

Transcript of the Testimony of

Date: April 22, 2021

Case: CWARB Meeting

Bushman Court Reporting

Laura Carnahan

Phone: (501) 372-5115

Fax: (501) 378-0077

www.bushmanreporting.com

STATE OF ARKANSAS
CHILD WELFARE AGENCY REVIEW
BOARD MEETING

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
700 WEST MAIN STREET
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

April 22, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Andy Altom, Chair, Foster Care Unit
Charles Flynn, Emergency Shelters Unit
Beverly Massey Foti, Psychiatric Residential Care Unit
David Whatley, Residential Care Unit
Andrew Watson
Sandi Doherty (VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE)

ALSO PRESENT:

Joe West, DCFS Designee Attorney for the Board
Ebony Russ, OCC/ECE Program Manager
Rebecca Mitchell, OCC/ECE

Court Reporter:

LAURA L. CARNAHAN, Arkansas Supreme
Court Certified Reporter No. 569

BUSHMAN COURT REPORTING
620 West Third, Suite 302
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-372-5115

JOB NO. 96004

I N D E X

1

2 WELCOME - Ebony Russ, PRLU Program Manager - Meeting
Facilitator..... 3

3

4 CALL TO ORDER - Mr. Charles Flynn, Chairman..... 3

5

6 APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - February 25, 2021..... 3

7

8 ITEM 1. CHANGE OF BOARD CHAIR STATUS..... 4

9

10 ITEM 2. VOTE FOR NEW CHILD WELFARE AGENCY REVIEW BOARD
CHAIRMAN..... 4

11

12 ITEM 3. PERMISSIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN..... 8

13 a. DCFS - Mr. [REDACTED] T..... 8

14 b. DCFS - Ms. [REDACTED] F..... 10

15 c. Millcreek - Ms. E..... 14

16 d. Millcreek - Ms. R..... 19

17 e. Compact Family Services..... 32

18

19 ITEM 4. Exhibit "A" - Approval of Special
Considerations/Temporary Approvals "Bundle" "A"..... 35

20 Exhibit "A", Approval of Special
Considerations/Temporary Approvals "Bundle"... (MARKED) 35

21

22 ITEM 5-7. OMITTED

23

24 ITEM 8. ARKANSAS BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME..... 36

25

ITEM 9. YOUTH HOME..... 38

ITEM 10. MILLCREEK..... 39

ITEM 11. BETHANY CHRISTIAN SERVICES OF ARKANSAS..... 42

ITEM 12. REPORT OF TEMPORARY APPROVALS/ACTIONS (LOGS
PRESENTED) DECEMBER 2020 & JANUARY 2021..... 44

ITEM 13. OTHER BUSINESS..... 44

a. Licenced Facilities Update..... 44

b. Ebony Russ: Introduction of new staff.....

ADJOURNED 54

COURT REPORTER CERTIFICATE 55

Date of Next meeting: Thursday, June 24, 2021

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 (THEREUPON, the meeting began at 1:30 p.m. on
3 April 22, 2021.)

4 MS. EBONY RUSS: Thanks so much for
5 participating in the April 22nd, 2021, Child Welfare
6 Agency Review Board meeting. Welcome to everyone.
7 For those of you who are presenting, will you please
8 come up to the podium; please remove your masks, so
9 that the court reporter can hear you properly; and
10 put your masks back on afterwards. When you come to
11 the podium, I'll give you the microphone and hand
12 sanitizer, so you can wipe the microphone. And I'll
13 turn it over to Mr. Flynn.

14 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: Thank you, ma'am. Thank
15 you, Ebony. I'd like to call to order the April 22nd
16 meeting of the Child Welfare Agency Review Board
17 meeting. You've put -- probably received some
18 minutes not long ago. If you have any questions,
19 additions or motions, now is the time.

20 BOARD MEMBER ANDY ALTOM: Make a motion to
21 approve the minutes.

22 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Second.

23 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: Motion by Andy; second by
24 David Whatley. All in favor say aye.

25 (CHORUS OF AYES)

1 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: And no one is opposed.

2 All right. Thank you. All right.

3 ITEM 1. CHANGE OF BOARD CHAIR STATUS:

4 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: First order of business.

5 Last year when Ed Abner passed away, I was available
6 to become chairman of the board again, and I was
7 honored to have done that several years ago, and I
8 was honored to have done it another time. But, you
9 know, at that time what I -- I think you may remember
10 I said -- what I was -- would be glad to do it, but I
11 didn't want to take it on long term. And I've
12 enjoyed this past year, you know. In the history of
13 this board, that began, I guess, in 1997, there --
14 besides Ed and myself -- there's only been one other
15 Chairman, James Malcolm. I think James began with
16 this board and continued several years until I had
17 the opportunity to take over. But I would like to
18 today submit my resignation as the chairman of the
19 board

20 ITEM 2. VOTE FOR NEW CHILD WELFARE AGENCY REVIEW BOARD

21 CHAIRMAN:

22 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: And, then, the number two
23 item, here, would be to accept nominations to choose
24 a new -- a new chairman. So, at this time, I would
25 like to open that up for a nomination.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Mr. Chair, I would
2 say it seems like it would be very practical, to me,
3 to have the vice chair -- or, who we have, kinda,
4 ourselves, put in the place as vice chair, I guess,
5 instead of him -- and so I would be happy to nominate
6 Mr. Andy Altom.

7 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: All right. That's good.
8 Thank you for that nomination. Yeah, technically, I
9 don't think there is --

10 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Right.

11 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: I think our vice chairman
12 is kind of an informal arrangement we have, --

13 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Right.

14 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: -- but Andy has filled
15 that role. And, even prior to that, I had kind of
16 filled in with Ed in that position for taking care of
17 some business. So thank you for that nomination.
18 Are there other nominations?

19 UNKNOWN: I'm just doing a microphone --
20 checking if our viewing may hear you. Is that okay?

21 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: Okay. I -- I just --

22 UNKNOWN: (INAUDIBLE).

23 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: Yes. All right. Okay.
24 Do you have everything you need? All right. Any
25 other nominations?

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 (NO RESPONSE)

2 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: So is -- a motion to close
3 nominations?

4 UNKNOWN: (RAISES HAND).

5 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: All right. Motion to
6 close nominations. And I'll second that. And all in
7 favor say aye.

8 (CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: Nominations are closed.
10 So now let's vote on -- I don't know if I'm doing it
11 the right way; I'm doing it my way. So all in favor
12 of electing Andy as our new chairman, please say aye.

13 (CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: Opposed, by like sign.

15 (NO RESPONSE)

16 CHAIR CHARLES FLYNN: All right.

17 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Congratulations.

