

**Ohio Commission on Fatherhood**

**Minutes from the Meeting of**

**Thursday, September 2, 2010**

<p><b>Commissioners Present:</b></p> <p>Cuyahoga County Commissioner Peter Lawson Jones, Chairman</p> <p>Mr. David Kontur, Vice Chairman</p> <p>State Senator Ray Miller</p> <p>State Representative Timothy Derickson</p> <p>Mr. Robert Boykins</p> <p>Mr. Cedric Collins</p> <p>Ms. Kimberly Dent</p> <p>Mr. Thomas Eddie Joyce</p> <p>Dr. Diane Karther</p> <p>Mr. Steven Killpack</p> <p>Mr. Joseph Maiorano</p> <p>Mr. Scott Neely</p>	<p><b>Guests:</b></p> <p>Ms. Lauren McGarity Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer, WinWin Academy</p> <p>Ms. Christine Money Interim Director, Ohio Department of Youth Services</p> <p>Mr. Al Grimes Social Program Administrator, Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative</p>
<p><b>Commissioners Represented by Designee:</b></p> <p>Angela Cornelius-Dawson Director, Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addition Services (by Jewel Smith)</p> <p>State Representative Marian Harris (by Kelsey Woolard)</p> <p>Greg Hargett Director (by) Shandall Jamal</p>	<p><b>OCF Staff Present:</b></p> <p>Mr. J. Tracy Robinson, Executive Director</p> <p>Ms. Monica Mahoney</p> <p>Ms. Whitney Logan</p>

## **I. Call to Order & Welcome**

Chairman Peter Lawson Jones called the meeting to order at 11:10 am. A quorum was achieved.

## **II. Introduction of New Commissioners and Guests**

Chairman Jones introduced himself and welcomed our guests to the meeting. New Commissioner Greg Hargett was not able to attend the meeting, but Shandall Jamal of the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives ("GOFBCI") was present on his behalf. Commissioner Hargett replaced former Commissioner Greg Landsman as Director of GOFBCI and will serve as Governor Strickland's designee to the Commission. He welcomed guest speakers Lauren McGarity, Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer of WinWin Academy, and Christine Money, Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

## **III. Approval of June 3, 2010, Minutes**

Commissioner Cedric Collins moved, with Commissioner Steve Killpack seconding, that the minutes from the meeting of June 3, 2010, be approved as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

## **IV. Executive Director's Report**

Director Robinson provided a written summary of his activities in June, July and August, a synopsis of which has been incorporated in these minutes. Director Robinson highlighted the Commission's and/or his involvement in the following events and activities:

- Mocha Moms Celebration of Fatherhood Luncheon, Cleveland, Ohio (June 5, 2010). Mr. Robinson presented the Fatherhood Commitment Pledge and distributed lapel pins.

- The Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative's Sixth Annual Celebration of Fatherhood Conference, Cleveland, Ohio (June 18, 2010). Mr. Robinson served on panels for the Public Officials and Funders Breakfast and at the Town Hall Meeting.
- The Channel 4 local NBC affiliate's Daytime Show with Gail Hogan, Columbus, Ohio (June 25, 2010). Mr. Robinson discussed the importance of fatherhood.
- Fathers and the Child Welfare System: What Caseworkers Need to Know training session at the Northeast Ohio Regional Training Center, Akron, Ohio (June 10, 2010). Mr. Robinson conducted a workshop on how to engage fathers.
- National Partnership Community Leadership 12th Annual International Fatherhood Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana (June 15-17, 2010). Mr. Robinson conducted a workshop on the past, present state and future of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood ("OFC").
- Columbus Urban League's Father2Father graduation ceremony, Columbus, Ohio (August 11, 2010). Mr. Robinson served as the keynote speaker.
- Briefed Douglas Lumpkin, Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (August 27, 2010). Discussed OFC's upcoming projects.
- United States ("U.S") House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee (July 1, 2010). Submitted written testimony on OFC's work to the House Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee at the panel's hearings on responsible fatherhood programs.
- Participated in a roundtable discussion (July 9, 2010), hosted by U.S. Representative Betty Sutton with Mr. Joshua DuBois, Executive Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Chairman Jones and Commissioner Hargett were also panelists.

