

CDYCI COMMISSION MEETING
9:00 am, Wednesday, October 18, 2023

The Capital District Youth Center, Inc's October 18th meeting will be held in person at 1 Park Place, Suite 102, virtually through Zoom Meetings and, later, posted on CDPRC's Youtube Channel.

Members Present: William Connors, Laura Bauer, Mike Stammel, Susan Costanzo, Craig Warner, Gary Hughes

Members Present via Zoom Platform:

Others Present: Lucas Jacobs, (Berkshire Farm)

Others Present via Zoom Platform: Bob Ryan (Harris Beach), Mike McLaughlin (Albany County Executive office)

Members / Others Absent: Kristin Swinton, Samantha Miller-Herrera

Staff: Mark Castiglione, Amy Weinstock.

Presiding: Craig Warner, President, called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

1. Welcome & Introductions

President Warner welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. June 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were distributed before the meeting. No questions or changes made.

Action Taken

Gary Hughes made a motion to approve the June 21st meeting minutes and Laura Bauer seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Financial Statements through September 30, 2023

We have received Q1 and Q2 2023 financials from Berkshire, rates from OCFS and have billed the counties. We are waiting for Q3 financials from Berkshire.

SD: Berkshire Farm's reported expenses through July are \$2,192,045. The estimated total operations expenses through September are \$2,805,474.

SSD: Berkshire Farm's reported expenses through July are \$3,313,076. The estimated total operations expenses through September are \$4,240,026

On the balance sheet, you'll note a new clearing account for debt service payments related to the capital project. CDYCI is the pay agent and bills Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties their local shares of the debt service and pays Albany County the proceeds of those payment.

Disbursements for Q1 2023 to Berkshire Farm have been made but we are still waiting on payments for Q2 bills.

A conversation was had with Berkshire Farms and CDYCI about delays in payments for various reasons and how Berkshire Farms needs improved cash flow. To assist with the cash flow, CDYCI implemented partial disbursements to Berkshire Farms as quarterly money is received from the Counties. Also, a discussion will be held with OCFS to see if any changes can be made to the rating process.

Board action is requested to approve the financial statements.

Action Taken

Gary Hughes made a motion to approve the Financial Statements through September 30th 2023, and Mike Stammel seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Amendment to Meeting Schedule

The A&F Committee on the CDRPC Board requested to change their December meeting date from the 20th to the 13th. Board action is requested to amend the CDYCI meeting schedule to move our next meeting from 12/20 to 12/13.

Action Taken

Laura Bauer made a motion to approve the amendment to the meeting schedule, and Gary Hughes seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

5. RTA Capital Project Update

Good progress is being made on Phase I.

- They moved the existing generator so that the new one will be installed.
- The visit wing has been enclosed.
- The walls of the new dorm have been completed and the roof is being worked on.
- The interior demolition of the Sally Port is done.

They still are on track to complete Phase I by first quarter, and the entire project by 2025.

6. Facility Use

The Facility is at full capacity with 3 females and the remaining beds males. It has been a challenge with bed availability and accommodating where to put youth if they cannot fit into the facility now. The length of stay for the youths at the facility has been increasing, which in turn makes it more difficult to have open beds.

7. Annual Sheriff's Inspection

The Albany County Sheriff, as Co-Administrator of the Specialized Secure Detention Facility, is required to conduct an annual security and compliance inspection. This year's report is attached. Any compliance issued noted will be addressed during the construction project.

8. Heightened Monitoring Progress Report

All milestones have been met since the 2022 start of the Heightened Monitoring. There is no longer a need for monthly meetings, and weekly meetings have started again which is more standard for OCFS. The staff shortage is still a large problem and the facility is working on hiring. There was a roof confinement problem raised by youth at the facility. The Youth felt they were not getting out enough, but if a youth is deemed unsafe they are sent back to their rooms for the safety of themselves and the staff. The facility staff are formulating documentation on when, why and how long a youth is in their rooms.

9. SCOC Audit and Responses

In April, the board reviewed the initial correspondence between SCOC and Berkshire Farm. Attached is a continuation of that evaluation. Berkshire provides certain policy and procedure clarifications or corrections related to items flagged by SCOC. Berkshire Farm's response and associated policy/ procedure excerpts were also discussed. The Facility's policy and procedures manual was updated to reflect language changes regarding certain policies. Since the letter was written, the Facility has effectively addressed all the issues raised by SCOC. There were no red flags in the medical audit, which was the first of its kind.

10. Facility Operation / Agency Report

- There is a youth in the facility that is very difficult for the staff to control, and he has physically hurt a few of the staff members. Due to this, there is a domino effect where less staff is available at the facility, and the more experienced staff members are out leaving the less experienced staff to try to handle him. 70% of the staff currently at the facility have less than 5 years of experience at this type of work.
- 17 staff members at one point have been on medical leave the last few weeks due to injuries.

- There are 18 vacancies left to fill regarding staff.
- There was a large discussion on mental health problems and the youth who come to the facility with them. The upcoming budget reflects the need for more mental health staffers. There is currently only psychiatric nurse practitioner on staff and the need. They are also working with the South Colonie School District to see if they can provide a mental health staffer.
- The facility is also working with their recruitment officers to find more mental health clinicians and the need for more help will be greater once the construction is completed in 2025, as the facility will be expanding.
- OCFS requires a transition team dedicated solely on the building and construction progress. The Facility does not have the necessary staff to dedicate solely for that purpose. They are working together to determine a good course of action and still have the needs met.
- The first graduation of the year will be held next week for a South Colonie senior.
- Regarding the tablets that were going to be donated by Securis, there has been a problem where the company is saying they now need to install, remove, and reinstall the wiring for the tablets during and after construction. That would add a big cost to the project. Securis is working with the construction team to find an alternative way to do the wiring, but the cost will still increase.

11. Other Business

The mental health situation is not just affecting this local facility. Throughout the State there are more youths with mental health issues that are being put in the juvenile system. In the past, facilities would be able to exchange youths or move them around to different facilities to see if the staff there would be a better fit for them. Due to the fact that there are so many more youths with these mental issues now, that process is no longer feasible. There is no good solution to this problem in sight, as long as these youth are being sentenced to be at these facilities.

12. Adjournment

Gary Hughes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 and Laura Bauer seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 am.

The next meeting of the CDYCI Board will be December 13, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Weinstock
Office Manager

Reviewed and approved by

William Connors
Secretary