18 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Sandi is online.

19 Thank you. I meant to ask who -- who is online. Is
20 there anyone besides Sandi joining us online?

21 (NO RESPONSE)

22 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: You know, during my
23 recent years we've made some changes. I have been
24 available to take calls from Sandi, whenever she had
25 a special consideration, that needed to be considered

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 by the board, with a background check with a
2 provisional family. And, often times, when she
3 couldn't reach Ed, she would call me and I told Ebony
4 yesterday that, because of my schedule and
5 flexibility, I -- if -- if the board would like, I
6 would be glad to continue that. Andy, you're welcome
7 to do that. So -- and Sandi and I worked together
8 pretty good on that. So, if that would please you, I
9 will be glad to continue to do that.

10 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Sure.

11 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And --

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: So you are willing to act as
13 the a -- what is it? An assistant?

14 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I guess so.

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Here --

16 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And -- but Sandi
17 can call me first and I've got her phone number. So,
18 when I see that name pop up, I have a pretty good
19 idea she's not calling me and asking me if I want to
20 go get lunch, so -- all right. So, if that's okay,
21 we can continue that. But, otherwise, let's continue
22 the meeting and thank you -- thank you, Andy, for
23 taking this position.

24 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you, Charles, for your
25 leadership and I look forward to you taking on that

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 responsibility. I think you've got the -- you've got
2 the longevity, as far as knowing what this board has
3 done in the past and it only serves to strengthen us
4 having you to be the person to contact on some of
5 those issues. So I appreciate that. Next item on
6 the agenda is the permissions to work with children.
7 DCFS.

8 MS. EBONY RUSS: With --

9 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Kathleen McDaniel?

10 ITEM 3. PERMISSIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN:

11 a. DCFS - Mr. [REDACTED] T.:

12 MS. EBONY RUSS: Yes. With DCFS we have
13 Cathleen McDaniel and Brittany Collins.

14 MS. CATHLEEN MCDANIEL: I'm Cathleen McDaniel
15 with DCFS, adoption supervisor and the provisional
16 placement supervisor for Area 3. And we have Mr.
17 [REDACTED] T. here for permission to work children and then
18 Brittany Collins is his resource worker.

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. If you'd just give us
20 a few minutes. This is the first time this board
21 will have this information. So we want to read over
22 it a little bit and we may want to ask some
23 questions. Okay?

24 (BOARD MEMBERS READING PACKET)

25 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Mr. T., would you like to

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 address the board in your own words as far as what
2 you're trying to do here?

3 MR. [REDACTED] T.: Just trying to help a --

4 COURT REPORTER: Step up to the podium. Thank
5 you.

6 MR. [REDACTED] T.: Just trying to help a child.

7 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Talk a little bit about your
8 background and why you're here today.

9 MR. [REDACTED] T.: I done a lot of things when I was
10 younger, but I've grew up a lot since then and
11 learned from my actions.

12 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Any incidents or
13 arrests since 2013?

14 MR. [REDACTED] T.: No, sir.

15 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Can you expound a
16 little on what you're wanting to do, as far as to
17 help a child, a little of the details of it?

18 MR. [REDACTED] T.: Can you repeat that please?

19 MR. ANDREW WATSON: Can you -- can you expound
20 on what you're wanting to do, as far as helping this
21 child, and a little bit of the details there? This
22 is the first time that we've actually seen this, so
23 any info would be great.

24 MR. [REDACTED] T.: Well we're -- if it goes to it,
25 we're planning to adopt him, if -- if we're able to.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 (BOARD MEMBERS READING PACKET)

2 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Chairman, I'll make
3 a motion to approve this request.

4 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We have a motion. Is there a
5 second?

6 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: I'll second.

7 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Second. Any discussion?

8 (NO RESPONSE)

9 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All those in favor say aye?

10 (CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Opposed?

12 (NO RESPONSE)

13 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. [REDACTED] T.: Thank you.

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Appreciate your willingness
16 to do that. And I'm assuming, Sandi, you abstain?

17 BOARD MEMBER SANDI DOHERTY: Yes. Any of the
18 DCFS requests, I abstain from voting.

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay.

20 ITEM 3. PERMISSIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN:

21 b. DCFS - Ms. [REDACTED] F.:

22 MS. EBONY RUSS: Our -- for letter b, of the
23 agenda, permissions to work, we have Tarsha Smith
24 Cook representing DCFS.

25 COURT REPORTER: Step to the podium please.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 MS. TARSHA SMITH COOK: Okay.

2 COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

3 MS. TARSHA SMITH COOK: Good afternoon. I'm
4 Tarsha Cook with Mississippi County DCFS, Area 8.
5 And this is Ms. [REDACTED] F. This is the packet that you
6 have. She is the provisional that's standing before
7 you today.

8 (BOARD MEMBERS READING PACKET)

9 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Would you like to go ahead
10 and tell us a little bit about what it is you plan to
11 do with children, as far as your permission to work
12 with children, as well as your background, and why
13 we're here today?

14 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Yes. I'm trying to get my two
15 grandchildren that's been in foster care. I want,
16 more than life, those child -- those kids have been
17 my life. And I want to adopt them if -- if everybody
18 will let me. I got in trouble. I did some stupid
19 stuff and that stupid stuff actually saved my life.
20 I've been clean for over four -- for about -- nearly
21 four years. I don't live that way anymore,
22 thankfully. I mean, like I said, it's -- I'm
23 grateful. It saved my life. I go to Jonesboro and
24 go to recovery meetings, when I can. I live in
25 Osceola, so it's an hour drive. And that and, you

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 know, working, have support of my family, my friends,
2 and the church. And I'm honored to be here. I mean,
3 I want my grandchildren more than my life itself.

4 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Tell us about those
5 grandchildren, please.

6 MS. [REDACTED] F.: [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] -- or, he's [REDACTED].
7 [REDACTED] is [REDACTED]. They're a [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
8 apart.

9 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay.

10 MS. [REDACTED] F.: I have not gotten to speak with
11 Colby. He's having some problems. He's in a -- I
12 forget what they call it. A -- anyway, he's having
13 to have -- to have some help.

14 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay.

15 MS. [REDACTED] F.: He's really -- his mama really
16 messed him up --

17 MS. TARSHA SMITH COOK: He's in a --

18 MS. [REDACTED] F.: -- in the head. Treat --

19 MS. TARSHA SMITH COOK: -- treatment facility.

20 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Yeah, in some kind of treatment
21 facility, I think. And they said until I was
22 approved that it would probably be in his best
23 interest if I didn't talk to him, because it might
24 just mess him up -- might confuse him more. And I
25 don't want -- I did not want that, so I have not

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 pushed it.

