

Marion County Children & Families Commission

May 21, 2020

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Online Virtual Meeting

Commission Members Present: ~~Patrice Altenhofen~~, Phil Blea, Sue Bloom, George Burke, Paige Clarkson, ~~Jayne Downing~~, Josh Graves, Troy Gregg, Lisa Harnisch, ~~Jimmy Jones~~, Sheriff Joe Kast, ~~Levi Herrera Lopez~~, Stacy Lake, Kimberly Lemman, Pete McCallum, Honorable Judge Cheryl Pellegrini, Chris Pineda, Allan Pollock, Eric Richards, Jim Seymour, ~~Sam Skillern~~, Shaney Starr, ~~Commissioner Colm Willis~~

Guests: Melissa Glover, Salem-Keizer School District; Kevin Karvandi, MCSO; Carla Munns, C-Suite

Staff: Tamra Goettsch, Melinda Hautala, Heather Johnson

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 11:32 am. Welcome and introductions were made.

Video: “What to Do When You Want to Give Up”

Melinda shared a short video about how knowing that others have “got your back” makes it possible to continue work that is especially difficult or overwhelming in an unusually stressful time. The video can be viewed on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/VXt9Zt2urls>

HOPE ALIVE – East Salem

Tamra commented that despite the current crisis, the CFC is still committed to having a positive impact on East Salem while also having a productive impact on member organizations. With the requirements of safety and physical distancing in place, some of the plans that the CFC discussed previously will not be feasible, but the challenge now is to figure out how to participate collectively to move the work forward in a different way. How can the CFC find different or non-traditional ways to see others, align efforts, and make adjustments, even with current limitations?

Shaney asked if state and county guidelines might allow for some in-person meetings and activities as the county enters Phase One reopening. She added that it would be worth discussing the details of the reopening phases and how they would affect efforts in East Salem. She also pointed out that although the schools are not in session, the CFC should still focus on the schools, in terms of what challenges they are facing with distance learning, what the situation will be in the fall, etc.

- ➔ Melinda will research how phased reopening and county/state guidelines will affect planning for events in East Salem.

Shaney asked Josh if Fostering Hope Initiative is maintaining Community Café meetups by doing them virtually. Levi was not present, but she also wondered if Mano a Mano are holding their Community Cafés virtually.

Josh said that Catholic Community Services has certified community health workers who are involved with the Community Cafes, but the events are being organized by CBEL. They are hosting three virtual Community Cafes about student success in the Hallman Elementary and Auburn Elementary neighborhoods—two are for parents to discuss their experiences and challenges with online learning (one for Spanish speakers and one for English speakers) and to share what their needs are. The third Community Café is being planned by high school students in Outward Mindset classes, to gather input from high school and middle school age kids about their experiences with online learning and social distancing in general. CBEL will form an action plan based on input from these meetings, and the goal is to go neighborhood by neighborhood to try to make some tangible changes that can be demonstrated and then scaled up.

Pete asked how many families CBEL estimates do not have access to technology for participating in Community Cafes and online learning? Carla said that they have confirmed 40 families who can access the Zoom meeting.

CBEL has also hired a Spanish-speaking family advocate who is working with consultant Jackie Franke to promote the Marion County Community Resource Network. They have also been coordinating with food banks to expand distribution of not only food, but also household needs like cleaning supplies, baby supplies, etc. Tamra pointed out that the CRN is a product of the CFC and managed by the Community Services staff, so that could be a useful tool to connect people with resources.

Stacy asked if there is a way to combine and coordinate the efforts of various organizations who are doing similar work (distributing food, clothing, and other basic needs). Some organizations stockpile donated goods that cannot be used immediately, and combining efforts could be one way to help with the imbalance of needs and resources. Lisa said that Early Learning Hub has worked with a local church to set up “resource closets” to stockpile items that families can request from them, like diapers, school supplies, etc. SKEF has been a good source of funding for school supplies.

Lisa mentioned that ELH has partnered with Marion County Behavioral Health to present a series of online parent support groups (in both English and Spanish), as a way for families of young children to discuss their stressors and share skills and tools with other families. The sessions will be facilitated by a county mental health therapist and moderated by ELH staff.

ELH is also pivoting how they approach their parent education programs. For example, they are providing their “ready for kindergarten” workshop virtually, knowing that kids will need extra support and attention to be ready for school in the fall. They are not trying to present their 8-12 week parent education course in a virtual format, because it is a large commitment for overwhelmed families right now, but they have been taking some key points out of that series to present individually.

Lisa pointed out that in addition to trying to supply distance learning, and to prepare kids to start kindergarten in the current environment, schools are also facing budget cuts and uncertainty about what format school will take in the fall. Anything that we can do as a community to support schools right now is very important, including all of the wraparound services. She said she is especially concerned about access to equipment and internet service, and that addressing equity issues is crucial to make sure all kids have the same access to resources.

Phil said that Marion County Health & Human Services has been working with all of the school districts to find out what challenges they are facing not only with students and their families, but also with school staff. The county has also provided tips for parents about how to facilitate distance learning and materials for kids about COVID-19 to alleviate fears and share info.

Sue shared that Boys & Girls Club is also providing packets of fun learning activities for various age groups by subject matter.

Tamra suggested that because so many member organizations are providing materials and resource lists, it might be useful for Community Services to put together a web page compiling all of this information in one place.

- ➡ Several members are concerned about equity issues during the pandemic, especially regarding access to technology.
- ➡ Several CFC organizations are engaged in meeting urgent basic needs in the community, including food assistance as well as educational and mental health support.
- ➡ Community Services will build a one-stop web page to promote the many programs that CFC members have available.
- ➡ Melinda will put together information about how CFC members can use the Marion County Community Resource Network.

Shaney brought up the issue that with schools not in session and healthcare and other facilities closed, there is a network of mandatory reporters who do not currently have “eyes on kids”. She worries that all agencies in the child welfare system will see an increase in workload as facilities reopen, and they will see this increase while facing funding cuts. Stacy said that DHS has seen a decrease in calls to their child abuse hotline, and added that when she has talked with educators, the kids that they are most worried about are not showing up for virtual education opportunities. Stacy also said that the calls that they have been getting are more serious in nature and she agreed with Shaney’s assessment that their work will increase over the coming months. Tamra added that Jayne has asked to step back from the CFC for the time being, simply because Center for Hope & Safety has seen such an increase in need for their services. Tamra suggested that the CFC could look into finding resources for funding, noting that organizations may already be doing this, but a combined effort might be more effective.

Shaney noted that DHS had reported a 70% decrease in reporting and a 72% decrease in CPS visits during the month of March, and asked Stacy if she had data for April; Stacy said she would share this info if it was available.

Judge Pellegrini agreed with the concern for abuse/neglect reports increasing and being more serious in the coming months. She asked if DHS had any plans in place to expand foster care services, noting that if cases are more serious, there is a higher likelihood that children may need to be removed. Stacy said that although their recruitment efforts have changed, they are still working on building capacity—but at the same time, they are expecting funding reductions, and are trying harder than ever to keep kids in homes.

Judge Pellegrini proposed contacting Children Public Private Partnership (CP3) to marshal volunteers who can act as safety service providers for children who must remain in their homes due to lack of placement resources. Shaney said she has already had conversations with CP3, and is continuing to meet with them. Judge Pellegrini noted that the courts are still partially closed and she is concerned that if new cases come into the system, it might be a long time before those cases could even be scheduled. If there is an increase in cases, it will require close coordination of everyone in every step of the child welfare system so that cases don't languish while waiting for a hearing.

- ➔ Child safety is a serious concern during the pandemic, because kids are not going to schools and other closed facilities where mandatory reporters would normally be alerted to problems that require intervention.
- ➔ Organizations and agencies at every stage of the child welfare system are concerned about impending decreases in funding.
- ➔ With courts partially closed, it is crucial to try creative solutions to prevent a backlog of cases.
- ➔ Stacy will share DHS statistics for April and May (below).

