 2016 which was not unique to CSC clients, the 2016 uptake happened in both the comparison group and the county.
- In 2017 – 7.3% of CSC-funded children were born preterm. The matched group showed that from 2013 to 2015 the CSC-funded children showed gains, but in 2016 and 2017 the CSC-funded children's trajectory closely matched the match group. It is by tenths of a percentage point so is not currently a concern, although it will be followed.

Safe from Abuse and Neglect:

- 2.5% of CSC-funded children have verified abuse and neglect. The trend line from 2013 was mostly down, with a slight increase in 2017. The takeaway is that fewer CSC-funded children have verified abuse and neglect than their matched counterparts.

Ready for Kindergarten:

- There is no consistent trend line over time because the kindergarten measure has not been consistent over time. Data for years 2013 and 2014 used the FLKRs measure and the percentage (of ready for kindergarten) for CSC-funded clients was higher, and was increasing from 2013 to 2014 whereas the matched group was decreasing. Comparing 2016 and 2017 the CSC-funded children continued to be more ready than the matched group. Scores for kindergarten readiness for school entry Fall of 2017 for fiscal year 17/18 will be available in the next few months.

Access to quality afterschool and summer programs:

- Data presented was for the most current year of 2017. Number of children receiving CSC funding was 12,652; number of children served in QIS sites was 19,546.

Q: Are these separate counts, or could they receive funding through multiple avenues, therefore counted two or three times?

A: Individual counts.

Comment: Please provide disaggregated data in June. Provide a descriptor of the numerator and denominator when you have the percentages. Can you give numbers for after school and summer, and separate by elementary and middle school? Can you also look at unmet need? All children should be involved in extended opportunities for learning and enrichment, and this is an area that we need to invest in (not necessarily just CSC). For safe from abuse and neglect, we should track the total number of complaints, even if they are unverified. We should disaggregate the number that are investigated.

Q: Is this the first year that we are counting the number of children receiving CSC funds in QIS sites? It would be helpful if we could see the trend line to determine how we are increasing those numbers over time.

Is there a benchmark for born low birth weight, so that we can see whether we are performing to the target or below the target?

A: There are national targets. We look at Palm Beach County overall, and Florida overall.

Q: There should be a red target line showing that we are performing at, below, or exceeding the target, so that it's an actual metric we are trying to achieve vs. historical tracking.

The next phase of work is to present disaggregated data. The Dashboard will be presented on an annual basis. The Dashboard data is used to inform strategic planning and ongoing work.

2. Minutes

A. March 29, 2018 Council Meeting

A motion by Burdick/Lynch to approve the Minutes of the March 29, 2018 Council meeting as presented was approved by unanimous vote.

3. Public Comment – Agenda Items – N/A

4. Council Committees:

- Finance Committee – the Finance Committee sent CSC's investment policy to all Council members, included in their notebook packet. The Committee discussed budgets for 2018/19 and all the way to years 2021/22. Approval was sought for Minutes and Financials.

A motion by Burdick/Weber to approve the Finance Committee Minutes of March 29, 2018 and CSC Financials dated March 31, 2018 was approved by unanimous vote.

- Personnel Committee – N/A

5. Consent Agenda

1. Additions, Deletions, Substitutions – N/A
2. Items to be Pulled for Discussion – Agenda item 5B(1) (Reference #6) was pulled for discussion purposes.
3. Adoption of the Consent Agenda and Walk-in Warrants List

A motion by Lynch/Bean to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of Agenda item 5B(1) (Reference #6), was approved by unanimous vote (note: the Walk-In Warrants List was approved together with the Warrants List under a separate motion).

A. Program

1. Resolution #18-007 Authorizing an Increase to Center for Family Services, Inc./Counseling for Parents and Young Children – Approved by Consent
2. Resolution #18-008 Authorizing an Increase to Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Inc. – Approved by Consent
3. Sickle Cell Foundation, Inc., Community Voice Program Update – For informational purposes only; no action required.
4. Resolution #18-009 Authorizing Summer Camp Expanded Learning Opportunities – Approved by Consent

B. Business

1. Warrants List

Q: What is the item “Overpayment delinquent tax distribution” for \$70,408?

A: The Palm Beach County Tax Collector had given CSC too much money and had requested to be reimbursed \$70,408. The County had to pay back a much higher amount.

Q: Does this happen often?

A: To the best of my knowledge this has never happened before.

The amount of \$70,408 has accrued over a period of several years (since 2003), where large landowners have the opportunity to appeal the Property Appraiser’s assessment of their property, and the litigation takes time. The letter received with the request had stated that if it had happened in the past, the Property Appraiser’s office had simply deducted these amounts before disbursement.

Q: How do you account for this in your accounting?

A: Net it against the revenue.

A revised motion by Lynch/Martz to approve the Warrants List and Walk-In Warrants List was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Proposed 2018-2019 Annual Budget – For informational purposes only; no action required.
3. Proclamation Declaring May, 2018 as Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month – Approved by Consent
4. Resolution #18-010 Authorizing an Agreement with Downs & St. Germain Research, Inc. – Approved by Consent

6. **Non Consent Agenda**

A. Business – N/A

B. For Informational Purposes Only – N/A

7. **Walk-In Items** – N/A

8. Chief Executive Officer's Report

1. Great Ideas Initiative (GII) Update – launched in 2016, provided funding to 46 organizations in a total amount of \$1.2 million, 2018 is the third year of funding. This funding year the grant ceiling will be raised from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and will continue to be for agencies with an operating budget of less than \$1 million. Funding comes from underexpenditures.