2 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: That makes sense.

3 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Now, [REDACTED], I get see -- I talk
4 to her -- for almost the past year -- every Sunday or
5 Monday on video chat. And then I go to her ball
6 games. They let me come to her ball games twice a
7 week. She plays baseball. And I went and seen her
8 cheer. The M.'s have been very, very supportive.
9 They are wonderful foster parents. [REDACTED] already
10 picked out her bedroom suit that she wants. (LAUGHS)
11 Yes, she's -- she's been wanting to come live with --
12 John told her, awhile back, that she may get to come
13 live with me. And I said, you know, "Why would you
14 do that, when I don't know yet," you know. And every
15 day that I talk to her she says "Nanny, have you
16 taken those classes yet?"

17 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay.

18 MS. [REDACTED] F.: I say, "No, baby, I can't take
19 them until they approve me." So, anyway, --

20 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay.

21 MS. [REDACTED] F.: I want my grandchildren more than
22 my life itself. They deserve to be happy and well
23 taken care of.

24 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Thank you for being
25 willing to be here today on behalf of them.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you.

2 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Sir?

3 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Thank you for being
4 willing to be here today on their behalf.

5 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Well thank you for letting me
6 come and talk. I appreciate it.

7 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Chair, I make a
8 motion to approve the request.

9 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We have a motion to approve.
10 Hear a second?

11 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: I'll second.

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Andy makes the second. Any
13 discussion?

14 (NO RESPONSE)

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All in favor say aye.

16 (CHORUS OF AYES)

17 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

18 (NO RESPONSE)

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you for coming in.
20 Good luck.

21 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Thank you, so much.

22 CHAIRMAN ANDY ALTOM: We appreciate you.

23 MS. [REDACTED] F.: Thank you, so much.

24 ITEM 3. PERMISSIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN:

25 c. Millcreek - Ms. E.:

1 MS. EBONY RUSS: Okay. Next on the agenda we
2 have Millcreek. Ms. Christie Aaron as representative
3 and Ezell Breedlove from the licensing unit.

4 MR. EZELL BREEDLOVE: Okay. Again, my name is
5 Ezell Breedlove. I'm the licensing specialist for
6 Millcreek and today I'll introduce Ms. Christie
7 Aaron. She's here on behalf of two employees who are
8 requesting permission to work with children.

9 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Good afternoon. I have two
10 employees, as Mr. Breedlove has said. I have Ms.
11 Pamela E. and also --

12 MR. EZELL BREEDLOVE: They can't hear.

13 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: I can't -- I can't hear you.
14 You need to hold the microphone closer.

15 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Okay. I have two
16 employees, Ms. [REDACTED] E. and Ms. R.

17 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Are your employees here?

18 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Yes. Ladies?

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Come on up. Yeah. Stand
20 with her -- come --

21 MR. EZELL BREEDLOVE: There's two -- two
22 different --

23 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We've got two different ones.
24 We'll just do one at a time.

25 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: I have Ms. E. first. And

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 she has been employed with us for a little bit better
2 than a year. And we have come to appreciate her as
3 an employee. She actively engages with our children.
4 She started out as merely just a part-time employee
5 that wasn't sure if this was something she wanted to
6 do full-time. She has, since, come running to us
7 full-time and she's a valuable asset to our team.

8 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: So this is the first time we
9 are seeing this, so please give us a moment to read
10 over it, but if you want her -- if you want her to
11 talk about what's in here, as far as tell us your
12 background, you can go ahead and do that. That would
13 be good, enlighten us, as we go through this.

14 MS. [REDACTED] E.: Okay. Back in '94 or '95, I got
15 into some trouble over in Hot Springs. And I served
16 my time, did my community work. And I've -- love
17 working with children. And I feel like that I can
18 help children. And I have been helping children.
19 I've been working in my community, of my city, of
20 Fordyce, Arkansas. And I've did my work; I do work
21 in my church, and at the school, head start, or
22 wherever I'm needed. And I love my job at Millcreek
23 of Arkansas.

24 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: What do you do at Millcreek?
25 What's your job?

1 MS. [REDACTED] E.: Behavior. I sit with the kids,
2 take them to school, talk to them, when they have a
3 problem. Help them with whatever they come in for.
4 You know, they -- with they therapy.

5 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay.

6 MS. [REDACTED] E.: And just show love for the kids.
7 And some of them don't have love where they come
8 from.

9 (BOARD MEMBERS READING PACKET)

10 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I can't find what
11 she did.

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Say again?

13 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: This is somebody
14 named R. This is the second one.

15 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: I think we
16 have the wrong packet.

17 MR. EZELL BREEDLOVE: Is this your second
18 second person? (INAUDIBLE).

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We have the [REDACTED] R.
20 packet.

21 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Is that correct?

22 (PACKETS REGARDING MS. [REDACTED] E. PASSED OUT TO
23 BOARD MEMBERS)

24 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you.

25 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Yes, thank you,

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 Ebony. So you mentioned one experience in 1995. Is
2 that the only -- is that why you're here today; has
3 there been --

4 MS. [REDACTED] E.: Yes, sir.

5 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: -- anything since
6 then?

7 MS. [REDACTED] E.: Yes, sir.

8 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: So there's been
9 nothing since that time?

10 MS. [REDACTED] E.: Nothing since then. I walked a
11 straight path and I've learned from my mistakes that
12 I had made.

13 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I make a motion to
14 approve this request.

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We have a motion to approve
16 the request. Is there a second?

17 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Second.

18 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: There's a second. Any
19 discussion?

20 (NO RESPONSE)

21 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All those in favor say aye.

22 (CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

24 MS. SANDI DOHERTY: Aye.

25 COURT REPORTER: Was that an opposed?

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 MR. DAVID WHATLEY: No.

2 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: No. She's for it.

3 MS. EBONY RUSS: Sandi --

4 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: She's -- this is
5 the one for Sandi to vote on. This one she gets to
6 vote, because it's not DCFS.

7 COURT REPORTER: Okay.

8 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Now we'll go onto the
9 next one.

10 ITEM 3. PERMISSIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN:

11 d. Millcreek - Ms. R.:

12 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Our next employee is Ms. R.
13 Ms. R. has been with us since August of 2020. She
14 too works with our children. She's on the girl's
15 unit. And one of the things that we really
16 appreciate about Ms. R. is that she's all about
17 teaching our girls self love. And I'll just let her
18 tell you a little bit about what she does.

19 MS. [REDACTED] R.: Working with the girls on

20 [REDACTED] --

21 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: You have to speak up. We can
22 barely hear you.

23 MS. [REDACTED] R.: Working with the girls on my
24 hall, they tend to come from places where they don't
25 understand love or -- you know they have peers to

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 tell them that they are worthless, they're ugly, that
2 they can't, you know, be all that they can be. They
3 look for somebody to push them. My momma was a youth
4 director at our church. So we did little projects
5 where, you know, you get poster boards, you tell what
6 you love about yourself, but you have to also have a
7 goal that you want to reach. So, a couple of weeks
8 ago, I told the girls let's, you know, do a self love
9 project. Which we did. I went and got the things
10 that we needed. And I really found out a lot about
11 my girls. They actually showed me a lot that I
12 didn't know about myself. They made me a poster and
13 told me things that I love -- that they loved about
14 me. And they ended up having me, you know, put my
15 goal down that I chose. And my goal was to help them
16 all get a discharge date the right way -- meaning
17 we're not going to look at the negative, we're gonna
18 go positive. We're not gonna look back on what our
19 past has done to us, we're gonna look towards the
20 future and make it brighter. I've told -- I've had
21 two girls, since I've been at Millcreek, discharge.
22 And I've told them -- I said, "Look, when you get
23 your discharge date I don't want to see you back
24 here, because here is not where you can make positive
25 things, where you can help people out in the world."

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 Because they all said they wanted to be teachers;
2 they wanted to have a job, like somewhere at
3 Millcreek, so they can help kids like they were. And
4 so I looked at that, and I think about it, and I say
5 hey, this may be my purpose. I love working at
6 Millcreek. Sometimes it does get frustrating. But,
7 you know, taking ten seconds to think about
8 everything, you know, you'll get it all together.

9 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: So is there --
10 reading through these -- is there one charge?

11 MS. [REDACTED] R.: Uh-huh.

12 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And that was 2016?

13 MS. [REDACTED] R.: Yes, sir.

14 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: What was the
15 charge?

16 MS. [REDACTED] R.: It was shoplifting at Wal-
17 Mart.

18 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Was that a
19 misdemeanor, or --

20 MS. [REDACTED] R.: Yes, sir.

21 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: What is it, five
22 years on a misdemeanor?

23 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: They said it
24 would roll off --

25 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Yeah, okay. I was

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 -- I missed that.

2 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: As far as
3 (INAUDIBLE) --

4 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay. She's real
5 close. Yeah.

6 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: I'll make a motion to approve
7 this request. Is there a second?

8 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Second.

9 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Second from Charles. Any
10 more discussion?

11 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Sounds like you're
12 doing a great job.

13 MS. [REDACTED] R.: I'm trying.

14 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All those in favor say aye.
15 (CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Opposed?

17 (NO RESPONSE)

18 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All right. Congratulations.
19 Thank you.

20 MS. [REDACTED] R.: Thank you.

21 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: One of the
22 questions that I've got with situations like this is
23 how do they get employed, and they're working with
24 kids, and then they come to us asking for permission
25 to work with kids? That does not -- that -- that's

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 not --

2 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Well was she
3 working with kids or was she working in a job where
4 she was not working with kids?

5 MS. EBONY RUSS: I believe there was a
6 (INAUDIBLE) in place, from my understanding.

7 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Ms. Aaron.

8 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Well I know -- I know, in the
9 past, we've had folks that didn't come up on the
10 first check, but on the -- when they reapply they
11 check and take a look again.

12 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Yeah the check --
13 as far as they could. Sometimes it comes later.

14 MS. EBONY RUSS: I think there was a question
15 about her --

16 COURT REPORTER: Step to the podium.

17 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Yes, ma'am. I just
18 had a -- I just had a question about --

19 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Okay.

20 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: -- the two that we
21 just approved. Sounds like they're doing great --

22 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Uh-huh.

23 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: -- and certainly we
24 want to -- you know, we want them to continue. We
25 want them to continue to impact kids.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Uh-huh.

2 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Very proud of, you
3 know, the success that they're having. But my
4 question is, is how did they get employed, working
5 with children, in the first place?

6 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Okay.

7 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Before we actually
8 had this discussion. Because, to me, we need to be
9 having these kind of discussions on the front-end of
10 the hire.

11 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Uh-huh.

12 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: You know, that,
13 hey, they have a track record of -- that they haven't
14 committed any more crimes, or that they haven't
15 messed up, you know, and that they're wanting to work
16 with children, versus, you know, coming in -- and I
17 don't think -- I don't even know how long that
18 they've been working with children. But, to me, that
19 -- that just seems really backwards and it -- and it
20 does concern me that we're bringing in -- you know,
21 that -- that --

22 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Uh-huh.

23 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: -- people are
24 allowed to work with children when they have, you
25 know, backgrounds like that. Because all people may

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 not be doing as well as the ones that you've brought
2 before us today.

3 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Okay. Ms. E. had the
4 charge on her record more than 20 years ago. And, in
5 reading our minimum licensing requirements, it did
6 stipulate the -- that -- the felonies. We did reach
7 out to our licensing agent, who asked us to put a
8 plan in place, so that she'd be able to work, because
9 it was more than 20 years old. And that's what we've
10 done. There has been some changes in the way
11 background checks are being done. And, with that
12 being the case, we did then receive a letter that
13 said that she was ineligible to work. And, of
14 course, I made reference again to the plan that we
15 had in place and had been -- had had in place for
16 awhile. She works third shift and will work over, if
17 she needs to do a double shift, on first. And
18 sometimes we'll have to call her in, just so that we
19 can maintain those staffing ratios. And that's what
20 we've been doing. And, like I said, we would not
21 have known until the whole background check process
22 changed and we were generated a letter. And that's
23 the same thing with Ms. R. We did her background
24 checks the old way, where you just do the paper
25 forms, you mail everything in. Now, so much has gone

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 electronic, and it's spitting things out. So we're
2 picking up -- I picked up a couple of other people
3 this week that I've had to send home, pending
4 administrative leave, just because now we're
5 receiving communications that we have not received in
6 the past.

7 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Is that not
8 assuming -- so you're saying you have some now that
9 are -- that you have background --

10 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Right. We --

11 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Sandi -- Sandi --

12 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Let's go to Sandi's
13 question.

14 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Sandi's got a question.

15 BOARD MEMBER SANDI DOHERTY: Well we have --
16 just because it's a felony, doesn't mean it has to
17 have the board approval. We had the Attorney
18 General's attorney -- what was her name -- that was
19 on here. And she clarified that it's -- it's not
20 whether it's a misdemeanor or a felony. And, if, for
21 the past five years prior to the -- this application,
22 they've had no offenses, then that one wouldn't have
23 had to come before the board.

