

Ohio Commission on Fatherhood

Minutes from the Meeting of

Thursday, April 5, 2012

<p>Commissioners Present:</p> <p>Mr. David Kontur, Chairman</p> <p>Mr. Steven Killpack, Vice Chairman</p> <p>Representative Michael Ashford</p> <p>Senator Bill Beagle</p> <p>Director Susan Brown</p> <p>Mr. Cedric Collins</p> <p>Mr. Scott Neely</p> <p>OCF Staff Present:</p> <p>Kimberly Dent, Interim Executive Director</p> <p>Monica Mahoney</p> <p>Whitney Logan</p>	<p>Guests:</p> <p>Mr. Matthew Cunningham, TANF Section Chief</p> <p>Ms. Marilyn Demma, Executive Director, Clark County Families and Children First Council</p> <p>Ms. Jenelle Donovan-Lyle, ODJFS Legislative Liaison</p> <p>Mr. Shane Ellet, Governor’s Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives</p> <p>Mr. John Hafford, Program Manager, Summit Charisma Community Connection</p> <p>Mr. Burl Lemon, Executive Director, Forever Dads</p> <p>Lorenzo Lewis, Mediator, Summit Charisma Community Connection</p> <p>Mr. Daniel McDonald, guest of Chairman Kontur</p> <p>Pastor Eugene Norris, CEO, Summit Charisma Community Connection</p> <p>Director Harvey Reed, Ohio Department of Youth Services</p> <p>Ms. Kristen Rost, Interim Executive Director, Ohio Children’s Trust Fund</p> <p>Reverend Eli Williams, Executive Director, Urban Light Ministries</p>
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I. Call to Order & Welcome

Chairman David Kontur, (“Chairman Kontur”) called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Chairman Kontur introduced himself and welcomed our guests. He shared a reading from Eli Wiesel illustrating the importance of sharing our stories.

II. Approval of February 2, 2012 Minutes

The commission lacked a quorum for the first time in three years. Approval of the minutes was tabled until the June meeting.

III. Update on Executive Director

Chairman Kontur congratulated Kimberly Dent on her selection as Interim Executive Director (“Director Dent”) of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (“OCF”). Director Dent thanked Whitney Logan and Monica Mahoney for their work keeping the commission on track over the past five months. Director Dent met with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (“ODJFS”) Director Michael Colbert and he requested that she prepare a two page report on her vision about the direction the OCF should take moving forward. Director Dent has several initiatives she would like to see funded including the next round of the Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative. Five counties have already expressed interest: Cuyahoga, Hamilton, Lake, Lucas and Perry counties. Once the letterhead bid for the OCF evaluator is completed Director Dent plans to begin work on a Request For Propossal (RFP) to select a trainer for the Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative.

IV. State of Ohio Department of Youth Services

Harvey J. Reed, Director of the Ohio Department of Youth Services (“DYS”) spoke about DYS strategies for supporting responsible fatherhood. According to Director Reed, DYS has been enhancing community alternatives to serve the right youth in the right place with the right treatment. DYS has worked closely with community partners and judges to expand appropriate options in the community for those youth who do not pose a public safety risk. Since 2009, the number of DYS Juvenile Correction Facilities (“JCF”) has been cut in half, decreasing from eight

to four and the DYS facility population has decreased from an average of 1735 in FY08 to 823 in FY11. The DYS population is currently around 575 youth.

The DYS website (www.dys.ohio.go) recently added a “Family Tab” which links to resources and provides information specifically for families including video conference visitation information and Release Authority webcam information sessions for families.

Several different fatherhood curricula are taught at different facilities. For example, at the Indian River JCF, fathering skills are taught through the “Healthy Living and Career Search” curriculum. Youth who are fathers have an opportunity to record a video of themselves reading a book for their children. They also host a “Daddy and Me Day” where youths’ children come into the facility for special activities like frosting cookies together and taking and framing photographs. At the Cuyahoga Hills JCF the “Baby Elmo Program” is a 10-week course that teaches parenting skills to youth who are fathers. After course completion, caregivers bring children into the facility for guided visitation with their fathers and provide the fathers with an opportunity to practice their new skills.

DYS has a partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice (“Vera”) in which Vera trained DYS facility staff on how to use the Juvenile Relational Inquiry Tool (JRIT) to help identify people who can support youth while they are in facilities and when they return to the community. Moreover, mental health, parole and social services staff are collaborating to improve the engagement of family members in each youth’s treatment and rehabilitation during his or her stay in the facility and while on parole.

