

Scioto County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Board Minutes
May 20, 2021
STAR, Inc. @ 5:00 P.M.

In complying with the Governor’s Urgent Health Advisory: Ohioans Protecting Ohioans, SCDD’s meeting was held in closed quarters and was live streamed on the SCDD Facebook page.

1. **Pledge:** Superintendent Matt Purcell led the pledge
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Vice President Michael Arnett, Recording Secretary Jeffrey Kleha, Cindy Gibson, Anthony Mantell, William Adams, and Jon Peters. President C. William Rockwell, Jr. was absent and excused. Vice-President Arnett led the meeting in Rockwell’s place.
3. **Agenda:** Purcell requested that visitors Commissioner Bryan Davis and Prosecuting Attorney Shane Tieman be recognized and permitted to “comment from the floor” before moving on to regular Board business. There were no objections.
4. **Comments from the Floor (1):** Speakers are required to state their name and address for the record. Additional speaking rules are on the back of the public agenda

Commissioner Davis thanked the Board for recognizing him. He stated he wanted to address the recent decision to remove public prayer from the Board meetings.

It was noted the removal was a unilateral decision prompted by information received from Prosecutor Tieman’s office regarding possible legal risks in continuing prayer. It was also noted the Board President had sought advice from Tieman after taking an overall look at the role of the organization and the concern that transgressions could be occurring by offering public prayer, as well as concerns regarding the current language used to enter into Executive Session and when a roll call vote is required. It was Tieman’s opinion that prayer should cease, as it could subject the Board to a liability if someone chose to take the issue to court.

It was noted there had not been an opportunity to talk over this decision among all Board members, and the outcome may have been different had there been a discussion and vote.

There was lengthy discussion and questions between Board members, the Commissioners, and Prosecutor Tieman that included legal references, moral opinions, differences in public prayer at County vs. School Boards, risks and possible consequences should a legal dispute arise, and the right to stand for personal beliefs. Board and audience members heard different perspectives of the issue in order to make an informed decision on public prayer. All conversation was handled with respect and consideration and all participants were allowed to voice their opinion and knowledge.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Arnett stated he wanted to make a motion to reinstate prayer at the Board meetings, and it was seconded by Adams. The motion carried in a unanimous roll call vote. Other audience participants thanked the Board for allowing them to attend and speak.

5. **Minutes:** Minutes for the Board meeting conducted on April 15 and the Facilities Committee conducted April 22 were approved collectively on a motion made by Kleha and seconded by Mantell. The motion carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

6. **Expenses and Fiscal Report:** Superintendent Matt Purcell reporting for Finance Director Lynne Webb. The Board signed two *Moral Obligations*. Purcell stated the month of April began with roughly \$9.9 million and ended with slightly over \$10 million after revenue and expenditures. There were no questions or comments. Adams made the motion to accept the written and oral report and it was seconded by Gibson. The motion carried in a unanimous roll call vote.
7. **Superintendent's Report:** Superintendent Matt Purcell reporting. Purcell informed the Board employees were no longer required to complete a COVID assessment form when entering the building, as an estimated 80% of employees had been vaccinated. They are required to self-assess and take their temperature at home before coming in. Other safety measures are still in effect until after June 2 when rules will be reevaluated and applied as needed.

Purcell also updated the Board on the van purchased with the help of the Commissioners and federal government funding. The van is available, with a few deficiencies that are currently being taken care of. It has been insured, licensed and ready for use.

8. **Program Reports:** The program reports were submitted to the Board prior to the meeting. Arnett thanked the Directors for their reports. There were no comments or questions
9. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. **Ethics Council:** J. Kleha, Chair. There was not a need for an Ethics Council meeting this month.
 - B. **Facilities Committee:** W. Adams, Chair. Adams reported the Committee had met on April 22 to discuss the VRS building assessment and playground upgrade at the Carousel Center. He stated the Committee had reviewed the assessment and agreed the first step would be to hire a masonry expert for further analysis. Once that is completed, the Committee will meet again and present that information and recommendations (if applicable) to the full Board. The Committee agreed three letterhead quotes were needed to move forward with the playground upgrade at the Carousel. A recommendation will be brought before the Board once those figures are received. A written report from the Chairman was included in the Board packets. No action was needed from the Board at this time. Purcell added he was able to move forward with getting a geotechnical assessment (for foundation settling issues) from Triad Engineering, and from a Columbus based company for the outside top area of the VRS building. Once these results are completed, they will be given to the Facilities Committee, and that information passed to the full Board. Arnett thanked Chairman Adams for his report.
10. **Old Business:** Discuss opening the Board meetings to allow the public to physically attend. It was noted that with the exception of the Program Directors, there are normally very few to no public audience members. Discussion included the mask mandate being lifted on June 2, social distancing, status of vaccinations, whether the Directors would be comfortable attending the meetings, and STAR's opening their building for public use. Following further discussion, the Board agreed to vote on the re-opening at the June meeting.
11. **New Business:**
 - A. **Discuss SSA Caseload Coverage Option Model:** Purcell stated the SSA Dept was experiencing challenges in obtaining and retaining SSA's. He noted the turnover in that department was an average loss of three to four employees per year, and this is typical among all counties. An SSA carries a maximum average of 35 individuals on their caseload, and these individuals must be redistributed to other SSA's to continue their services, which could result in SSA's carrying a higher number than 35. Purcell proposed the situation could be alleviated

through compensating the SSA's if they take on additional caseloads. A model is being developed that would temporarily allow SSA's to have over 35 individuals on their caseload and offer some type of mechanism to compensate them for it. Arnett suggested a proposal be presented to the Board at the next meeting for review and possible insight into the situation. No action was required at this time.

B. Discuss Staff Rate Adjustments: Purcell stated a staff rate adjustment of 3% is included in the budget every year. The adjustment, if approved by the Board, would begin in August so it coincides with the teacher's fiscal year. A market analysis comparing SCDD salaries will be reviewed and information will be provided to the Board as needed. No action is usually needed regarding the salary review unless there is a discrepancy in SCDD salary and other county salaries, so SCDD can stay competitive with other agencies. No Board action was needed at this time.

C. IT Audit Update: Purcell informed the Board that originally Hamilton County ESC was scheduled to do the IT audit for SCDD, but that has been changed to the local South Central Ohio ESC. They will begin an IT audit in a couple of weeks and provide a report with their results. Purcell stated he hoped their report would have a good outcome and assist in making the department more efficient.

11. Other: Purcell stated Providers could currently earn more money in retail than working with adult individuals. He commented this was a state-wide issue and a 2% rate increase for Providers was part of the upcoming July state budget, and County Boards were going to be asked to help in funding the increase. Further information and action from the Board will be presented at June's meeting.

12. Comments from the floor (2): Speakers are required to state their name and address for the record. Additional speaking rules are on the back of the public agenda. Purcell reminded the Board graduation would be conducted Friday, May 21 in the VRS gym.

13. Adjournment: On a motion made by Kleha and seconded by Adams, the Board adjourned at 6:30 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes Prepared by:
Carla Nelson-White
Board Clerk

Submitted by:
Jeffrey Kleha
Recording Secretary

