

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

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING FOR BOARD MEMBERS  
VIRTUAL MEETING ON TEAMS FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PUBLIC  
March 24, 2021 at 6:30 PM**

**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, March 24, 2021, at 8751 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida, to begin at 6:30 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Michael Mikurak; Dorothy Duvé; Michael Feeney; Lynn Gibson; Commissioner Patricia Gerard; and Emily Ralston

**Board Members Attending Virtually:** Celeste Fernandez

**Ex-Officio Member Attending Virtually:** Brandy Downing

**Advisory Committee Members Present Virtually:** Lynn Bittner; Richard French; Shelia Haugabook; Elizabeth Krakowski; Nancy McGreevy; Anne Martinelli

**Advisory Committee Members Absent:** Cynthia Sumter

**Attorney Present:** Colleen Flynn, Esq.

**Staff Members Present:** Faith Bornoff, Executive Director; Jorie Massarsky, Supervisor, Centers; Julie Oliver, Supervisor, Family Child Care Homes; Tammy Sharpe, Licensing Specialist

**Staff Members Attending Virtually:** Hope Williams, Licensing Specialist, Public Comment Volunteer; Lisa Zacharia, Administrative Secretary; Victoria Gilley, General Services Manager; Ivy Than Huynh, Contract Administrator; Olga Chang, Contract Administrator

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Mikurak called the Board meeting to order at 6:39 pm and stated that we have a quorum present. He welcomed back Commissioner Pat Gerard. Mr. Mikurak asked if there were any announcements but there were none.

**II. Consent Agenda**

**A.** Mr. Mikurak asked for a motion to accept the minutes from November 18, 2020.

**Motion:** Commissioner Gerard made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Feeney seconded the motion and consent agenda passed unanimously.

### III. Action Items

#### A. Increases/Additions to Regulations

##### 1. Increase fee for Children's Center License

Ms. Flynn stated that PCLB has not increased its regulations for about ten years, other than when the Department of Children and Families has increased state regulations, which we must meet, and explained that we need a finding of necessity in order to increase them. Then, at least five out of seven Board members have to believe it's a finding of necessity and not just preferential that the regulation be increased. After that, we have to mail notice of the old regulation, the new regulation and the finding of necessity. Next we have to have a hearing so the affected people have the opportunity to make comments. Our Public Hearing would be on June 23, 2021, which is the date of our next Board meeting. It then has to sit silent for 90 days. Following that, we can have our final vote on September 22, 2021. If the Board wants to go forward with it, we would have to have the five out of seven vote in favor of the increase. Then we will mail a notice out about the new standard and its effective date. The proposal is for the effective date to be November 1, 2021. PCLB has not increased its fees in approximately 10 years. We have changed regulations based on state regulations during that time, but we haven't had to go through a cumbersome process like this because we hadn't changed regulations in Pinellas to exceed state regulations. Ms. Flynn asked if there were any questions. Ms. Bornoff asked the Board members to look at the Action Item A-Part I packet and explained that it is a comparison of fees in Pinellas, fees in other counties and DCF's fees. There is one for Centers and one for Homes and then there is our proposal. The first Action Item is to increase the license fee by \$25, bringing Centers to \$75. The finding of necessity is the cost of doing business has increased and we need the increase to fund these additional costs. Our salaries, mileage, insurance and materials have all gone up. Funding from DCF has not increased since 2006. We have a contract with them to enact regulations in our area and they do fund us but not enough. Mr. Mikurak asked if we raise fees slightly, how much we've accomplished for the budget. Ms. Massarsky stated there are 250 preschools and 117 before and after school facilities, so 367 centers which would create \$9,175 more income. Ms. Duvé stated she would like to raise the fees even higher. There was discussion about what the shortfall is and if we will still be short after raising fees and by how much. Ms. Bornoff said we were concerned with going up too much since it's been so long and it may be better to bump it up now and not do it again for another 5 year. Ms. Gibson suggested raising Homes less than was proposed by increasing by \$40 rather than \$50. Board members and staff discussed different variables to possibly raise fees higher for Large Family Child Care Homes versus Regular Homes and explained that Hillsborough County charges much higher fees than Pinellas County. They discussed the Public Hearing on June 23, and that it will sit silent for 90 days thereafter, so people can think about it during that time before going into effect November 1. Mr. Mikurak stated they would like to increase the licensing fee higher than we proposed. Ms. Flynn asked that the Board start by voting on Item A1-Centers.

**Motion:** Ms. Ralston made a motion to adopt the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed change to the regulation to increase fees to \$100 plus \$1 per child. Ms. Duvé seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Mikurak asked if there were any public comments and there were none.

##### 2. To add a new regulation providing for a fee for a non-mandatory preliminary inspection of a possible location for a Children's Center

Ms. Bornoff explained this fee would be charged to people who want a preliminary inspection of the site of a new Center. Ms. Massarsky explained everything that's involved in preliminary inspections for Licensing Specialists. She also stated that there would be increased technical assistance and paperwork given if a fee was charged moving forward. Ms. Duvé expressed she feels the fee should be \$50. Ms. Bornoff told the Board members group what other counties charge for this service.

**Motion:** Ms. Duve made a motion to approve the proposed new regulation instituting the fee, setting the fee at \$50 and adopting the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Comment/question from Lynn Bittner, Advisory Committee member: If new people decide they want to move forward with that site, can the charge be taken off the licensing fee? Mr. Mikurak asked why we would give it back if the service had already been provided. Mr. Feeney said he felt if we were talking about regular homes it would be different. No further comments were made.

**3. To add a new regulation providing for a fee for Children’s Centers to file a Petition for Variance or Waiver**

Ms. Bornoff explained Variances and Waivers to the Board. She stated we currently charge nothing to Providers for filing Variances/Waivers or Dispositions, but we have to pay about \$600 to cover Department of State fees and legal advice each time.

**Motion:** Ms. Fernandez made a motion to approve the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed new regulation to institute a fee of \$100 for Variances/Waivers. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**4. To add a new regulation requiring a Children’s Center Director who has not been a Director in Pinellas County within the previous 12 months to attend PCLB’s “Pinellas Director Basics” training within 90 days of hire**

Ms. Bornoff explained that the class would be a new requirement and a new class for Pinellas County. The state of Florida Director Credential class does not teach everything Directors need to know. The class would help new Directors be more successful and avoid violations.

**Motion:** Ms. Ralston made a motion to approve the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and the proposed new regulation requiring that a Children’s Center Director who has not been a Director in Pinellas County within the previous 12 months take Pinellas Director Basics within 90 days of hire. Mr. Feeney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**5. To increase the fee for a Family Child Care License**

Ms. Bornoff stated we are proposing increasing the regular Homes license fee to \$50. There are 245 homes and there can be up to six children in a regular home. It was proposed by Mr. Feeney to increase the fee to \$75 and the large home to \$100.

**Motion:** Ms. Duvé made a motion to approve the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed change to the regulation which would increase the Home license fee to \$75. Ms. Ralston seconded the motion. It passed by a 6-1 margin with Ms. Gibson opposing.

**6. To increase the fee for Large Family Child Care License**

The license fee is currently \$50. Staff proposed to increase it to \$100. Ms. Gibson explained that requirements are much higher for a large home than a regular, plus it costs more to run because they have to have an employee. She added there are providers that would not want this increase.

**Motion:** Mr. Feeney made a motion to approve the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed change in the regulation to increase the license fee for a Large Home to \$100. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**7. To add a new regulation requiring “Prospective Provider Training” if the applicant has not been a licensed Family Child Care Home operator in Pinellas County in the past two years**

Staff explained that its recommendation is to make Prospective Provider Training a requirement. The charge is currently \$25 and provides all necessary paperwork, regulations, and information about inspections and the Clearinghouse.

**Motion:** Commissioner Gerard made a motion to approve the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed new regulation to require Prospective Provider training. Ms. Fernandez seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**8. To add a new regulation providing for a fee for filing a petition for a Variance or Waiver for Family Child Care Homes**

Staff explained that this is the same rationale for the variance/waivers as the cost for each as the same as it is for Centers. We have not had a need for this so far but there is a possibility that a Home will want to petition for a Variance/Waiver.

**Motion:** Commissioner Gerard made the motion to approve the finding of necessity in its entirety as set forth in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed new regulation to charge a fee for filing a petition for a Variance or Waiver for Family Child Care Homes in the amount of \$100. Mr. Feeney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**9. To add a new regulation providing for a fee to add overnight care at any time other than initial license or a renewal license for a Family Child Care Home**

Staff explained that this proposed new regulation pertains to Homes adding overnight care mid licensing cycle and the requirements thereof. If a Home adds overnight care mid-cycle, it requires an additional inspection which has added costs such as mileage, etc. in addition to staff time.

**Motion:** Mr. Feeney made a motion to approve the finding of necessity as set forth in its entirety in the Board Memorandum and to approve the proposed new regulation to add a \$25 fee to add overnight care mid-cycle. Ms. Duvé seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**B. Accept and Approve Audit Presentation by Dana Powell, Thomas Howell Ferguson**

Ms. Powell thanked Ms. Gilley and Ms. Bornoff for all their help throughout the audit process. The firm issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements this year which means they are fairly presented and in accordance with accounting principles. They did not note any deficiencies in internal control or instances of non-compliance. Overall, these were good reports and they did not propose adjusting any journal entries. The statements shared with the Board are in draft format but Ms. Powell stated they will get everything dated March 23, 2021, remove the draft watermark, get the firm’s signature, and send 27 bound copies over to PCLB. Ms. Powell asked if there were any questions but there were none. Mr. Mikurak asked for a motion to accept and approve the audit.

**Motion:** Commissioner Gerard made a motion to accept and approve the audit. Ms. Duvé seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Mikurak asked if anyone on the Board needed to have any discussion with the auditor, but no Board members asked.

**C. Approve Licenses for 2 new Children’s Centers**

Ms. Massarsky stated we are recommending 2 new Centers for full licensure. Jump Start Preschool is actually owned by a Home provider in South St. Pete who purchased it. Southwest Preschool is a new Center run by the City of Largo. They each have had 3 perfect inspections during the temporary permit period. We are asking that you approve them for full licensure.

**Motion:** Ms. Ralston made a motion to approve the 2 new Children’s Centers. Commissioner Gerard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**D. Approve Licenses for 4 New Family Child Care Homes**

Ms. Oliver stated we are recommending 4 Homes for regular licenses. The first 2 moved and the last 2 are brand new. We are very confident recommending these homes for full licensure.

**Motion:** Commissioner Gerard made a motion to approve the 4 new Homes for full licensure. Ms. Gibson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**IV. Executive Director’s Report**

Ms. Bornoff is happy to report a downward trend in COVID child care closures and we have also been able to complete on-site inspections again. Our staff continues to perform much of their work remotely and spends little time in the office. We hope they are back in the office soon so we can get back to normal. Our staff assisted child care providers age 65+ in getting COVID vaccines. We were able to schedule about 55 providers at 3 different centers. Our new Classification Summary, to incorporate Regulations released in 2019 by DCF was on hold due to COVID and they are getting back to that now. Tammy Sharpe, our newest Licensing Specialist, is almost done with her training and will be receiving her full caseload in May. Ms. Gibson said Ms. Sharpe was at her home a day earlier and it was a pleasure to have her. Since the November Board meeting, Ms. Hope Williams, who is in the public comment room during this meeting, was the successful candidate to have unlicensed care investigations added to her duties. She will be working with any unlicensed Homes and Centers to obtain background screening or become exempt. It’s one more step to making Pinellas County safer for our children.

**V. Information Items**

Mr. Mikurak asked if there were any comments regarding Information Items. Ms. Duvé said there were a lot of \$500 fines this go-around. Mr. Feeney asked if there should be a column for how many infractions a Center has had. Ms. Bornoff said we do track that in CARES. Ms. Massarsky said there is a number that we use to revoke a license. Ms. Duvé asked about the child that was spotted outside by a by-stander. Ms. Oliver said the child was ok and the family stayed with that provider.

**VI. Public Comment**

Mr. Mikurak asked if there were any public comments but there were none. He then congratulated PCLB on the audit. Ms. Ralston said she was grateful because even though there were a lot of changes to child care due to COVID, providers still received so much guidance from PCLB.

**VII. Staff Anniversaries**

Ms. Bornoff reported that we are celebrating 4-year anniversaries for Cindy Odette and Elise Bishop; Cindy Blakley is celebrating her 13-year anniversary; Kathi Merino is celebrating 6 years; Julie Oliver is celebrating 20 years; Debbie Hunt is celebrating 26 years.

Mr. Mikurak stated that unless there was any other business, the Board meeting is adjourned. Ms. Flynn inquired if two members of the Advisory Board were present. Ms. Haugabook said she was present, but Ms. Sumter was not present.

**IX. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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Celeste Fernandez, Secretary