

**Ohio Commission on Fatherhood**

**Minutes from the Meeting of**

**Tuesday, July 21, 2009**

<p><b>Commissioners Present:</b></p> <p>Mr. David Kontur, Vice Chairman</p> <p>Senator Ray Miller</p> <p>Representative Marian Harris</p> <p>Representative Carlton Weddington</p> <p>Mr. Robert Boykins</p> <p>Mr. Robert “Bo” Chilton</p> <p>Mr. Cedric Collins</p> <p>Ms. Rose Handon</p> <p>Mr. 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>OCF Staff Present:</b></p> <p>Mr. J. Tracy Robinson, Executive Director</p> <p>Ms. Monica Mahoney</p>
<p><b>Commissioners Represented by Designee:</b></p> <p>Representative Kevin Bacon (by Sean McCullough)</p> <p><b>Commissioners Participating via Telephone</b></p> <p>Commissioner Peter Lawson Jones, Chairman</p>	<p><b>Guests:</b></p> <p>Ms. Teresa Coll, Dr. Karther’s student</p> <p>Mr. Al Grimes, Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative</p> <p>Ms. Nicole Harper, Office of Senator Ray Miller</p> <p>Mr. Carl Lee, Family Services Council</p> <p>Pastor Eugene Norris, Summit County Fatherhood Initiative</p> <p>Mr. Abdul Shakoor, Queens Chess Academy</p>

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

The meeting was called to order at 10:40 am by Chairman Peter Lawson Jones who participated by telephone. A quorum was achieved.

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

Executive Director Tracy Robinson introduced our two new commissioners, Representative Marian Harris (D-19) and Representative Carlton Weddington (D-27). Chairman Jones thanked them for agreeing to serve on the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood.

## **III. Approval of May 19, 2009 Minutes**

Commissioner Weddington moved, with Commissioner Harris seconding, that the minutes from the meeting of May 19, 2009, be approved as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Executive Director Robinson provided a written summary of his activities in June and July, which synopsis is incorporated into these minutes. He highlighted the following events and activities from the past two months:

- Presentation on May 20<sup>th</sup> at Alvis House's Alum Creek Residential Facility to forty-four incarcerated men.
- Radio interview on May 21<sup>st</sup> on the Trinity Broadcasting Network of Akron about the 100<sup>th</sup> Celebration of Father's Day. Pastor Norris was the interviewer.

Once the Executive Director receives the final program reports (dues June 30<sup>th</sup>) from the current OCF grantees, he will prepare a report on "lessons learned" during his first year at the helm of the Commission.

- Regarding the RFGA, Executive Director Robinson has done everything that is required of him. The contracts office must now release it. Commissioner Handon noted that the RFGA has moved more expeditiously than the previous RFP process. Commissioners Kontur and Harris had questions about the size of the grants. Because of the state budget shortfall, all GOFBCI programs, including the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, reduced their budget 40% for the 2009-2010 biennium. The Executive Director anticipates awarding \$900,000 in grants to ten programs. Unlike the previous RFP where all grantees received \$225,000, the Executive Director would like to award smaller grant amounts depending on the demonstrated need of the applicants. Commissioner Joyce asked what became of the unspent grant money awarded to current grantees, and the Executive Director responded that ODJFS recouped all unspent TANF money, including OFI grants, and used the money to fund shortfalls in the Food Stamps Program.

## **V. Child Support Guideline Recommendations**

Carri Brown, Assistant Deputy Director in the Office of Child Support, distributed copies and made a presentation on the final report of the fifth Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council (“Council”). By statute, ODJFS is required to gather economic data and convene this advisory council every four years. The General Assembly will propose legislation based on the recommendations included in the report. The Council convened twelve community forums, and Executive Director Robinson attended several.

Assistant Deputy Director Brown highlighted four of the thirteen recommendations in the 95-page final report:

- 1) Update Child Support Schedule (page 29): Child support orders will increase 10-30% to reflect the increased cost of living since the last adjustment in 1994.

2) Create Self-Support Reserve (page 60): The Council recommends creating a self-support reserve test that will result in a downward adjustment when the noncustodial parent is at or below the federal poverty level.

3) Increase Amount of Minimum Order (page 44): The amount of the minimum child support order will increase from \$50 to \$80 (\$960 annually) to reflect the same percentage (11%) increase of the 2009 federal poverty level for one person.

4) Parenting Time Adjustment (page 62): When there is a standard parenting time order (i.e., visitation) of less than 40%, the noncustodial parent's annual obligation should be reduced by 8.75% to reflect the time the child spends in the noncustodial parent's home.

Chairman Jones asked what percentage of the obligors are male, and Assistant Deputy Director Brown replied that 85% are fathers and 15% are mothers or kinship caretakers. Executive Director Robinson recommended that the OCF Legislative Subcommittee consider the issue of child support.

## **VI. Ohio Fatherhood Summit Recap**

Al Grimes, Coordinator of the Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative, offered a summary of the Initiative's fifth annual conference and jointly-sponsored for the first time with the OCF and held in Cleveland on June 17-20th.

Mr. Grimes provided the following numbers regarding the conference: 262 people attended the Wednesday night reception; 60 organizations participated in the resource fair; 86 people served as panelists or moderators; 360 people attended the plenary breakfast meeting on Thursday; 500 people attended the keynote luncheon on Friday; and 2,500 people participated in the Father and Family day at the Cleveland Zoo on Saturday. The official final conference report will include a list of the summit attendees.

Senator Ray Miller said that he was a facilitator at the town meeting and was impressed with the tremendous mix of people in attendance and the depth of knowledge and expertise of the panelists. The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood had answers to virtually any question that was asked. Senator Miller feels that people are paying attention to what the OCF is doing.

Commissioner Handon attended the conference and felt that the most impressive aspect of the conference was hearing from young fathers. She suggests that the OCF regionalize the conference in the future.

## **VII. Discussion and Decision**

### **A. 2010 Meeting Dates**

Monica Mahoney distributed a proposed calendar of 2010 OCF meeting dates. Commissioner Harris said it would be easier for our commissioners who also serve as state legislators to attend our meetings if they are held on Thursdays. Chairman Jones agreed to seek to change the meeting dates of the Board of Cuyahoga County Commissioners on the Thursdays that conflict with OCF meetings.

### **B. Federal Legislation**

Discussion was deferred until the September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **VIII. Announcements & New Business**

There were no announcements or new business.

## **IX. Adjournment**

The official meeting adjourned at 11:53 pm. Thereafter, all commissioners went to Governor Strickland's office for a photograph and presentation of an award to the Governor from the Ohio Fatherhood Summit.