

## Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)

August 13, 2024 Meeting

### Minutes

#### Members Present:

Tinuade Akinshola

Laura Coyle

Kay Farley, CRBC Representative

Stacey McNeely, Chair

Lisa Merkin, CYFS Liaison

Elizabeth Simon

Ronald Whalen

Ms. Stacey McNeely called the meeting to order.

#### Review and Approval of the Minutes

The draft minutes of the June 11, 2024 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. It was pointed out that Ms. Laura Brown's surname was incorrect in the draft minutes. Mr. Ronald Whalen made the motion to approve the revised minutes. Ms. Laura Coyle seconded the motion. The revised minutes were approved.

Minutes of the July 16, 2024 meeting were also distributed prior to the meeting. There was not a quorum for that meeting, so no business was conducted.

#### Agency Update

Ms. Lisa Merkin presented the data for July 2024.

Data Element	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024		
<b>Assessment</b>					
Number of calls to Screening Unit	1140	731	603		
Reports of Child Maltreatment (referrals)	879	517	472		
Number of new Alternative Response (AR) investigations	101	54	47		
Number of new Investigation Response (IR) investigations	87	40	48		
New non-CPS cases	103	57	76		
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation indicated	41	56	59		
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation unsubstantiated	15	21	53		
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation ruled out	47	53	52		
<b>Out of Home</b>					
Number of new out of home placements (entries)	14	8	5		
13Total children who left care (exits)	13	8	8		
Total out-of-home children in care at month's end	336	336	333		
<b>Placement</b>					

Number of children in foster care	233	226	219		
Number of children placed with relatives	60	69	72		
Number of children in residential placement	43	41	42		
<b>Length of Stay</b>					
Average (mean) length of stay in foster care (months)	33	33	33.5		
Median length of stay in foster care (months)	27.5	27	27		
<b>Resource Homes</b>					
Number of licensed regular foster homes (does not include restricted/relative homes)	113	114	pending		
Number of newly assigned regular home studies	2	5	1		
Number of recruitment inquiries	33	33	26		

### **Sub-panel on Support for Transitioning Youth**

Ms. McNeely chairs the Sub-panel that includes Ms. Brown, Ms. Coyle, and Kay Farley. The Sub-panel met by Zoom on July 31, 2024. Ms. Merkin looked at historical MCCRP materials for prior work. Ms. Brown has begun looking for relevant articles and will continue her research. Ms. Farley offered to pull together the state and federal policies related to transitioning youth. Ms. McNeely volunteered to reach out to other Montgomery County Commissions and Boards to see if they would be interested in partnering on a joint project. The Sub-panel is scheduled to meet again on August 20<sup>th</sup> by Zoom.

### **Sub-panel on Developing a Culture of Support for Agency Staff**

Mr. Whalen chairs this Sub-panel that includes Tinuade Akinshola and Elizabeth Simon. The Sub-panel will be meeting soon. Mr. Whalen put forth two potential avenues of work. One possibility would be to focus on the MSW interns to try to ascertain the factors that they consider in deciding whether to accept an agency position after graduation. Another idea might be to seek out transitioning youth willing to talk (give testimonials) about the importance and support of the agency staff in their lives.

Ms. Merkin's sense is that staff that make it past 3-4 years, tend to stay with the agency long term. She advised that staff really do respond to a thank you and other means of showing appreciation. She still hears comments about the Smithsonian presentation the MCCRP arranged for them in 2023. The agency tried to host events of appreciation periodically – ice cream social, lunches, and CEU programs.

Ms. Coyle offered to explore additional opportunities the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

### **Yearly HHS Committee Meeting**

Ms. McNeely advised that Montgomery County's HHS Committee will be meeting in October. She has not received her time slot yet for presenting the work of the MCCRP.

She will draft the one-pager for the presentation and circulate the draft to the panel members for review.

### **Panel Training Requirements**

Ms. Neely reminded members to make sure they have completed the required training sessions and uploaded their certificates of course completions.

**Panel Vacancy Notice**

Ms. Merkin will work with County to get the MCCRP vacancy posted.

**Panel Availability for September 10, 2024 Meeting**

Panel members did not advise of any conflicts with the next meeting date.

The meeting adjourned.