A Great Ideas Growth Fund will become available to those organizations initially funded under the 2016 GII, and is by invitation only. It will look at whether they had been able to sustain the program, and will provide additional funding to perform expansion and/or capacity building. Total funding for both the 2018 GII and the Growth Fund will not exceed \$1.5 million.

2. Great Ideas Initiative Success Story – the CEO Report featured a program teaching children the violin and is serving 20 children.
3. March of Dimes Awards CSC Grant – an amount of \$16,000 was awarded to CSC for the second year in a row to support the CenteringPregnancy® program.
4. Strong Minds Network Open Enrollment – over 60 applications to join the Strong Minds Network were received during the open enrollment period: 34 of those applicants will be joining the network.
5. Ready by 21 Conference – Palm Beach County was specifically chosen to host the 7th annual (national) Ready by 21 Conference because of its Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures work. Six workshops during the conference were provided by local entities: five of the six workshops featured CSC staff.

Ready by 21 is looking to bring the national conference back to Palm Beach County in 2021 to follow up with how Birth to 22 has progressed.

6. Business Breakfast Pre: Ready by 21 Conference – close to 200 businesses in attendance, businesses have already expressed interest in mentorship, internship, and working with the Chamber of Commerce. Videos shown at the event were played.
7. PolicyLink Equity Summit – April, Chicago – Palm Beach County had a delegation which included members from Birth to 22, My Brother's Keeper, Prime Time, United Way, School District, Youth Services Department, PBC Sheriff's Office, and the National Alliance for Boys and Men of Color, among others. Marsha Guthrie from CSC, and James Green from Palm Beach County headed the planning of the delegation.
8. Robotics First® Competition – The Robotics First® competition was held Saturday, February 24th with over 175 teams in attendance. Hosted by the School District of Palm Beach County there were teams from Pearl City CATS, Westgate Community Center, and Cabana Colony Youth Center. All three after school centers receive direct funding from CSC. Judges of the performances/competition included Council Member Paulette Burdick, and Robert Kurimski, CSC's Chief Technology Officer. A video of the competition was played.

Q: Is CSC providing funding so that all schools can participate?

A: CSC funds Green Mouse Academy through Prime Time in order to ensure that there is a FIRST® LEGO® League affiliate in South Florida; efforts of Green Mouse Academy ensure that there is a structure in place. Funding is provided to after school programs (Pearl City CATS, Westgate Community Center, and Cabana Colony Youth Center) and there is no

affiliation with the schools themselves. As the FIRST® LEGO® League affiliate, Green Mouse Academy has been asked to lay out its overall strategic plan which ensures that the opportunities are far-reaching and comprehensive, specifically to the underserved and underrepresented populations. Palm Beach County has a STEM Council, and information can be provided which schools are participating.

Q: Can we talk about STEM at the Planning Session?

A: Absolutely.

Comment: **There is a geographic underserved area in Palm Beach County which doesn't fall under a particular city, it's from 45th Street to Lantana Road, and Congress/Haverhill west to Jog Rd.**

A: We are in the process of geo-coding all CSC-funded clients; it will be mapped out in the next few weeks so we will soon be able to provide that information.

9. Invitation to Spring Book Distribution Event – invitations to the book distribution event Tuesday, May 15 (10:15 am) at Forest Hill Elementary School will be emailed.
10. EveryParent App Presentation – At the May 24 Council meeting there will be a presentation on the EveryParent App. It is hoped that Council members will create a profile in the parenting app, look around the app, and give feedback.
11. Update from Florida Children's Council – A handout of all Bills passed was provided.

9. Legal Reports – annual training re: Public Records and Sunshine Law will be provided in May.

10. Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items – N/A

11. Council Comments

Commissioner Burdick thanked the Council for its support to the programs that participated in the Robotics First® competition. She further thanked Florida Power and Light (FPL) for providing not only funding, but the employees to man the competition.

Judge Martz stated that his son had first participated in FIRST® LEGO® League activities 20 years previously, and that he was now the Integration Specialist for SpaceX, building the ship that will go to Mars. It is truly a path, and building LEGO® robotics to perform autonomous tasks led to Tessler and other developments. Science and Technology positions are in such high demand, and are very well paid.

Thomas Bean stated that it is a real opportunity for underserved kids to have a path to success. It was great to have the Pahokee kids in the video showing that there are other opportunities for kids outside of football. It's giving new life, new opportunity, a different way of looking at things, and when you look at the drivers of the economy in 20 to 25 years, it leans more and more towards computers, today's car mechanics already have to know how to program computers. Whole sections of the community cannot be allowed to fall behind, never to catch up, because they don't have the resources or ability to recognize the opportunities. "I am passionate about breaking down the barriers to the opportunity, encouraging girls and underserved populations to recognize that this opportunity is out there for the taking."

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.



~~Vincent Goodman, Secretary~~
Thomas P. Weber, Chair



Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer