

**MEDINA COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**  
**Special Board Meeting Minutes**  
**September 11, 2017**

**I. Call to Order**

The MCBDD Special Board Meeting was called to order by Board President, Ms. Thomas Fain, at 6:02 p.m. Other Board Members present included the following: Ms. Barnes Brown, Ms. Morrison, Ms. Orlandi, and Mr. Carroll.

Staff present included the following: Ms. Davis-Kramp, Ms. Finnerty, Mr. Bluebond, Ms. Lees, Ms. Hetkey, Ms. Majoros, Dr. Stanley Bryson, Ms. Davis, Ms. Wilbraham, Ms. Hunt, Ms. Bohner, Ms. Brodzinski, Ms. Bucks, Mr. Dryer, Ms. Day, Mr. Krebs, Ms. Zeigler, Mr. Young, Ms. Goodrow, Ms. Chris Garmon, Ms. Claire Garmon, Mr. Dermody, Ms. Boysen, Ms. Friss, Ms. Merriman, Ms. Swain, Ms. Fortney, Mr. Walter, Mr. Kelly, Ms. LaPinta, Mr. Steiner, Ms. Keys, Ms. Vernorsky, Ms. Zawadski, Mr. Stuber, Ms. Hartman, Ms. Hollifield, Ms. Koty, Ms. Bachtell, Ms. King, Ms. Heath, Mr. Smith, Ms. Batke, Mr. Core, Mr. Khadige, Ms. Petrak, and Mr. Thomas.

Others present included the following: Parents, Jay Mitzel, Gus and Nancy Valentasis, Fran Koenig, Barb Drager, Karen Tanski, Sally and Deryl Albrecht, Charlotte Carroll, Donna Zeleznik, Russ and Beth Hadlock (along with their three children), Donna Zeleznik, and Dianne DePasquale-Hagerty, Sharon Biggins, and James Derry, from MCH.

**II. Executive Session**

A Motion was made by Ms. Barnes Brown, seconded by Mr. Carroll, to enter into Executive Session for the following reasons:

- A. To Consider Matters to be kept confidential by Federal Law or Regulations or State Statute.
- B. Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment.

The Motion passed with a unanimous "yes" vote. The Board entered into Executive Session at 6:04 p.m.

The Board exited Executive Session at 7:34 p.m.

**III. General Session**

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Mission Statement Affirmation
- C. New Business

- 1. There was no New Business.

#### **D. Open Forum**

The following was stated during the Open Forum:

Fran Koenig stated that she has attended meetings like this before and wondered why no one knew what was on the agenda? She also stated that there has been a great deal of backbiting that has been irritating the parents. She stated that everyone seems to be thinking of money and that it seems to be the only important thing. Ms. Koenig stated that she cares about everyone in this place. Ms. Koenig stated that when she expressed concerns to a Board Member regarding another provider, the Board Member asked why she is concerned with another provider where her daughter does not receive services. Ms. Koenig stated that it is important to her that all providers do what they are supposed to do. Ms. Koenig stated that she did not like the tone of the last Board Meeting, and that she doesn't like when things are done in the dark. She stated that the Board needs to think more about the individuals than the money.

Karen Tanski stated that her son attends the Work Center, and that she is worried about the program. She discussed a six-year court battle regarding her son and how the attorneys were able to help her because they knew him. She asked the Board to think about the people who make decisions for the individuals and keep them where they need to be until we get through this transition process.

Barbara Drager stated that her son has been at the MCBDD for 49 years. Ms. Drager wants to see a Board where each member has their own strength. She is also asking the Board to not be ruled by personal agendas, but to think of the entire group of individuals affected. She stated that the 1970s, her husband was on the Board and at that time, he was very proud to be a Board Member at the MCBDD because it was a good Board.

Jay Mitzel stated that he served on the Board for 12 years, and was Board President for five years. Mr. Mitzel stated that the parents have their child's best interest at heart, as well as the other 1,000 plus individuals that receive services. He has no doubt that the Board will do the right thing. He would like his son to stay where he is, but realizes that that may not be possible. Mr. Mitzel commended the Board and staff for what they do and stated that in order to have a successful Board and agency, everyone needs to show up, do their job, know what is going on in field, and communicate the information to the public. Mr. Mitzel stated that he knows the Board is able to do this, but asked whether or not the Board has the right resources to do this. Mr. Mitzel asked the Board to consider these things when they make their decision.

Donna Moran's son has been with the agency for nine years. She feels that the agency is on the right track with leadership. The changes have been made in other counties, and we can do it here, as well.

Russ Hadlock expressed concerns regarding his son's services. He stated that anytime he has requested services for his son, he was told about funding. Mr. Hadlock was informed that in order for his son to continue receiving services, he needed to continue to visit group homes, which have never worked out in the past. He stated that he would take his son to a group home and they would ask his son if he would like to come back for dinner, then the home would never

follow thru. He does not understand why he has to continue to do this in order to receive services. In addition, Mr. Hadlock has been trying to get an emergency waiver for some time, with no success. Transportation is also an issue. Mr. Hadlock is very confused about funding.