24 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: We received communication
25 that asked that she appear before the board and I

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 complied with what the recommendations were.

2 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Right.

3 BOARD MEMBER SANDI DOHERTY: I mean, I
4 understand. I just -- I just know what -- how it was
5 clarified to the board on those.

6 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Well I know -- I
7 know we've -- we've actually, at Soaring Wings, we've
8 -- we've turned people away when we found out that,
9 you know, they had something, literally, 20 years
10 ago. I mean that's just how we've -- that's how
11 we've done it. We -- we've -- we haven't heard
12 anything about if they haven't offended --

13 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: So now it's only five years?

14 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: -- you know, within
15 the last five years. Oh. I'm sorry. We haven't
16 heard anything -- (INAUDIBLE) -- if they haven't did
17 it within the last five years, you know, that we can
18 run them. We've actually had people that we've found
19 out that had a prior, and, literally, like 20 years
20 prior, that we didn't -- we didn't hire. We didn't
21 -- we didn't allow them to work with our children,
22 because it was our understanding that if they had
23 that on their record, unless it was expunged or
24 something like that, that we couldn't bring them in.
25 So --

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And, actually, even
2 if it's expunged, they still come before this board.

3 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Right.

4 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: There you go.

5 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: But -- but the --
6 but the way -- the way we've done it is that we had
7 the option to come, like we've done, and receive
8 permission from the board that this person -- that
9 the board does not feel like this person is a danger
10 to children --

11 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Right.

12 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: -- because of how
13 long it's been since their charge; how often that
14 happened; and was it a charge that was a danger to
15 children?

16 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Right.

17 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And so we would
18 consider those things, and they always request. I
19 think today the difference is -- is that you should
20 have seen us before she started working with children
21 -- before she actually went on the job, even though
22 it's a misdemeanor, because it's happened in the last
23 five years. So, Sandi, it is -- this misdemeanor has
24 been less than five years and so that's why this one
25 would be heard.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 BOARD MEMBER SANDI DOHERTY: Oh, okay. I didn't
2 see -- I didn't see that --

3 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: You don't have the
4 --

5 BOARD MEMBER SANDI DOHERTY: -- it was within
6 past five years, because I did not see it in the
7 pocket.

8 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: You don't have
9 that. This misdemeanor will not be five years until
10 --

11 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: September.

12 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: -- in the future.
13 So -- so this one -- this one we needed here before
14 she worked with children first, say.

15 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: Yes.

16 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And it's the same
17 with -- you know, with a felony, it doesn't matter.
18 There is no time restraint. We've had -- we have
19 seen felonies from the 50's that's not been writeable
20 (sic).

21 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Right. Yeah. Makes sense,
22 yeah.

23 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Did y'all have --
24 but y'all had to approve the --

25 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: They did have to

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 come before this board to get that approved --

2 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Gotcha.

3 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: -- before that
4 person could work with children the first day.

5 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: So if I'm
6 understanding correctly, that you'll have a couple
7 more that will need to come maybe the next meeting
8 that we have?

9 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Quite possibly. One, we
10 have placed on administrative leave, and one, we have
11 rescinded our offer of employment to.

12 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Okay.

13 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: You might want to
14 talk to your licensing specialist about those people
15 before you get -- have a major issue.

16 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: And -- and that's typically
17 what we do, is we -- we reach out to our licensing --

18 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Sure.

19 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: -- because, you know, we
20 can read the information, in the minimum licensing
21 requirement, but we still sometimes have questions,
22 which was the case such as it is now. We have the
23 questions and, again, we didn't get a communication
24 on either one of them until here recently. And, of
25 course, we needed to take some action, because they

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 were already employed with us. And, by then, we knew
2 how valuable they were and we didn't want to lose
3 them.

4 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: So if I'm
5 understanding correctly, the -- the new system has
6 helped y'all to deal with that?

7 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Uh-huh. Right.

8 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: And on it quickly
9 and it's just the hires that you made previously,
10 with the computer system, that's what -- that's
11 what's gotten y'all --

12 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Yes.

13 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: -- here today.
14 Okay.

15 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Absolutely.

16 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: But, in the future,
17 if you have someone, they can work for you, I
18 believe, in a position where they are not in contact
19 with children, until you come (INAUDIBLE). You have
20 a good hire that's worth hiring, maybe you can find
21 something else for them to do until you come here and
22 then they can work with children.

23 MS. CHRISTIE AARON: Right. That's what we're
24 doing with the other gentleman. We're placing him in
25 maintenance, so that he doesn't have the direct or

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 unsupervised contact with the children.

2 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Is that it? All
3 right. The next on the agenda is Compact Family
4 Services.

5 ITEM 3. PERMISSIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN:

6 e. Compact Family Services:

7 MS. CHARLOTTE GALUSHA: Good afternoon. I'm
8 Charlotte Galusha with Placement and Residential
9 Licensing. I'm the licensing specialist assigned to
10 Compact Family Services. And today we have Lance
11 Nelson as a representative from Compact, as well as
12 Mr. F., who is requesting a permission to work with
13 children. And they can answer any questions you may
14 have.

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Great. Lance, if you want to
16 go ahead and step up to the microphone and tell us a
17 little bit about this gentleman, and --

18 MR. LANCE NELSON: Sure.

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: -- what -- what it is you
20 hope to do today?

21 MR. LANCE NELSON: Mr. F. is with us today
22 requesting permission to work with children, so that
23 he and his wife can open their home for foster care.
24 You'll see -- as a private agency home. You'll see
25 in the packet there's an incident that stemmed from

1 when he was a teenager, some 38 years ago, sealed in
2 the record. And I'm sure he'll be happy to answer
3 any questions you have there.

4 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay.

5 (BOARD MEMBERS READING PACKET)

6 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Not had any issues since this
7 one incident?

8 MR. F.: In that -- in that amount of time maybe
9 a speeding ticket, but nothing in the last, you know
10 -- nothing of -- of that nature. No, sir.

11 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Right. So you want to be a
12 foster parent?

13 MR. F.: Yes, sir. My wife and I, we've been
14 empty nesters here for a number of years. We
15 relocated to Hot Springs about three and a half years
16 ago for my work and, you know, it -- we've been
17 talking about it for -- for awhile, but, with the
18 nature of my work, I moved, you know. I used to
19 travel a lot and we moved some. So -- so, now that
20 we're -- I run a factory in Hot Springs and, now that
21 we're tied to the community, we -- we decided that it
22 would be a good time to -- to open our home, and see
23 if we couldn't help -- help some children out.

