

**SUMMIT COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AUGUST 26, 2025 MEETING MINUTES**

Board Members		Board Members		Executive Team	
	Anne Connell-Freund, Chair	✓	Patrick Bravo		Cassandra Holtzmann
✓	Keith Malick, Vice-Chair		Traci Buckner	✓	Amy Davidson
✓	GinaKaye Maddox, Secretary		Beth Gracey	✓	Darin Kearns
✓	Anna Arvay	✓	Megan Recker	✓	Liz Mangon
✓	Omar Banks	✓	Katie Stoyhoff	✓	Sushi Moore
	Pastor Kemp Boyd			✓	Catherine Van Horne

**Staff Present:** Margaret Cross, Traci Foley, Jon Hart, Ray Jacobs-Security Tom Lavery, Tracy Mayfield, Erica Sabados, Laura Sasser, Deanna Shriver, Jennifer Snyder, JoAnn Dunson - Recording Secretary

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice-Chair Malick called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. and a roll call was taken.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Vice-Chair Malick requested a motion to approve the minutes of July 22, 2025. Mrs. Stoyhoff moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Maddox. All were in favor and the motion carried.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Lavery was advised by Vice-Chair Malick that his request was submitted late. He allowed Mr. Lavery to speak after advising him that professional conduct is expected. Mr. Lavery was also reminded that he cannot preface any confidential case information, including that of his children. Mr. Lavery spoke about an article that he provided to the board regarding events taking place in the Ukraine and Syria.

**Committee Reports**

**Resources Committee**

Committee Chair Malick reported that the committee met today, and Department Director Shriver reviewed the Financial Statement Report as of July 31, 2025.

**Resolution 08-2025-26/A**

*Authorization to enter into agreement with Strategic Solutions for a three year term commencing October 1, 2025 with the option to extend for two additional one-year terms thereafter, at the sole discretion of the Summit County Children Services (SCCS) and subject to available funding, at a cost which may be less than, but shall not exceed \$100,000 annually, for a total cost over the three year term of the agreement not to exceed \$300,000. Committee Chair Malick made a motion to approve; seconded by Mrs. Stoyhoff. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

**Resolution 08-2025-26/B**

*Authorization to enter in agreement for the provision of beds, cribs, mattresses, and related items with Stone's Kenmore Mattress for a three-year term commencing September 16, 2025, and expiring on September 15, 2028, with the option to extend the agreement thereafter for two additional one-year terms at the sole discretion of SCCS and subject to available funding at the annual cost not to exceed \$150,000. The total amount payable over the initial three-year term of this agreement may be less than but shall not exceed \$450,000. Committee Chair Malick made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Maddox. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

**Resolution 08-2025-26/C**

*Authorization to approve the purchase of Directors and Officers Liability Insurance, including Employment Practices Liability Insurance, for a one-year policy period of August 31, 2025, through August 31, 2026, from O'Neill Insurance*

*Agency, Inc through National Union at a cost of \$60,235. Also, SCCS recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the purchase of Commercial Automobile Insurance for a one-year period of August 31, 2025, through August 31, 2026, from O'Neill Insurance Agency, Inc through Hastings at a cost of \$27,514. Committee Chair Malick made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Bravo. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

#### **Executive Director's Report**

The Board received a Director's Report in their packet and Interim Executive Director Kearns highlighted the following information.

Intake cases were initiated timely at an average rate of 96.7%. Cases were completed 94.2% within the required timeframe this month and 90.1% YTD. The mandate is 95%. Interim Executive Director Kearns shared that Deputy Director Davidson, and her team have made it an area of focus to improve the timeliness on case initiation and completion. There is a financial incentive when this goal is met.

The number of hotline reports stand at 5,158 YTD. The screened in reports stand at 1,711. This is the lowest that both of these reports have been in the last five years.

There were 54 JR6 removals for August and 46 were conducted by Akron Police Department (APD). APD Deputy Police Chief Laughlin is working to update the JR6 policy and SCCS staff will review the new policy once it has been completed. SCCS is also in the early stages of discussing the possibility of our staff being involved with the JR6 training with new cadets. This should foster a better partnership with our agency and APD.