DYS has established a variety of community initiatives to reach youth, support families and build communities. “Our Second Chance Mentoring Program” provides mentoring and supportive services to youth while still in the facilities and continues while youth are on parole. The program currently serves youth who reside in Cuyahoga, Franklin, Montgomery and Summit counties. DYS is continually looking for additional mentors to serve youth. The DYS Cleveland Regional Parole Office is active in the local fatherhood initiative and youth participate in services

and community outreach spearheaded by former OCF Chairman, Peter Lawson Jones. In Lucas County, the Northwest Ohio Reentry Coalition supports the fatherhood initiative and participates in DYS' monthly Ex-Offender/Family Support Meeting during which former offenders and their families can engage with a variety of local support services that assist reentering youth and adult offenders.

Director Reed welcomed suggestions from the commissioners on ways to expand DYS fatherhood initiatives.

V. Update on OCF Fatherhood Grants and Funding

Director Dent is scheduling site visits to all eight grantees over the next several weeks. This will be an opportunity to observe programs in action, build a good relationship between OCF and grantees and answer any questions grantees may have about OCF procedures.

A. Evaluator Letterhead Bid

Matthew Cunningham, TANF Interagency Section Chief, spoke about the status of the letterhead bid being drafted to hire an evaluator to assess effectiveness of OCF funded grantees. Mr. Cunningham has been working with the Office of Contracts on final revisions and expects the grant to be posted within the next week.

B. County Fatherhood Initiative

Once the evaluator letterhead bid is completed, Director Dent would like to begin work on drafting the RFP to hire a trainer for the next round of the Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative. This person will train five (5) Ohio counties and OCF staff on how to develop community fatherhood initiative plans. This vendor will develop a tool kit which will include a step by step manual with audio and visual materials as well as handouts. The training manual will include a process on how to train future participants and trainers as well.

VI. Legislators Information Session

Jenelle Donovan-Lyle, ODJFS Legislative Liaison, has scheduled two information sessions on May 4th for legislative aides entitled, "Early Childhood Issues". This will be a joint presentation

by OCF staff and Michelle Albast from the Division on Child Care to let the General Assembly staff know about the work of the OCF and its grantees and Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant funding for Ohio.

VII. Grantee Experience

Two OCF grantees were invited to present information about their fatherhood programs.

A. Urban Light Ministries

Reverend Eli Williams shared a power point presentation about the mission and work of Urban Light Ministries (“ULM”). Reverend Williams was accompanied by Marilyn Demma, Executive Director, Clark County Families and Children First Council.

The centerpiece of the ULM’s fatherhood initiative is the “POPS Program”. POPS stands for P – Protectors/ O – Order keepers/ P – Providers/ S – Stabilizers. The program includes "POPS 101" which covers the basic principles of healthy fathering during three (3) 90-minute sessions as well as monthly outings and events for dads and their families. To accommodate fathers’ busy schedules and make it easier for them to attend and complete the program, sessions are offered at several locations including The Learning Café, McKinley Hall, Urban Light Center, Clark County Jail, Greene County Greenleaf Center, and Clark County JFS Work Plus Center. In addition, ULM has established POPS clubs which is a volunteer association of fathers and father figures. This father-led club provides mutual support, community involvement, leadership development and father-child bonding activities. Commissioner Dent commented that she was impressed by the number of POPS club members, many who are grandfathers, who met with her during her visit to ULM.

In addition, ULM collaborates with Clark County JFS to provide a monthly clinic called “Parents as Partners” during which fathers’ questions about child support, visitation, custody, paternity establishment, etc. are answered. The goal is to help fathers learn how to navigate government agencies and judicial systems and to self-advocate.

Clark County participated in the pilot round of the Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative and Urban Light Ministries was a member of the leadership team. In 2009, the Clark County Fatherhood Commission was established to promote responsible fatherhood county-wide; foster collaborative relationships; develop sustainable funding for responsible fatherhood programming in Clark County; and articulate the community attitudes, beliefs, values, and perceptions about responsible fatherhood which lead to the establishment of a father-friendly culture.

B. Charisma Community Connection

Pastor Eugene Norris and two of his staff members, Program Manager John Hafford and Mediator Lorenzo Lewis spoke about the fatherhood program at Summit Charisma Community Connection. The name of their fatherhood program is “FameFathers”. They fund and train ten fatherhood service providers (“FSP”) who offer eight-week fatherhood courses and use various National Fatherhood Initiative curricula. Pastor Norris provided a brief description of each FSP, their target audience and where each program is located. FameFathers partners with Work Force Development to train fathers to be home energy auditors. In addition, FameFathers organizes community events for fathers and families throughout the year.

VIII. Fatherhood Day 2012

Chairman Kontur suggested that commissioners write articles for a special fathers’ day edition of the OCF e-newsletter and Op-Ed pieces for their local newspapers.

IX. Announcements & New Business

There were no announcements or new business.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.