24 MR. LANCE NELSON: Great.

25 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Well thank you for

1 being willing to come down here today, and bring
2 something up in your past, to show your dedication to
3 being willing to set up --

4 MR. F.: It was a -- it was a heck of a
5 surprise. I can tell you that. Because when I got
6 that letter it was like (LAUGHS) --

7 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: And we read on
8 there, with your packet, so we feel the most
9 compassion for a person that has to come forward.

10 MR. F.: Sure.

11 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: So we appreciate
12 that.

13 MR. F.: Well I appreciate that, because, you
14 know, I gotta -- I gotta be honest, when I was asked
15 to do the -- to do the statement I had to sit for a
16 couple of days, because I just hadn't thought about
17 it in 20 something years. You know --

18 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Right.

19 MR. F.: -- it just -- but, you know, if you
20 have any questions, happy to answer. You know, just
21 looking forward to -- to you know moving on in this.

22 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Mr. Chairman, I'm
23 going to make a motion to approve this request.

24 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: I have a motion to approve
25 request?

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: I'll second.

2 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Second.

3 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Oh.

4 MR. F.: Thank you, very much.

5 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: There was a second from
6 Andrew. All those in favor say aye.

7 (CHORUS OF AYES)

8 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

9 (NO RESPONSE)

10 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you, sir.

11 MR. F.: Hey, I appreciate your time.

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Thank you.

13 MR. F.: Thank you, very much.

14 COURT REPORTER: Did she abstain on that one?

15 CHAIRMAN ANDY ALTOM: She said -- no, she
16 couldn't vote on that one. Yes.

17 ITEM 4. Exhibit "A" - Approval of Special

18 Considerations/Temporary Approvals "Bundle" "A":

19 MS. EBONY RUSS: Number four on the agenda is
20 Exhibit A.

21 (THEREUPON, Exhibit "A", Approval of Special
22 Considerations/Temporary Approvals "Bundle", was
23 marked for identification and attached hereto.)

24 MS. EBONY RUSS: I do need to bring note to
25 letter Y on the Exhibit. I was informed standards --

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 I was informed on letter Y, standards 211.5 and 211.6
2 are no longer needed. So 209.2 is the only one
3 needed for letter Y, DCFS.

4 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Are you needing a motion to
5 approve this?

6 MS. EBONY RUSS: Yes, sir.

7 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: So moved.

8 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any second?

9 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Second.

10 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any more discussion?

11 (NO RESPONSE)

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All in favor say aye?

13 (CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

15 (NO RESPONSE)

16 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Next up is Arkansas
17 Baptist Children's Home request for adoption license.

18 ITEM 8. ARKANSAS BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME:

19 MS. SHARRA LITZSEY: Good afternoon. This is
20 Sharra Litzsey with the Placement and Residential
21 Licensing Unit.

22 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Go ahead.

23 MS. SHARRA LITZSEY: Arkansas Baptist -- go
24 ahead?

25 CHAIRMAN ANDY ALTOM: Yes.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 MS. SHARRA LITZSEY: Arkansas Baptist Children's
2 Home and Family Ministries is requesting to add an
3 adoption services to their current license. ABCH has
4 a model time history of compliance with licensing.
5 ABCH currently holds a placement and a residential
6 license, in good standings. ABCH previously held an
7 adoptions license -- an adoption license and it
8 closed, in good standings. ABCH understands the
9 needs of the children in Arkansas and has served as a
10 vital part of the community. PRLU supports this
11 request.

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Derek, would you mind
13 taking a -- talk to us a little bit about how you
14 guys are getting back into this business and the
15 history on that?

16 MR. DEREK BROWN: My name is Derek Brown,
17 Executive Director of Arkansas Baptist Children's
18 Homes and Family Ministries. Thank you, Andy, for
19 the question. You know, we try to serve vulnerable
20 children and families in every way we possibly can.
21 We began to recognize a need to -- to help expectant
22 mothers to find the appropriate placement for her
23 children, and to provide a -- an ethical child-
24 centered adoption service in the State of Arkansas.
25 And so we began conversation on how could we utilize

1 our resources to be able to meet that need.

2 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. I'll make a motion
3 that we approve this request, proudly.

4 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: I'll second.

5 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Is there any discussion?

6 (NO RESPONSE)

7 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All those in favor say aye.

8 (CHORUS OF AYES)

9 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I abstain.

10 MR. DEREK BROWN: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN ANDY ALTOM: Charles abstains. Motion
12 passes. Next up is Youth Home. Sharra?

13 ITEM 9. YOUTH HOME:

14 MS. SHARRA LITZSEY: This is Sharra Litzsey,
15 with the Placement and Residential Licensing Unit.
16 For the increase on capacity, for Youth Home, we have
17 Susan Reed, the Director of Community Services with
18 Youth Home, available to answer any questions. Youth
19 Home is requesting a change in their residential
20 childcare beds in the Hickory House. The request is
21 for two additional beds for this program, which is a
22 qualified residential treatment program. The Hickory
23 House already has bedrooms to accommodate these two
24 patients. Additional staff will be hired to cover
25 the necessary ratios in safety regulations. This

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 request will increase the capacity from six to eight,
2 in the Hickory Home, and change the overall
3 residential capacity to 24.

4 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Does the board have
5 any questions?

6 (NO RESPONSE)

7 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Is there a motion to approve
8 this?

9 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: I'll make a motion
10 to approve the request.

11 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I'll second.

12 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All right. Any more
13 discussion or any discussion?

14 (NO RESPONSE)

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All those in favor say aye.

16 (CHORUS OF AYES)

17 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

18 (NO RESPONSE)

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: None opposed. Carries.

20 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: I will
21 abstain. Please note that.

22 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Beverly abstains. Next up is
23 Millcreek request for -- to add the Sunshine House to
24 license. Ezell Breedlove?

25 ITEM 10. MILLCREEK:

1 MS. SHARRA LITZSEY: Well Sharra Litzsey again.
2 I will be presenting. And Brady Serafin is
3 available, with Millcreek, to answer any questions.
4 Millcreek of Arkansas is a licensed psychiatric and
5 residential facility located in Fordyce. The agency
6 is currently licensed to provide care, for up to 61
7 children, in their residential program. The facility
8 has recently obtained a lease for the Sunshine House,
9 located at 1829 Industrial Drive, in Fordyce, across
10 the street from Millcreek's administration and
11 psychiatric and residential program. Millcreek is
12 requesting to utilize the four bedroom home for eight
13 regular residential clients. The home meets minimum
14 licensing standards. PRLU supports this request.

15 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Will this be the only
16 residential license that they have as far as
17 residential program, for Millcreek?

