

**hLANCASTER COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

August 18, 2025

**Board Members Present:** Commissioner Alice Yoder, Kurt Miller, Phil Berkheiser, Brian Klugh, India Folk, Ramonita O'Maille, Bertha DeJesus-Saldana, Ashlee Rineer, Madeline Mitchell, Deb Jones, and Cathy Ginder

**Staff Present:** Crystal Natan, Executive Director, Kara Davis, Intake Director, Rebecca McMinn, Family Support Director, and Lindsey Brenna, Executive Administrative Coordinator

**Community Present:** Jacquelyn Pfursich, County Solicitor

**Excused:** Kelley Zipp, Director of QA, Jennifer Smith, Director of Permanency, Stacey Spangenburg, Angela Keen, Christopher Wenden

**Call to Order:** Board Chair Kurt Miller called the meeting to order at 8:03AM

**Approval of Board Minutes:** Brian Klugh motioned to approve the May 2025 meeting minutes; Phil Berkheiser seconded.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

**Executive Director's Report:**

- Advisory Board Report- Director Natan mentioned we are still waiting for news on the state budget. State funds are currently on hold until a state budget is passed. 80% of the CYA's budget is state dollars. At this time, we are continuing to pay invoices. Hopefully the budget will be resolved in the next month or two. Deb Jones asked if there is a limit to what the county can pay; Director Natan reported the county will be ok for the next month or so.
- Director Natan mentioned that we are working on planning our budget for next year, this sets the forecast for what we anticipate our need will be for FY 26/27. She explained that our fiscal department is working on the fourth quarter invoice to the state. There are only minor increases/enhancements to next year's budget. The budget will go before the commissioners for approval the first week of September.
- Director Natan reviewed staffing. There is currently 24 open positions. Since July 1<sup>st</sup> we have had 4 or 5 people join our agency. She explained we only post for 85 positions; we lose about a third of our caseworkers each year. However our turnover has improved since 2021-2023.
- Director Natan mentioned we are still working on the BOA audit. This has been a slow and steady exchange of data- we have no update to report. Director Natan explained what specific case information the BOA will be looking for. We should have a report by the end of the year since this is the BOA's 2025 project- Kurt Miller asked if this is legitimate. Director Natan replied yes, Philadelphia and Alleghany counties are also

participating in the audit. Director Natan explained they chose certain regulations to audit us on.

- Director Natan mentioned that we will be participating in the federal Child, Family Service Review (CFSR) in 2026. We will begin planning in late fall/winter. Director Natan explained that there are 8-10 cases will selected for review of the CFSR team. The case file will be reviewed and the case team members and family members are interviewed. Periodic reviews of state child welfare systems, to achieve three goals:
  - Ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements
  - Determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services
  - Assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes
- Director Natan provided an update on the development of family treatment court. The initial meeting was in July and the next meeting is at the end of August. Judge Parsons and Director Natan are coordinating and leading this project. Anticipated commencement is winter 2026.
- Director Kara Davis reported that GPS and CPS units are in a much better position with staffing. The goal is to try to retain these new caseworkers so they can begin receiving cases in September.
- Director McMinn explained family support is struggling with staffing. Deb Jones asked what has been successful in the past; Director McMinn responded she's still very new to the position, she's currently using teamwork and words of encouragement to try and support the Family Support caseworkers. Kurt Miller mentioned that he noticed that cases accepted for services have significantly increased compared to the past. Director McMinn explained that many of the cases that have been accepted for services are more complex especially families experiencing homelessness. Director McMinn explained that she has a very new and young fresh out of college staff that are struggling to help families experiencing homelessness. She explained that supervisors are doing the best they can to support their team members. Director McMinn explained that it is very hard to address other problems when families are experiencing homelessness. Director Davis explained that a lot of times families don't have support because other family members are already doubled or tripled up.
- Chair, Kurt Miller, mentioned the low adoption numbers are. There were only 16 adoptions this year. Director Natan explained there was a delay in filing of Petition to terminate parental rights due to solicitor and Judge changes over the past two years. With the many court changes the judges are giving parents more time to address their court ordered goals on their Child Permanency Plan. Director Natan mentioned that there have been a significant number of TPR's filed recently. Director Natan explained the adoption numbers should significantly increase in the next fiscal year.
- Director Natan explained that there are slightly more kids in care. At this time last year, the daily population was 275 and this year it is 295. One contributing factor is children are staying in care longer, so this makes our numbers look slightly higher. Director Natan explained that we have had judges that wanted goals done right now, but now we have judges who are being more strategic with goal timelines for parents/families to meet in order to have reunification. Director Natan summarized our internal process of

goals that families should be before a child is returned home. We strive for successful reunifications. Deb Jones referenced page 6 of the report and Director Natan explained that this means being returned home, and Kurt Miller also explained that this can also mean that the child is returned home but the agency retains legal custody.

- The Charts are a great visual to show the annual average of children in care. Director Natan explained that there has been a significant drop in the past 8 to 10 years in the overall number of children in out-of-home care. Director Natan explained when we are placing children it's because we've exhausted all other means to keep the child safe.
- Director Natan explained that we are seeing an increase in client resistance and lack of cooperation and we need to involve law enforcement more to be able to see the children. Director Natan explained that we must make every effort to see the children and assess the situation. Engagement with uncooperative families is very stressful for caseworkers.
- Kurt Miller explained that in his experience new staff have a hard time explaining how services work to families. Kurt Miller explained that there can be a lot of hostility between the younger caseworkers and families. Kurt Miller asked about the shift in the drugs being used in the community. Ashlee Rineer responded that this shift is towards more poly substance use, Ashlee explained that we tend to copy Baltimore and Philadelphia. She seems to think that these substances are just easier for people to find.
- Director Natan provided an update on staff returning to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in the beginning of 2026. Planning is occurring to move this forward.
- Director Natan discussed the Universal Assessment pilot. The Agency will be participating in this in 2026. The Universal assessment tool is a state assessment to assess the family. This will replace our current risk and safety assessments. One tool instead of two will be much more comprehensive and it is much more engaging for the family. Kurt Miller explained that there is a competency component in order for staff to be able to use this tool. Director Davis had questions on how it would affect intake, Director Davis preferred to have input now versus just being thrown into it at the end. Kurt Miller explained that it is not very trauma focused, it will be a learning curve.
- India Folk asked about how the youth homelessness program is going. Director Natan explained that we have made 10 voucher referrals. Director Natan explained that Community Basics is working on a new homeless shelter for people ages 18-21. Valley Youth House will be offering the social services. Deb Jones explained that there are 75 different partners trying to help address the homelessness problem. There are three different initiatives helping address youth homelessness. There are currently 212 youth that have engaged with the homelessness system.
- Madeline Mitchell asked if we have any services we offer to staff to help with trauma. Director Natan said we have some, but we would like to offer more programs for staff to turn to. Director Natan asked Madeline for suggestions on what we could bring to the staff. India suggested having a consulting firm come in; Director Natan explained that financially that is a little more difficult to do. Kurt Miller mentioned he will be offering a training to staff this week, to talk about what a client might be experiencing and how does this make the caseworker feel after having a tough discussion with the client.

**Upcoming Events:** None

**Announcements:** None

**Public Comment:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43A.M.

**NEXT MEETING:  
November 17, 2025**

**8:00-9:30 a.m.  
via TEAMS and In Person  
Join the meeting: [TEAMS Link to follow](#)**

Respectful  
Lindsey Br