Josh noted that some of the parents that they have been working with have expressed feelings of anxiety and despair when seeing empty shelves in supermarkets, due to their own childhood trauma around food insecurity. He also announced that the Fostering Hope Initiative will be partnering with Marion-Polk Food Share to distribute food boxes provided by the USDA, and that this will continue each week.

- ➔ Many challenges during the pandemic can add additional stress for parents by triggering their own experiences of childhood trauma (food insecurity, for example).

Approval of Meeting Summary Notes

Pete McCallum moved to approve the meeting summary notes for February 20, 2020. Eric seconded the motion. Motion: Approved

2020 Marion County Volunteer Awards

Shaney shared that the Marion County Board of Commissioners named Eric Richards as the Advisory Board Volunteer of the Year, and she thanked him for his service to the commission and to the community.

Additional Discussion

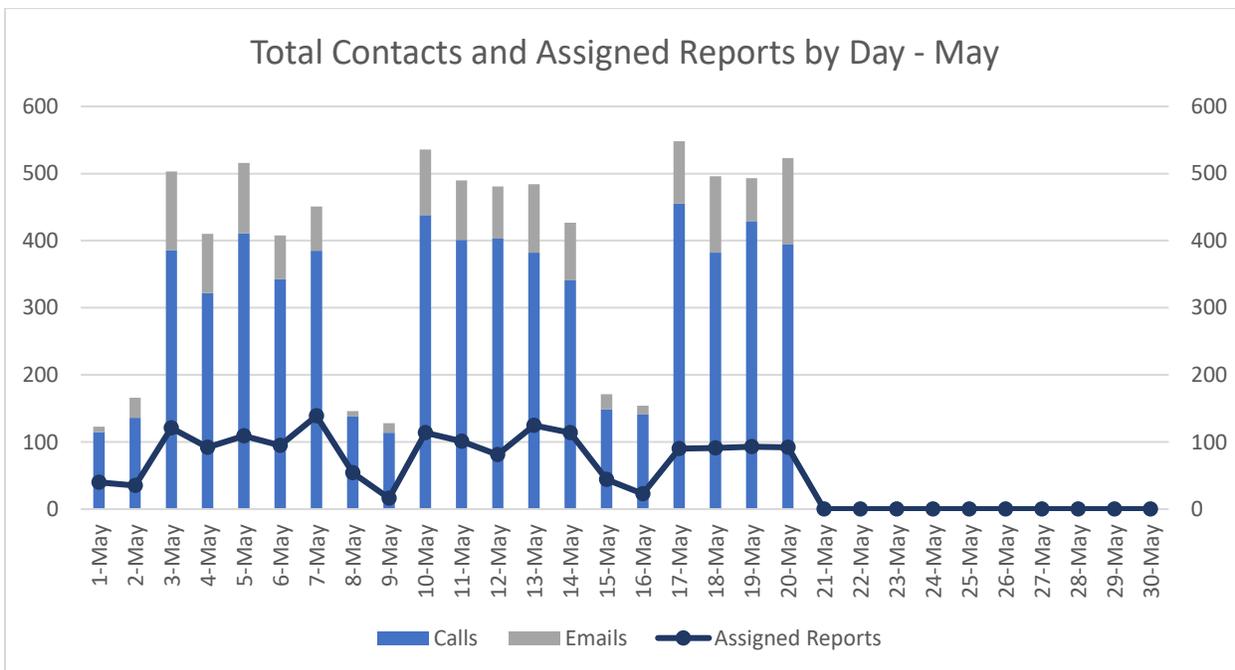
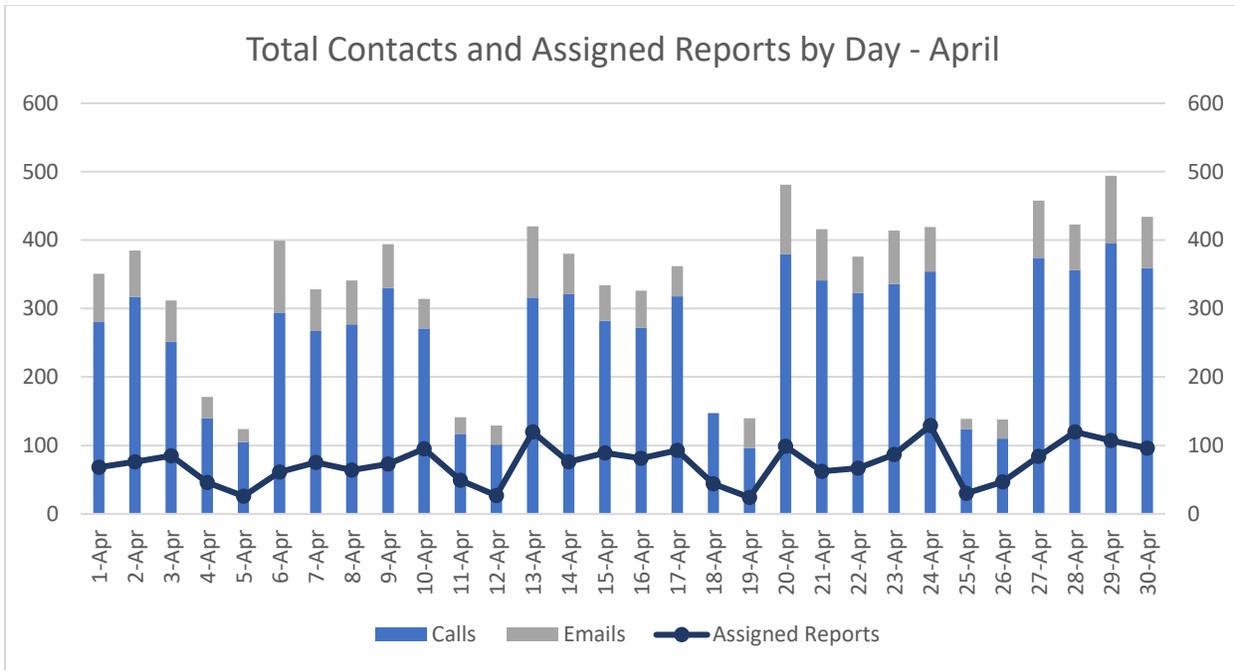
Sue said that the Boys and Girls Club has been continuing its work with the Epping family on the site in East Salem, albeit more slowly. She added that some of the recent conversations in the community have confirmed that residents are enthusiastic to participate in discussions about services that might be provided in the neighborhood, including social/emotional support, mental health support, career tech, workforce development, adult mentors, and providing safe spaces for kids to have extracurricular opportunities.

Judge Pellegrini said that the CFC was poised to meet with residents in East Salem to find out what they need and what they would like to see in their neighborhood, and she suggested that this could still happen over the coming summer. Sue agreed that with the Boys and Girls Club plans moving forward, the community is aware that changes are coming and want to be involved in that process. Judge Pellegrini proposed that maybe an event held outside could allow for actual in-person communication.

- ➔ The CFC will move forward with its plans to hold community meetings during the summer, even if they may take a different form.
- ➔ Melinda will create an updated action plan for organizing community meetings, and will communicate with members prior to the June CFC meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:51 pm

ORCAH CONTACT VOLUME AND ASSIGNMENT DATA APRIL-MAY 20, 2020



These graphs represent state-wide data.

Contacts=all calls and LEA Cross Reports (emails) that ORCAH receives of which approximately 35% do not result in any documentation in OR-Kids, 20% result in documentation in an OR-Kids Case note, and 45% result in an OR-Kids Screening report. Of the OR-Kids screening reports, ORCAH assigns for CPS assessment approximately 52%.