18 (NO RESPONSE)

19 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Did you say someone
20 was on hand for Millcreek, to answer questions?

21 MS. SHARRA LITZSEY: Yes. Brady Serafin is
22 available to answer questions.

23 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Is Brady here?

24 MR. BRADY SERAFIN: Yes. Good afternoon. Brady
25 Serafin here. I'm the CEO of Millcreek. Thank you

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 all for considering our -- our proposal, here, this
2 afternoon and I'm happy to answer any questions that
3 you might have.

4 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Yeah. I have a question. I
5 know that you have PRTF's and then you also have the
6 ICF/MR program. Will this be the first residential
7 -- just purely residential beds that you guys will
8 have?

9 MR. BRADY SERAFIN: No. So we have -- we have
10 ITC beds, which -- currently on our license. So we
11 have the PRTF -- or, the ICF actually fall into the
12 RTC category as well. So those -- those are kind of
13 classified in that particular realm. We're going to
14 take the lease, last year, in 2020, on the Sunshine
15 House, really as a response to the COVID crisis,
16 coming as an emergency provisional, allows us to use
17 that, should we have a particular COVID outbreak or a
18 need to quarantine youth. So we maintain that
19 license at this present time. And our goal is to put
20 that use -- to put that house in use to better serve
21 the youth of Arkansas, really. There's -- there's
22 some things going on relative to our fees and we're
23 in the process of responding to an RFP to better
24 serve some of the kids in Arkansas that are in need
25 of residential treatment, but not in need of

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 psychiatric residential treatment facility beds.

2 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. All right.

3 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I'll make a motion
4 to approve this request (INAUDIBLE).

5 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We have a motion from Charles
6 to approve the request. Is there a second?

7 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Second.

8 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Second from David. All those
9 in favor say aye.

10 (CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

12 (NO RESPONSE)

13 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Congratulations.

14 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Hey, please --
15 please tell Gail Wynne (sic) we said hello. I'm sure
16 she's happy to see children at the Sunshine House
17 again.

18 MR. BRADY SERAFIN: Certainly will do. Thanks
19 so much for the consideration and the approval.

20 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: You bet. Bethany Christian
21 Services of Arkansas is next on the agenda.

22 ITEM 11. BETHANY CHRISTIAN SERVICES OF ARKANSAS:

23 MS. FATIMA STEPPS: Good afternoon. Fatima
24 Stepps, Program Coordinator with the Placement and
25 Residential Licensing Unit. You should have, before

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 you, a request for Bethany Christian Services of
2 Arkansas. Bethany Christian Services of Arkansas is
3 requesting to change the address of their current
4 office location, in Little Rock, to 1100 North
5 University, Suite 136. That will also be in Little
6 Rock. The Agency is having to change some of their
7 programming services and will be moving from that
8 location. I do believe I have LaTanya Bennett on
9 call, in case you have any questions. However, due
10 to the type of request it is a representative is not
11 needed. The Placement and Residential Licensing Unit
12 does support the agency's request.

13 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Thank you, Fatima.

14 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I move to approve
15 this request for address change.

16 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We have a motion from Charles
17 to approve. Is there a second?

18 BOARD MEMBER BEVERLY MASSEY FOTI: Second.

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Beverly is the second. All
20 in favor say aye.

21 (CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Any opposed?

23 (NO RESPONSE)

24 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: All right. And then we have
25 the report of temporary approvals. Ebony, do you

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 have any update on that?

2 ITEM 12. REPORT OF TEMPORARY APPROVALS/ACTIONS (LOGS
3 PRESENTED) DECEMBER 2020 & JANUARY 2021:

4 MS. EBONY RUSS: No, sir. No, sir. No, sir.

5 CHAIRMAN ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Other business. We
6 have licensed facilities update.

7 ITEM 13. OTHER BUSINESS:

8 a. Licenced Facilities Update:

9 MS. EBONY RUSS: Yes. As part of our previous
10 discussions with the board, it was decided that the
11 PRLU will provide the board with licensing updates on
12 particular facilities or any concerns that we have
13 come into contact with. So I'll be very general with
14 these updates, but I did want to make you aware of
15 the information that we have.

16 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay. Can we --
17 when you say "general", you mean you'll not disclose
18 the name of the agency?

19 MS. EBONY RUSS: I am not. So I was just being
20 current --

21 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Thank you. I -- I
22 would rather not hear the agency's name here. If we
23 need to know that, can we -- we can just ask you for
24 that. Would that be good?

25 MS. EBONY RUSS: Very good. Okay. So we do

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 have a license placement agency that had a foster
2 parents to receive criminal charges. The current
3 foster placement home has been closed. PRLU has
4 identified a current trend of increased self-harm
5 attempts at a licensed agency. This agency is on
6 increased monitoring with PRLU and we will be -- we
7 are scheduling to meet with the agency to further
8 discuss and see what's going on. Also, at the last
9 meeting, it was identified that we do discuss Piney
10 Ridge Treatment Center, because of the letter of
11 reprimand that was issued on the February 25th
12 meeting. And so, since our last Child Welfare Agency
13 Review Board meeting, on February 25th, there have
14 been five unannounced visits to the facility. Two of
15 those visits resulted in the agency being cited for
16 being out of ratio. Lack of ratio was one of the
17 concerns I did find in the letter of reprimand issued
18 by the Board. And I'm not sure if anyone from Piney
19 Ridge is available. Ralissa --

20 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Yeah. This is Justin
21 Hoover. I'm the Interim CEO over here at Piney Ridge
22 and I'm willing to answer any questions or any
23 concerns. Or I can just speak in general to -- to
24 what's been brought up.

25 MS. EBONY RUSS: Mr. Hoover, I'm sorry. Could

1 you repeat your name for the court reporter.

2 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Justin Hoover, Interim CEO
3 at Piney Ridge Treatment Center.

4 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Could you speak to the -- the
5 issue about being cited again for being out of ratio?

6 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Yeah. Yeah. We have had
7 staffing challenges here at the facility. We've had
8 some challenges in hiring. But, in regard to those
9 -- those specific issues, at least the last one, we
10 did have enough staff in the building. We just did
11 not have the staff in -- or, appropriately assigned
12 to where they would have been. So let's talk about
13 one issue directly. We had an admission going on at
14 that time, where we had a staff who came up to us to
15 assist with that after hours. It was an after hours
16 admission, so we had staff come up to help with that.
17 And we have went ahead and changed how we will
18 proceed with after hour admissions.

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Could you tell us how your --
20 how you -- what was changed?

