



COUNTY OF ERIE
MARK POLONCARZ
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ERIE COUNTY YOUTH BOARD MEETING

Second Monday of each month from 4:30-5:30pm, unless otherwise specified

Minutes- May 12, 2025

Present: LaKishia Collins, LaShawn Davis, Jamien Eutsey, Dr. Zaheera Hemphill, Gabrielle Kostrzewski, Tiffany Lewis, Precious Lugo, Sue Lumadue, Maria Marinucci, Wavelle Parchment, John Romanowski, Tyler Skretny, Dave Smaczniak, Meghann Simpson, Jayla Williams, Ashleigh Worthy, Kate Hillman (staff), Wanda Hillman (staff), Dinesha Scarver (staff)

Absent: Brian Rochford, Denise Walden,

- I. Welcome/Introductions- Ice Breaker (Name/Feeling 0-10/Youth Superpower):**
 - a. Everyone went around to introduce themselves, how they are feeling, and a youth superpower they have or wish they had, or could pass on to youth, to help them thrive
- II. Youth Bureau Update-Wanda and Dinesha**
 - a. **Contracts for Prime Time**
 - i. A total of 70 contracts were mailed out last week, so providers have or will soon receive them to inform them of their funding
 - b. **Welcome Kate Hillman, New/Returning Youth Bureau Executive Director**
 - i. Kate was previously the Senior Director about 3 years ago, and is currently Deputy Commissioner at Erie County Parks Department (and will hold both roles for about the next month, then solely focus on Youth Bureau)
 1. Kate has been working with youth services for about 30 years, in Buffalo for about 17 years, and is looking very forward to getting to know the Board members
 - ii. Shared information on the restructuring of Youth Services
 1. Divided into 2 departments: youth detention is now stand alone under Deputy Commissioner Simmons
 2. Youth Bureau is now more programming focused, along with diversion and other services (as well as pre- and post-detention services to assist with support and “soft landing”)
 - a. This is the Youth Board’s focus
 3. With that, Youth Bureau is relocated to Room 1277 in the Rath Building
 - c. **Youth Board Meeting Location**
 - i. Still at Appletree but may explore returning to meeting at the service providers again



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III. Chair's/Vice Chair's Report

a. New Executive Committee Member

- i. Jamien noted that Tiffany Lewis has been voted in as new Executive Committee member

b. Vote on RFP Committee

- i. Now that there is a full Executive Committee, we will move on to filling the RFP Committee (trying to fill committees slowly and intentionally)
 1. Interested folks:
 - a. Dr. Zahara Hemphill
 - b. Precious Lugo
 - c. Wavelle Parchment
 - d. John Romanowski
 - e. Jayla Williams
 - f. Ashleigh Worthy
 2. Dave motioned to approve the six folks as the Committee, Maria seconded
 - a. Unanimously passes

c. Site Visits

- i. Site Visits still on hold for Youth Board members

d. Member Discussions, Questions, Concerns

- i. Jamien opened the floor for folks to share discussion topics with remaining time
- ii. Ashleigh shared she is excited to join RFP Committee to create trainings for service providers
- iii. Wanda asked folks for ideas the Board would like to share
 1. Maria brought up perhaps the need to review the Needs Assessment to generate ideas, needs, and gaps as many Board members are new, and conversations that began last year have stalled
 - a. Kate is asking JIS Department to map out demographics and services to demonstrate what is being provided to use that as an overlay
 2. Dr. Hemphill is interested in peer review and looking into research and proposals and scoresheets, as well as helping to connect providers doing similar work to encourage collaborative projects and grants
 3. Gabrielle identified a need to work on rehabilitation services and human trafficking
 - a. Kate noted there is work to improve runaway and homeless youth services
 4. Tiffany wanted to uplift Project Mona's House and Confident Girl Mentoring; suggested a training to prepare organizations to apply for grants and continuously review funded organizations
 - a. LaShawn echoed the need for trainings and noted we did develop a rubric last year for the RFP scoring process
 - b. Kate wants to increase social media presence to increase collaboration



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5. Action items for Site Visits Committee?
 - a. Perhaps start brainstorming ideas
6. Tiffany asked in committee members could sit in on other committees
 - a. Jamien said that for now, to focus on own committee
7. Question arose about whether there was any talk about there being focus groups in the future about needs and services
 - a. Kate noted there were focus groups in the Needs Assessment process but there is room for additional feedback to be sought
 - b. Definitely room in the YDP Program for this

e. Remaining Meetings 2025

- i. June 9
- ii. September 8
- iii. October 6
- iv. November 10
- v. December TBD

IV. Closing at 5:30pm