

Ohio Commission on Fatherhood

Minutes from the Meeting of

Thursday, June 2, 2011

<p>Commissioners Present:</p> <p>Peter Lawson Jones, Chairman</p> <p>Senator Bill Beagle</p> <p>Senator Charleta Tavares</p> <p>Mr. Robert Boykins</p> <p>Director Susan Brown</p> <p>Mr. Cedric Collins</p> <p>Ms. Kimberly Dent</p> <p>Mr. Shane Ellet</p> <p>Mr. Thomas Joyce</p> <p>Mr. Steven Killpack</p> <p>Dr. Randy Leite</p>	<p>Guests:</p> <p>Mr. Jesse Hines, S.O.U.L Foundation</p> <p>Mr. Robert Pina</p> <p>Ms. Kelly Rybacki, Legislative Aide for Representative Timothy Derickson</p> <p>Mrs. Lavita Stokes, Vice President of Finance Three Leaf Productions</p> <p>Reverend Eli Williams, Urban Light Ministries</p>
<p>OCF Staff Present:</p> <p>Mr. J. Tracy Robinson, Executive Director</p> <p>Ms. Monica Mahoney, Policy Coordinator</p> <p>Ms. Whitney Logan</p>	

I. Call to Order & Welcome

Chairman Peter Lawson Jones (“Chairman Jones”) called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Chairman Jones introduced himself and welcomed our guests. A quorum was achieved.

II. Approval of April 7, 2011 Minutes

Senator Charleta Tavares moved, with Commissioner Kimberly Dent seconding, that the minutes from the meeting of April 7, 2011, be approved as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Tracy Robinson (“Director Robinson”) provided a written summary of his activities in April, May and June, a synopsis of which has been incorporated in these minutes.

IV. Ohio County Initiative Update

Director Robinson then shared the following regarding the Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative (“OCFI”): the purpose of OCFI is to provide training to county leaders to enable them to identify and address the father absence problem in their local communities. The Initiative’s ultimate goal is to seed fatherhood initiatives in all 88 Ohio counties. The National Fatherhood Initiative (“NFI”) is providing community mobilization training to help counties identify collaborative partners and build sustainable fatherhood programs. All twelve counties participating in the pilot program conducted leadership summits on fatherhood during the month of May. Counties that successfully complete the initiative will receive \$10,000 to begin or continue fatherhood programming in their respective county. To date the OCFI Leadership Summits have been well attended, averaging over fifty local leaders per session. Stark, Greene, Mercer and Montgomery counties have shared the newspaper articles that have been written and the television stories that have been done on their leadership summits.

Director Robinson then recognized Shane Ellett, Project Manager, Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives for attending the Muskingum County Leadership Summit on Fatherhood. Reverend Eli Williams of Urban Light Ministries subsequently commended the work of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (“OCF”) and stated that he is honored to lead the Clark County OCFI effort. Senator Tavares recommended that all leadership summit participants sign a letter committing to implement the priorities identified by the County Fatherhood Initiative. Chairman Jones attended three leadership summits and confirmed that there was significant media coverage.

NFI will conduct a final webinar and produce individual reports for the twelve participating counties when the pilot project ends in July. Five counties are already on the waiting list to participate in the next round of OCFI funding. Depending on the OCF budget for the next biennium, the second training is expected to begin in the fall of 2011.

V. H.B. 145: OCF Statute Amendment Update

Representatives Carlton Weddington and Timothy Derickson are co-sponsors of H.B. 145 which contains the proposed amendments to the OCF statute, O.R.C. § 5101.34, et seq. The bill would amend O.R.C. §§ 5101.34, 5101.341 and 5101.342 by, inter alia, revising OCF membership, requiring that fatherhood summits be held every two years (as opposed to four) and enumerating the duties of the Commission’s staff. Representative Derickson reported that the measure passed the Ohio House of Representatives by a vote of 90-7 on April 13th. The bill is now pending before the Senate Health, Human Services and Aging Committee.

VI. OCF Fatherhood Grants and RFGA 2011-2013 Update

The draft of the OCF Fatherhood RFGA 2011-2013 has been submitted to the Contracts Division of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for approval. Director Robinson anticipates a release date in September.

VII. Announcements & New Business

A. Senate Bill 153 (Biennial Budget Measure)

Chairman Jones announced that the Senate Finance Committee released their proposed amendments to the state budget bill, including Line Item 600541, which, if approved, would eliminate the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood. According to Commissioner Cedric Collins, 1:00 p.m. today is the last opportunity to give public testimony in support or in opposition to budget amendments.

Director Tracy Robinson, Reverend Williams and Robert Pina, a concerned father, committed to testifying at the final public hearing today. Monica Mahoney announced that former OCF Commissioner Carri Brown submitted a letter to the Senate Finance Committee urging them to delete Line Item 600541 and continue funding the Commission. Senators Tavares and Bill Beagle pledged to offer a bipartisan amendment to delete Line Item 600541 from Senate Bill 153 and include funding for OCF in the proposed Senate budget. Commissioner Killpack commended the senators for their leadership and ability to work together to advance the work of the OCF.

B. Senate Bill 144 (Equal Parenting Legislation)

Mr. Pina announced the introduction of Senate Bill 144 which addresses the issue of equal parental rights. Mr. Pina believes this legislation will help OCF's efforts to promote responsible fatherhood and requested the Commission's support. Chairman Jones responded that last year the Commission voted not to endorse or oppose specific legislation. Chairman Jones then recommended that the Legislative Committee review SB 144 and report back to the full Commission on the measure's potential impact on the OCF's mission.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 11:05 a.m.