Patty Manning stated that Mr. Hadlock had said it all. This community needs to come together for the kids. She doesn't like to see Mr. Hadlock and his family suffer.

Barbara Drager spoke again regarding her son's former case manager, who passed away. She stated that he was wonderful and encouraged her to fight for her son. She stated that parents have power within the waiver, and they should not be afraid to use them. Also, Ms. Drager questioned what was on the agenda since no one had asked yet.

Barb Petrak stated the stories from this evening brought her to tears. Ms. Petrak wanted to know why Mr. Hadlock's questions were not addressed. Ms. Thomas Fair stated that the Open Forum session is not a question and answer session, but the Board and Superintendent were taking notes in order to follow up with concerns. Ms. Petrak stated that the Board has a responsibility to make sure individuals get the services they need.

Sharon Biggins has a 27 year-old son that receives services. She stated that Mr. Hadlock's story brought back memories from ten years ago when she used to have to fight for her son's services. She stated that she was told by the SSA, at that time, that her son was not a priority because she was married and because her son was not abused. When her son was taken off the waiver, she filed an appeal, and won. Her son now lives in an apartment, works, and has a girlfriend. She stated that when he is doing well, services are removed until he ends up in jail and then they are re-instated. Ms. Biggins stated that families should not have to go through this, they should not have to beg for services or for information; it should be out there and available. Ms. Biggins stated that all need to come together. She also stated that Claire Garmon is a great SSA and fights for her son.

Beth Hadlock stated that her son has been with agency since the age of four, and that the entire family, including siblings and relatives, have given up their own lives to help with their son. She stated that they ask about services every year at his meeting and are never told anything. Ms. Hadlock is tired of begging for services to help with her son's needs. She stated that they finally have received five hours of services, per week, through SHC. Ms. Hadlock stated that Mr. Casey, from Windfall School, is an awesome teacher, and that every teacher they have worked with from Windfall School has been amazing. Mr. Hadlock stated that he is tired of the group home visits being a requirement for services. Mr. Hadlock thanked the Board for their time.

Christine Merriman stated that there are many staff in the audience in support of the Superintendent, and that she has always had the best interest of both the individuals and the staff at heart.

Nancy Valentasis stated that she has been involved with the agency for 34 years. She stated that everyone has had issues with their children, and all have a story to tell. She stated that she surrounds herself with positive people and that the Board and leadership need to do the same. Ms. Valentasis has found the funding that she needs for her son. She stated that the MCBDD

staff are fabulous and the SSAs work very hard. She stated that she can guarantee that the Superintendent has been taking notes in order to follow up on all of the concerns, and that the Superintendent has always been there for her and her son when they needed help. The Superintendent is trying to run the school, manage staff and multiple programs, and stay up to date with the laws. Ms. Valentasis then stated that the staff at the MCBDD rise above to help all.

Michelle Fortney stated she has worked at the MCBDD since she was 17 years old, and all she cares about are the individuals, parents, and staff. She stated that the staff here truly love the individuals and also believes the Superintendent and the staff have always been there for each other, both professionally and personally. The Superintendent is strong in self-advocacy and has taught both individuals and staff to also be strong. Ms. Fortney stated that she appreciates the personal touch the Superintendent gives you; when she talks to you, she asks about your family. Ms. Fortney stated that she would hate for anything to change.

Debbie Hollifield is a parent of a child with significant disabilities and also works at the MCBDD. She stated that she has worked on the school side, in transportation, and now on the adult side, and has worked with many of the individuals since they were young. She stated that the Superintendent has always been there as a mentor and a teacher and that she has shared the information she has learned with others.

Ms. Thomas Fain closed the Open Forum by thanking all for attending the meeting and asked that parents, etc., continue coming to the meetings to share information and concerns. She also stated that the Board Members took notes regarding the concerns that were discussed.

The Superintendent thanked the staff who came to the meeting to support her.

Ms. Thomas Fain stated that the Board would now adjourn and go back into Executive Session. There may or may not be business conducted when the Executive Session ends.

#### **IV. Adjournment**

A Motion was made by Ms. Morrison, seconded by Ms. Barnes Brown, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

The Motion passed with a unanimous "yes" vote.

#### **V. Executive Session**

A Motion was made by Mr. Carroll, seconded by Ms. Morrison, to enter into Executive Session at 8:43 p.m.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

A Motion was made by Ms. Morrison, seconded by Mr. Carroll, to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

The Motion passed with a unanimous "yes" vote.

**FOR APPROVAL**

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Sandra Thomas Fain  
Board President  
Medina County Board of DD

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Elaine Orlandi  
Board Secretary  
Medina County Board of DD