- Ohio Congressional Delegation, Washington, D.C. (July 15, 2010). Sent thank you letters to Representatives Steve Driehaus, Marcy Kaptur, Marcia Fudge and Dennis Kucinich for co-sponsoring H.R. 2979: the Julia Carson Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2009. Copies of the meissives were sent to the rest of the Ohio delegation. In addition, OCF grantees were sent letters urging them to petition their Members of Congress to co-sponsor the measure.
- David Hansell, Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Sent a letter thanking him for mentioning OCF's exemplary fatherhood program in his testimony before the U. S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee June 17, 2009 (July 15, 2010).

## **V. Legislation & Policy**

### **A. HB 349 Update**

Chairman Jones briefed the Commission on the progress of HB 349 since the last OCF meeting. The Ohio House of Representatives approved the bill on February 17, 2010 (71 votes in favor, 23 votes in opposition). The House subsequently referred the measure to the Ohio Senate which assigned the bill to its Health, Human Services and Aging Committee ("HHSA"). The following actions on HB 349 have since been taken:

- On March 23, 2010, HHSA heard proponent testimony from Representative Timothy Derickson and Director Robinson. Commissioner Scott Neely provided written testimony. No opponent testimony was offered during this or any subsequent hearing.
- On May 12, 2010, HHSA unanimously recommended passage of the bill by a 9 to 0 vote.
- On May 19, 2010, HB 349 appeared on the Senate calendar below the "black line". Chairman Jones called and left messages for the Senate Rules Committee Chair, Senate President Bill

Harris, and Vice Chair, Senator Tom Niehaus, requesting that the measure be brought up for a vote by the entire senate.

Chairman Jones noted that the Ohio Senate is in recess and senators are preoccupied with the upcoming November election. He urged patience. Representative Timothy Derickson and Commissioner Diane Karther offered to lend their support to try to get HB 349 scheduled for a senate vote.

## **B. National Fatherhood Commission**

In June, Chairman Jones began petitioning for the establishment of an autonomous National Fatherhood Commission (“NFC”) focused on the needs of dads and their children. Chairman Jones and his staff sent letters and petitions to 350 agencies around the nation. The goal of the petition drive is to submit at least 500,000 signatures to the White House by year’s end. Ms. Monica Mahoney distributed petitions to all commissioners and encouraged them to promote the NFC in their communities. Commissioner David Kontur requested an electronic copy of the petition to distribute. Commissioner Steve Killpack suggested Chairman Jones speak about the NFC campaign at the next board meeting of the Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families.

## **VI. Guest Speakers**

### **A. Christine Money, Interim Director, Ohio Department of Youth Services**

Ms. Christine Money began her remarks by expressing her pleasure at attending the commission meeting. She stated that as the Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Youth Services (“ODYS”), she looks for strategies that support responsible fatherhood. Interim Director Money commended the Commission for the impact it is having on fatherhood, families and children in Ohio. She then briefed the Commission on how ODYS is making a difference in the lives of youth and detailed the agency’s current fatherhood initiatives. She further stated that ODYS invites the Commission to partner with it to expand and add to their fatherhood programming and

is open to ideas from the Commission and its grantees on how best to work with youth in ODYS facilities and on parole.

Interim Director Money furnished the following details on ODYS. The agency funds more than 650 direct service programs throughout the state providing more than 130,000 youth both the opportunities and the services needed to help them improve their lives. The department operates five facilities offering programs and services in areas such as mental health, sex offending and substance abuse and ranging from prevention and diversion to residential and community treatment. Of the youth served in ODYS facilities:

- 80-90% have been physically abused prior to commitment.
- 65% have had or currently have a family member incarcerated.
- 70% have received past mental health treatment.
- Nearly half are on the mental health caseload.
- Many have had a severe drug or alcohol problem.
- The vast majority are below proficient in nearly all academic categories, and more than half receive special education services.

Interim Director Money also provided information on specific ODYS programs:

Family as Partners: A new collaboration between ODYS and the Vera Family Justice Program. Over the next year, the department's facility and parole staff will receive training on using tools that promote a family-focused approach to juvenile corrections and re-entry.

Family Engagement Strategic Innovation Group: The group’s goal is to help communities understand the importance of parents, foster parents and grandparents, all taking part in the decision-making process that impacts youth.

The Ohio Youth Assessment System: A web-based system that provides objective assessment of youth recidivism and promotes consistency in the determination of treatment and level of supervision for juvenile offenders.

RECLAIM Ohio: Currently funds evidence-based and model programs in six metropolitan counties to reduce by 20% DYS commitments from the courts in FY 2010. The agency funds the operational costs of 12 Community Correctional Facilities which are operated by counties and used to treat lower-level felony delinquent youth who would otherwise be committed to an ODYS facility.