The newest caseworker (CW) class, which has 13 caseworkers, is now receiving case assignments. Moving forward there will be a 5:1 ratio to supervisors, with most CW having less than one year of experience.

Protective CWs are exceeding the mandate of visiting children. Staff completed visits over 95% of the time in August, even with 50% of kids being placed outside of Summit County.

There were seven adoptions finalized this month, which brings our year-to-date (YTD) total to 48.

SCCS currently has 127 traditional foster homes. Two new homes were licensed and seven closed this month. There are also 12 pending home studies with Caring for Kids (CFK). Traditional foster homes will be largely discussed moving forward due to this being part of the Paid Placement crisis improvement plan. Our agency is hopeful that the new campaign and other recruitment efforts will increase the number of homes being opened vs. closed.

Family Search and Engagement (FSE) is another area our agency is focusing on to improve the paid placement crisis. The team received ten new referrals and there are 45 referrals on the waitlist. 132 relative connections were identified, 52 were successfully contacted and 25 were identified as a support or willing to accept placement. The family search specialist assigned to Intake has been assigned 32 FSE assignments and assisted with an additional eight FSE's from the waitlist. Third shift staff have assisted with conducting family search on seven cases from the waitlist and have also been building family trees. This should shorten the search time when cases are assigned to the Family Search and Team Decision unit staff.

The agency is piloting a paid internship program for the Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 semesters. One student has been selected who is slated to graduate in Spring 2026. This student will have an opportunity to enhance their skills, gain confidence, gain hands on practice while engaging in SWA-related tasks, student training, CORE training and supervision. The student has expressed an interest in applying for a casework position upon graduation.

Human Resources (HR) and Professional Development & Training (PD&T) staff will be attending eight university career fairs this fall and will be speaking at three classes at Kent State University. Class III of the Leadership in Excellence and Professionalism (LEAP) program kicked off. The LEAP program was developed for staff in supportive roles who desire more advanced practice skills to prepare them for additional leadership opportunities within the

agency. Executive team members had the opportunity to speak to this group at the kickoff event. The Leadership Academy Class IV members had their graduation, and this will be reported on next month.

All five of our summer interns will be continuing their field placement through the fall semester. They will also be hosting a resource fair in September at the Education Center. This event will include trainings and substance use topics and will provide the opportunity to learn about various community resources in the Northeast region for treatment and recovery.

PD&T staff hosted training unit supervisors from Cuyahoga County Children and Family Services who requested to learn more about our field placement model. They received a program overview, campus tour and simulation lab tour.

Our Maintenance staff continue to work on updating the conference rooms throughout the organization. They are being upgraded with new televisions, soundbars with built in web cameras, updated paint, some flooring and some will receive new conference tables and chairs. The Women's Auxiliary Board (WAB) conference rooms are slated for technology updates in 2026.

Community Relations engaged in seven community events this month including, Flix on the Falls, the African American Festival, Touch-A-Truck, Fun at First & Main and an Akron RubberDucks game. These events are targeted specifically at foster parent recruitment. They also coordinated an interview with a reporter from the Akron Beacon Journal and two interviews with location television station WAOH to discuss the need for foster parents.

Staff also presented about the need for foster parents in the community at meetings of Barberton City Council, Akron Ward 6 and Akron Ward 4. Information was shared with three local YMCAs and a coffee house, and rack cards were provided to 11 independently owned small businesses in the area.

The Quality Improvement (QI) department began holding fact-gathering sessions with internal and external stakeholders as part of the Strategic Planning. Sessions were held on July 16<sup>th</sup> with the Citizens Advisory Committee, July 21<sup>st</sup> with SCCS Senior Leadership team and August 8<sup>th</sup> with the Management group. SCCS is planning to present the Strategic Plan to the Board in October 2025.

#### **Adjournment**

Vice-Chair Malick requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Arvay moved; seconded by Ms. Maddox. All were in favor and the motion carried. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:57p.m.

  
GinaKaye Maddox, Secretary  
Board of Trustees

 9/25/25  
Darin Kearns  
Interim Executive Director

2022