

**PINELLAS COUNTY LICENSE BOARD
FOR CHILDREN'S CENTERS & FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
(IN PERSON & VIRTUAL MEETING ON TEAMS FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE)**

OCTOBER 26, 2022, at 1:30 PM

**Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County
8751 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida**

APPROVED MINUTES

Our mission is to protect and promote the health, safety, and mental development of children cared for in Children's Centers and Family Child Care Homes in Pinellas County.

The regular Board Meeting of the Pinellas County License Board for Children's Centers and Family Child Care Homes was scheduled and properly noticed for Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 8751 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida, to begin at 1:30 pm.

Board Members Present: Michael Mikurak; Celeste Fernandez; Commissioner Patricia Gerard; Lynn Gibson; Jennifer Mekler; Dr. Susan Weber

Board Members Absent: Dorothy Duvé

Ex-Officio Member Present: Brandy Downing

Advisory Committee Members Present: Lynn Bittner; Dan Berman, Elizabeth Krakowski

Advisory Committee Members Attending Virtually: Richard French; Nancy McGreevy; Shelia Haugabook

Advisory Committee Members Absent: Anne Martinelli; Cynthia Sumter

Attorney Present: Colleen Flynn, Esq.

Staff Members Present: Faith Bornoff, Executive Director; Tammy Sharpe, Centers Supervisor; Julie Oliver, Homes Supervisor; Lisa Zacharia, Administrative Secretary; Ivy Thanh Huynh, Contract Administrator (virtually)

I. Call to Order

A. Announcements

Mr. Mikurak called the Board meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

Ms. Emily Ralston, former Board member, thanked the Board for allowing her to speak at this meeting. She said she appreciates having had the opportunity to be a Board member for more than three years and loved sharing knowledge and expertise. It provided her an opportunity to see how important oversight and accountability are. She is disappointed to no longer serve on our Board and hopes we continue to make a positive impact in the early childhood education field. Ms. Ralston said that if she can be of service to this Board again in any capacity, she would welcome the opportunity. What is most important to her is that the successful and positive relationship with PCLB continues. Board members and staff members thanked Ms. Ralston for her service.

Mr. Mikurak welcomed Dr. Susan Weber with FLAEYC to the Board.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Mr. Mikurak asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the Board meeting on July 20, 2022.

Motion: Commissioner Gerard made a motion to accept the minutes from the Board meeting on July 20. Ms. Gibson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. Action Items

A. Approve Dan Berman, M.Ed., CAEL, Director of Education and Family Programming with Temple Beth-El for PCLB Advisory Committee

Motion: Celeste Fernandez made a motion to approve Dan Berman as a member of the Advisory Committee. Dr. Weber seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Berman said he looks forward to supporting all the important work the License Board does.

B. Approve Licenses for 3 new Child Care Centers

Ms. Sharpe stated we are recommending 3 new Child Care Centers for full licensure. They are Bright Beginnings, St. Paul Catholic School Extended Day Program and The Stepping Stone Day Care and described each one.

Motion: Commissioner Gerard made a motion to approve the 3 Centers. Ms. Gibson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. Approve Licenses for 9 New Family Child Care Homes

Ms. Oliver explained all of the new Homes had great inspections and we feel very confident approving all of them for full licensure.

Approve Licenses for 2 new Large Family Child Care Homes

Ms. Oliver reported they had great inspections and we are confident approving them for full licensure.

Motion: Ms. Fernandez made a motion to approve the 9 new Family Child Care Homes and 2 Large Family Child Care Homes. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Approve 2023 Board Meeting Dates:

- March 22, 6:30 pm
- June 21, 1:30 pm
- September 20, 6:30 pm
- December 13, 1:30 pm

Motion: Commissioner Gerard made a motion to approve the 2023 Board meeting dates. Ms. Gibson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Bornoff reported that the Licensing Specialist position that Tammy Sharpe had before becoming Centers Supervisor has been filled and our new employee will begin onboarding this Friday. The Licensing Specialist position that became available since Cindy Odette's retirement has been advertised as well. We had some local (non-DCF) variances since last meeting for school age programs at public schools only. They were having staffing concerns and with the schools' oversight and the proper facilities, they are employing, if they choose, 17 year old's in addition to 18 and up with special training, guidance and coaching. Most are involved in training to work in the field already and will have proper oversight. Discussion and questions ensued regarding the new local variance.

V. Information Items

- A. Monthly Financial Report
- B. Statistical Report Regarding Licensing Activities
- C. Compliance Reports
 1. Children's Centers Fine Report
 2. Family Child Care Homes Fine Report

3. 100 Percent Compliant Inspections in Children's Centers
4. 100 Percent Compliant Inspections in Family Child Care Homes
5. Closed Centers and Homes

Mr. Mikurak asked if anyone had questions or comments regarding information items. Commissioner Gerard asked why a fine for KinderCare 531 was so high. Ms. Sharpe explained it was due to paperwork regarding safety not having been turned in for a long time and we had a meeting with their owner.

VI. Public Comment:

Jennifer Hughes with Pinellas Early Educators United Association gave a public comment about increasing the ratio for infants in Pinellas County. They are requesting to have the ratio increased from 1 adult to 3 infants to 1 adult to 4. Other organizations such as, FLAEYC, Zero to Three and Florida DCF recommend the standard of 4:1 infants with a maximum of 8. In other states in 2022, one state had a 7:1 ratio; four states had a 6:1; 10 states had a 5:1; 32 states had a 4:1 ratio including Florida; two states had a 3:1 ratio; and one does not have any licensing regulations at all. There is probably no statistical data that shows a correlation between infant to adult ratios and infant injuries and deaths, but what does contribute to incidents in child care centers is unregulated and unlicensed care with no minimal safeguards. They are suggesting increasing the ratio for providers in good standing. Unlicensed care continues to be a problem and many parents are not able to find care because all are at capacity. Increasing ratio increases licensed care as a response to solving the problem and decreases unlicensed care so parents would have peace of mind. They sent out 100 surveys to providers. 75 out of the 78 of those returned supported increased ratio. They started a petition on change.org and have over 150 signatures so far, not as a petition to the License Board, but as a way of formally showing the position. Ms. Hughes thanked the Board for their time.

Mr. Berman added that there is a desperate need for quality care with the limitations we have. If we don't make the adaptation, people will go to unlicensed care or have to find other employment. He stated he is in favor of the change in ratio going to centers in good standing that already provide quality care. Ms. Gibson added that she hears over and over how parents with infants under 2 are going to lose their job due to not having care. Colleen Flynn stated this county has had this ratio since 1987. Mr. Mikurak said he would like to have an update on where we stand so that the Board has a better understanding.

VII. Staff Anniversaries

Ms. Bornoff shared PCLB's 4th quarter anniversaries.

VIII. Upcoming 2023 Meeting Dates

Mr. Mikurak reviewed the upcoming Board dates for 2023.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Mikurak adjourned the meeting at 1:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Celeste M. Fernandez, Secretary