**B. Lauren McGarity, Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer WinWin Academy, on SB 246 and HB 479**

- Lauren McGarity spoke about WinWin Academy, a new dropout recovery re-entry model for high school, designed for youthful offenders 18 to 22 years old. The Academy provides continuity of education as students transition from prison to the community. WinWin, Incorporated (“WWI”), a non-profit organization, addresses the ongoing problem of recidivism involving these young adults. WWI has 19 years experience working with Ohio school districts, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction in collaboration with former Directors Terry Collins and Dr. Reginald Wilkinson Dr. Jerry McGlone, former Superintendent, Ohio Central School System, Ernie Moore, Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and others.

The high school experience for these students will be cohesive and seamless as they transition from the Academy's prison to its community campus. They will have the same teachers, the same curriculum and the same mentoring on the outside as they received on the inside. The Academy provides (1) academic rigor; (2) for personal growth through the *Pillars-4-Success* principles of Belonging, Generosity, Mastery and Independence; (3) elective credits, e.g., *Families-Together* and *Conflict Intervention*; and (4) career development through a career technology curriculum that transitions to college and, ultimately, to employment.

Ms. McGarity cites the following statistics as evidence of the necessity for the Academy.

- A 70% increase in the number of males ages 18-21 incarcerated has occurred in Ohio since 2000.
- 80% of those young men who were imprisoned had dropped out of school prior to their incarceration.
- According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Department of Justice Bureau statistics, 68% of these incarcerated youth will recidivate and those who leave prison without a high school education are 4-7 times more likely to be imprisoned again.
- Approximately 60% of Ohio's adult offenders have at least one minor child.
- 60-90% of the children of offenders and ex-offenders continue the cycle of incarceration.

Funding formula is the same for those attending the Academy as it is for anyone under 22 years old entering a public school in Ohio. Moreover, she reminded the Commission that it is significantly less expensive to educate at \$5,565 than to incarcerate at \$25,284.

## **VII. Fatherhood Program Funding: 2010-2011 Grantees**

Director Robinson provided a handout summarizing the current grantees' invoices and the number of fathers engaged in their programs. According to the terms of their contract, grantees are required to enroll at least thirteen new fathers each month. Moreover, all participating fathers are required to complete the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory ("AAPI") before and after completing the curriculum.

Director Robinson noted that HARCATUS and Ohio State University Greene County are two underperforming grantees. Both programs have the following strengths: collaborations, a visitation center, committed individuals and supporting resources. They also have the following weaknesses:

1. No fatherhood program existed in the community before OCF funding was received.
2. No clear leader.
3. Have faced challenges reaching the targeted population.
4. Need more fathers in outreach & engagement.
5. Need training in AAPI.
6. Need training in proven fatherhood curriculum.
7. Location and transportation issues.

Commissioner Eddie Joyce asked if unused funds were rolled over. Director Robinson responded that unused funds are moved from OCF and reallocated to cash assistance to needy families. Vice Chairman David Kontur suggested that contracts be modified for grantees that will not spend the awarded amount during this grant cycle. Commissioner Steve Killpack requested that reports on grantees include information beyond numerical and fiscal data. Director Robinson replied that he will look into sending other documents that summarize grantee performance. Vice Chairman Kontur also suggested that underperforming grantees be closely monitored. Director Robinson agreed and reassured the Commission

that his staff is working to increase the number of dads being served. Commissioner Diane Karther encouraged grantee training. Director Robinson wants to have two RFGA's for grassroots organizations and one for high performing organizations during the next grant cycle.

### **VIII. OCF Outreach: E-Newsletter**

The OCF sent its first e-newsletter to over 2,000 people and organizations. The response has been very positive and increased traffic to the Commission's webpage. OCF plans to send a quarterly e-newsletter with links to the webpage.

### **IX. Announcements & New Business**

Commissioner Killpack notified the commission that Ray Lautenschlager from the fathers' rights group, National Organization for Parental Equality that ("NOPE"), sent a letter to all Ohio senators stating NOPE's strong opposition to Senator Shirley Smith's Child Support legislation, SB 292. Moreover, Mr. Lautenschlager erroneously stated NOPE is working with the OCF to "kill the bill." Chairman Jones asked the Legislative Subcommittee to review SB 292 and prepare a summary for the November 4, 2010 OCF meeting. He also suggested that we invite Senator Smith to speak to the Commission about the bill.

### **X. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:06pm.