

CDYCI COMMISSION MEETING

9:00 am, Wednesday, July 28, 2021

Due to social distancing policies related to COVID-19, the Capital District Youth Center, Inc's May 19th meeting will be held in person at 1 Park Place, Suite 102, virtually through Zoom Meetings and streamed live on CDPRC's Youtube Channel.

Members Present: William Connors, Kristin Swinton, Laura Bauer, Scott Bendett, Steve Bayle, Craig Warner, Samantha Miller-Herrera

Members Present via Zoom Platform: Barbara Mauro

Others Present: Joseph Mancini, (Berkshire Farm) Brian Parchesky (Berkshire Farms) Robert Ryan (Harris Beach), Lucas Jacobs, (Berkshire Farm), Nicole Ward (Albany County), Shawn Noonan (Albany County), Mike McLaughlin (Albany County Executive office)

Members / Others Absent: Lucille McKnight

Staff: Mark Castiglione, Amy Weinstock.

Presiding: Laura Bauer, President, called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

1. Welcome & Introductions

President Bauer welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mark Castiglione asked the Board if the meetings should be continued to be aired live on youtube since they were now being held in person and less on zoom. It was decided to continue broadcasting for transparency, as well as changes that may occur to protocols in the future as COVID situations change.

2. May 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were distributed before the meeting.

Actions Taken

Kristin Swinton made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Craig Warner seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Financial Statements through June 30, 2021

Mark Castiglione presented are the financial statements through June 30th for the Secure Detention and Specialized Secure Detention facilities.

SD

Berkshire Farm's estimated expenses through June are \$856,905 and the estimated total operations expenses through June are \$862,768.

SSD

Berkshire Farm's estimated expenses through June are \$1,497,174 and the estimated total operations expenses through April are \$1,503,524.

Total Expenses are tracking at 46% to budget. Par is 50%

Action Taken

Scott Bendett made a motion to approve the financial statements through June 30th and Craig Warner seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

4. SCOC Correspondence

COVID-19 Protocols Review by SCOC:

On May 11, 2021, CDYCI received a letter from SCOC with results of their review of the protocols the facility has in place related to COVID-19. During the visitation, SCOC staff observed youth not consistently adhering to the masking policy and temperature screening was not conducted on SCOC staff who visited the facility. SCOC's letter and Berkshire Farm's response is attached.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Evaluation:

On July 14, 2021, CDYCI received a letter from SCOC with the results of an evaluation for compliance with requirements of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. The facility was found to be in compliance. The letter is attached for your information.

Berkshire Farms addressed the Board regarding their COVID Protocols. They were in discussions with the Albany County Department of Health regarding their protocols and they were told the actions they were taking were sufficient. These actions include KN95 masks for staff, temperature checks for both staff and juveniles, and that their actions provided an atmosphere that promotes well being to the youth and staff in the facility.

5. Staffing Update

Berkshire Farm has provided an update to their recruitment and retention activities. Female intake has been closed since April due to the staffing shortage.

We feel confident that we are making a lot of positive progress in hiring the right staff for these positions which will have positive impacts across all aspects of facility operation. We truly appreciate your support in this endeavor and we look forward to showing you all the positive impact this will have on the facility and the youth that we serve. Please let us know if you have any questions and feel free to contact me at 518-242-0578.

After reviewing the letter provided by Berkshire Farms, the Board asked if any candidates being hired were required to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Currently they are not being required, and 25% of current staff at the facility are fully vaccinated. They are continuing to provide PPE to all staff and are considering updating the air filtration system and anything else they can do to prevent further outbreaks at the facility.

Free PCR tests may be offered, with tests that can provide results to multiple cohorts at once. Vaccines are optional and are being offered to the juveniles at the facility, with any youth under the age of 18 requiring parental consent. A few of the youth have taken the vaccine since being there. There was a question about holding a pop up clinic at the facility for both staff and youth to have the option of getting vaccinated.

6. Capital Projects Update

CDYCI received notification in early June 2021 that we can proceed with the capital improvements needed for RTA compliance and facility expansion to better meet the demands of serving youth and the requirements of law enforcement. These upgrades were first contemplated in 2018 and progress was suspended in July 2020 at the direction of OCFS.

Contractor Reengaged: Since the notification was received, Albany County has reengaged the architects, SMRT, to proceed with Schematic Design. Per the intermunicipal agreement, the counties share costs for this project and CDYCI serves as the pay agent billing Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady for their shares and reimburses Albany for amounts paid to their contractor SMRT.

Cost allocation: The total estimated cost for the design phase is \$793,243. I've attached an estimated cost allocation for the full design phase for each CDYCI County.

RTA Plans: We will need to submit new RTA plans to make these costs eligible for reimbursement. OCFS has indicated they would prefer if Albany County alone submitted the project costs but that has not been confirmed by all stakeholders. The final cost estimate is not available until the cost/method of financing is known.

Project Financing via DASNY: There have been no updates from DASNY about this option other than they are still looking into approaches. We did receive clarification about reimbursement as it relates to the tax cap requirement of RTA. To be eligible for 100% reimbursement, a county must remain under the tax cap. This includes for the duration of the financing term. According to OCFS, "If a county exceeds the tax cap then

they can apply for a hardship waiver. Adherence to the tax cap or the approval of a hardship waiver is an annual exercise required for 100% reimbursement.”

Stakeholder Meetings: A series of “re-kick off” meetings have been held among SMRT, the state agencies, Berkshire Farm and the Albany County Sheriff’s office. The purpose of these meetings was to reintroduce the design phase scope and confirm assumptions. Additional meetings related to the plans were held with state agency staff and Berkshire Farm during which a number of important modifications to the original plans were discussed. With this input, SMRT is proceeding with the schematic design phase. Additional stakeholder meetings with representatives from all CDYCI counties will be scheduled to review facility design and financing options.

7. Facility Use

Facility use detail through June 2021 and daily facility use chart through April is attached. You will note the population dip resulting from the covid crisis.

There is still a higher AO populations than JD/JO. There have also been a few “exchange” youth in the facility.

8. Facility Operations

- They are still managing the interviewing process and training of new staff members
- The education program is running and going well.
- The youth are getting outside more, with the weather being nice.
- There is a fulltime LPN starting today, and an RN on a per-diem basis. They will have more shortly.
- OCFS approved funding for a vocational program, helping staffing and providing virtual reality sets where youth can learn skills needed for employment after being released. The youth can then earn “certificates to work” which will help with securing jobs after release. Requests have been sent for money from this funding to pursue these virtual reality sets, as well as other necessary repairs to the facility.
- There is potential funding from outside agencies regarding the youth and participating in art, gardening and other hobbies.
- They are working with consultants at OCFS for suggestions to decrease costs and enhance security protocols at the facility.
- They hope to have more staff who can assist in supervision with skills needed on the new restraint protocols. These restraints have been developed with staff being trained on handling with care and not bringing youth down to the ground. 3 members are already trained in this, with ongoing training for the remainder..
- WIFI has been updated thanks to a private donor.

9. Other Business

No new business to discuss.

10. Adjournment

Scott Bendett made a motion to adjourn, and Kristin Swinton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

The next meeting of the CDYCI Board will be October 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Weinstock
Office Manager

Reviewed and approved by

Samantha Miller-Herrera
Secretary