



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
Apple Tree Business Park, 2875 Union Rd. Cheektowaga, NY 14227 Suite #9*

Minutes- September 8, 2025

Present: LaKishia Collins, LaShawn Davis, Jamien Eutsey, Gabrielle Kostrzewski, Tiffany Lewis, Sue Lumadue (virtual), Maria Marinucci, John Romanowski (virtual), Tyler Skretny, Jayla Williams, Ashleigh Worthy

Kate Hilliman (staff), Wanda Hillman (staff)

Absent (bolded names gave advance notice): **Dr. Zaheera Hemphill, Precious Lugo**, Wavelle Parchment, **Meghann Simpson**, Dave Smaczniak, Denise Walden

I. Welcome/Introductions- Ice Breaker

- a. Jamien asked folks to introduce themselves, and share how they are feeling today on a scale of 0-10

II. Youth Bureau Update-Wanda, Dinesha, and Kate

a. Summer Overview

- i. Kate explained she has spent much of the Summer focused on building relationships both within and beyond the department.
- ii. Explained the Meetings Transparency Act: in effect since April, which affects the procedural aspects of meetings. Act will affect how we utilize technology, perhaps require us to stream or record and make meetings available, post agendas online, and allow opportunities for the public to engage. Jamien, Kate, and Wanda will review how to comply with the Act.
- iii. Kate will spend the next month to six weeks developing a strategic plan for the next few years as requested by Department of Social Services. Goal is to inform the legislature of the goals, procedures, and priorities of the department and how it can make an impact. Federal funding will likely impact social services, but Kate feels as though the Youth Bureau is in a good spot, however, as cuts are made federally, it will trickle down and may impact our services.
- iv. Kate shared a document summarizing the activities of the Bureau and the Board, and shared she believes trainings will be a big priority in the future.
- v. Local Commissioners Memoranda shared allocations of funding for YDP, YTP, YSEP, etc. Some require the Bureau to provide a local share; before that, we are looking at \$3.5M for the fiscal year. Many contracts were renewed for the upcoming year so we are



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not reviewing applications right now, but if we are able to sustain funding, we have a solid amount of money for Youth Development Programs to meet critical youth needs in the County, aligned with Bureau priorities. Received an historic increase in YDP funding—have not seen increases in a long time. Also a threefold increase in Youth Sports and Education funding.

- vi. Wanda and Dinesha conducted numerous site visits all Summer, and they generally went well. First year in several that they did not run into significant issues related to program changes, which was exciting.
- vii. 2025-2026 cycle will begin in October; finishing YDP visits for 24/25 cycle in the next couple weeks.

b. Fall Meetings Reminder

- i. Beginning in September, all members are required to attend meetings in person, unless attending school out of state (and excluding Sue)
 - 1. A link will not be provided broadly.

III. Chair's/Vice Chair's Report

a. Vice Chair Update

- i. Brian has stepped down from the Board; in October, we will vote for a Vice Chair.
- ii. Jamien asked for those interested to submit a statement of interest by **September 22, 2025**; brief paragraph expressing interest via email to Jamien, Wanda, Dinesha, and Kate. Will put to vote in October meeting.
- iii. All Board members are eligible.

b. Changes to By-Laws

- i. Voting
 - 1. Should take place in person, not via email. Votes will be anonymous.
- ii. Site Visits
 - 1. Sites will host meetings so Board members will be able to be familiar with them, but Board members will no longer be conducting site visits.
 - 2. Meeting scheduling will take location of site into consideration to provide for reasonable travel distance and time for Board members.
 - 3. Wanda shared if members are interested in seeing a site, they can reach out with availability; there will just no longer be a requirement to attend site visits.
 - 4. Tiffany asked if we needed to make a motion and vote on Bylaw changes; a draft will be written and then voted on next meeting.

c. Commitment to Serve

- i. Due to the changes in site visit requirements, the Commitment to Serve will be updated and all members will sign in January 2026; Commitment to Serve will just be for one year.



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- ii. Jayla asked what mandatory requirements are; Wanda shared that requirements include reviewing and scoring RFPs and attending meetings in person. Kate shared that the idea of a Strategic Plan is new, so may ask the Board to review and provide input annually.
- d. **Board Renewals**
 - i. Everyone that needed to has completed the Board Renewal paperwork.
- e. **Review Board Member Applications**
 - i. For adult members, new applicant materials were shared, and while there is no procedure for voting on members, materials were provided in case anyone wanted to share concerns. No concerns or questions voiced.
 - ii. Will be added to the Legislature Review agenda, along with Board Member Renewals.
 - iii. We do vote on youth members:
 - 1. Five potential youth members submitted applications; they will be invited to attend the October meeting in person and provide a two-minute pitch about joining.
 - 2. We currently have one youth member, and will look to add one more.
 - 3. Anyone not selected will be referred to an opportunity with the State Youth Advisory Board.

IV. Committee Updates

- a. **Executive Committee (Jamien, Vice Chair, Maria, Tiffany)**
 - i. Vice Chair is vacant; as a reminder, submit paragraph of interest by September 22.
- b. **RFP Committee (Jamien, Vice Chair, Maria, John, Ashleigh, Precious)**
- c. **Site Visit Committee Removal**
 - i. As site visits are no longer required, this Committee is no longer relevant.
- d. **Potential Committees**
 - i. Capacity
 - 1. Manage capacity of Board in terms of number of members and do recruitment when under 21 members.
 - ii. Trainings
 - 1. Committee would provide trainings on RFP scoring, RFP submissions for agencies, as well as come up with other youth development-related topics.
 - 2. Would also work on capacity-building for agencies.
 - iii. Outreach
 - 1. Would be in charge with getting the word out about the Board; could include social media and website plans.
 - iv. Events
 - 1. Only a few events a year, but would potentially organize a Summer and Winter event for the Board
 - v. Jamien asked Board members to offer thoughts on which committees should be created.



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1. Maria and Ashleigh echoed a need for the Training committee based on what the Board has been discussing.
2. Jayla shared support for the RFP Committee getting started because many agencies just resubmit the same thing over and over.
 - a. New RFPs will come out in January.
- vi. Kate suggested Board members review social media of other county boards and youth bureaus to get a sense of what other Bureaus and Boards do; we are unique with having Diversion.

V. Member Discussions, Questions, Concerns

VI. Remaining Meetings 2025

- a. October 6
- b. November 10
- c. December TBD

VII. Closing at 5:35pm