21 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Sure. So, generally, we
22 don't do after hours admissions. This was an
23 admission that we got a call on a Friday night about
24 6:30. Asked to go and take this child, because they
25 were having a challenge placing this child from --

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 from DHS. So we -- so we went ahead and said that we
2 would place this child. But, moving forward, when
3 that does happen, we will -- we will go ahead and
4 conduct the admission on the unit, if we cannot have
5 extra staff come in to facilitate that admission.

6 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: So just out of clarification,
7 on the unit versus, like, an office that's off the
8 unit --

9 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Correct.

10 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: -- is still under the same
11 roof?

12 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Correct. An admissions
13 office in the administrative wing.

14 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Do you have a paging system?

15 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: We use radios.

16 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. Does the board have
17 any other questions?

18 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I don't.

19 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay.

20 MS. EBONY RUSS: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Hoover.
21 There appears to be no additional questions for Piney
22 Ridge at this time.

23 MR. JUSTIN HOOVER: Thank you.

24 MS. EBONY RUSS: Okay. And I just wanted to
25 briefly just make you aware of some bills that were

1 signed through legislation. Act 673. It is
2 concerning corporal punishment. So you may want to
3 look that act up. And also Act 772. This is
4 concerning regulation of psychiatric residential
5 treatment facilities and it will also give the board
6 authority to close a license that has not been
7 operating for a consecutive 12 month period. So Act
8 673 and Act 772. And, I believe, Mr. West, there
9 legislation -- legislation is still going on, or --
10 COURT REPORTER: It's stuck on there.
11 MR. JOE WEST: Oh, it's stuck up --
12 COURT REPORTER: That's -- yeah. That's mine.
13 MR. JOE WEST: Is it -- does that -- can you
14 hear me? Thank you. So, yes, the legislature is
15 still in session. As a matter of fact, I believe the
16 House and Senate are meeting, as we speak, on the
17 floor. I believe the target date for them to adjourn
18 is next Tuesday. They can go as long as Friday. But
19 both Houses have indicated they want to adjourn by
20 Tuesday. So, between now and then, there could be
21 more bills passed. I don't know if any will relate
22 to y'all. By the next board meeting, my office will
23 review all bills that relate to boards and agencies
24 in general. We generally issue a report. I will
25 have -- I will provide that to y'all at the

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 appropriate time, as well as, I'll get with Ebony and
2 we can discuss any bills that deal specifically with
3 your board and your industry.

4 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I've got a
5 question.

6 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Yeah.

7 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Okay. So two
8 bills. The one I'm familiar with is the one I
9 contacted you and Ashelyn about, and that was on the
10 corporal punishment, and that was long overdue. And
11 the other one is to keep -- the board now has -- does
12 not have to automatically approve requests to keep a
13 license inactive. Is that -- is that what I'm
14 reading or is it about -- I wasn't clear on the
15 second one.

16 MS. EBONY RUSS: That is my understanding of it.
17 So I think before, we have an issue where licenses
18 were remaining open and there was a --

19 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: So the only change
20 --

21 MS. EBONY RUSS: -- no activity --

22 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And, really, the
23 way the law was written, and I believe, is that the
24 board did not have the authority to deny that.

25 MR. JOE WEST: Correct.

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: The only difference
2 is we now have the authority to deny it, but we don't
3 have to deny it.

4 MR. JOE WEST: Well you -- you will once that
5 Act goes into effect.

6 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: We'll what -- we'll
7 have to deny it?

8 MR. JOE WEST: Well, no, no.

9 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Oh, okay.

10 MR. JOE WEST: I mean you will have -- you will
11 have discretion for those.

12 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: We'll have
13 discretion.

14 MR. JOE WEST: Yes.

15 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Yeah.

16 MR. JOE WEST: But, when the act goes into
17 effect. It's an issue --

18 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: When it's in --
19 sure.

20 MR. JOE WEST: Yes. It doesn't --

21 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I understand.
22 That's fine.

23 MR. JOE WEST: It doesn't have an emergency
24 clause, so we have to wait til -- until some time in
25 July or August and -- yeah, at the --

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Right. And I
2 understand that.

3 MR. JOE WEST: Yes.

4 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: But I was
5 clarifying how it will be then.

6 MR. JOE WEST: Yes.

7 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: Because we have
8 several of us that have inactive licenses. And we
9 appear once a year. And we have some that have had
10 them for a very long time. And so, you know, one of
11 the things that I'm seeing, dealing with option, and
12 dealing with a license that Bethany has, is that I've
13 learned a little bit about -- reading recently about
14 that -- is that those -- for an adoption agency to
15 close their license, that someone has to take those
16 records. And so, if -- we would have to consider
17 that if an adoption agency license was not active.
18 For us, we have our residential license that's
19 inactive. So we -- we would continue to come and
20 then renew that each year. You know, the only -- my
21 only request is, though, that I think, as a board,
22 I'd like to have found out about it from you instead
23 of just having to come across it. Especially bills
24 that have to do with the Child Welfare Act. So and
25 -- and, you know, maybe, as a board, we may have some

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 input too. But the corporal punishment is one that
2 I've definitely -- like I said, in my email, I would
3 have done that a long time ago. It just kind of -- I
4 forget that it's there.

5 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Can you -- can you
6 -- what -- what -- a little clarification on corporal
7 punishment? Can we get anything on that? What is
8 that -- what is the Act to address?

9 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: The -- that Act --
10 the original Act allows for corporal punishment. The
11 original. And the regs allow for corporal
12 punishment. As soon as this is enacted -- and it has
13 passed -- I guess -- has it passed the House -- is it
14 an Act yet?

15 MS. EBONY RUSS: It usually is.

16 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: I saw it in the --
17 I saw the committee. But, anyway, it will no --
18 corporal punishment will not be allowed.

19 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: Okay.

20 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: And --

21 MS. EBONY RUSS: That is correct.

22 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: -- may need a
23 definition of corporal punishment. It's not just a
24 paddle on the bottom, so --

25 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: And Mr. West will

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 give us the information on when that is?

2 MR. JOE WEST: Yes. I'll -- I'll review that;
3 both of the bills Ebony's mentioned, as well as,
4 anything else that specifically relates to this board
5 or your -- your industry.

6 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: But, the other
7 thing is, especially on these things that we agree
8 on, that when you have some controversy we can also
9 help to support that bill too.

10 MS. EBONY RUSS: Okay. That is all from PRLU.

11 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Ebony, I do have one question
12 about the organization where you said on the self-
13 harm. Is it one -- is it one patient or is it a
14 bunch of children in a facility, there?

15 MS. EBONY RUSS: No. They were separate
16 incidents. Some happened back to back, day after
17 day.

18 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay.

19 MS. EBONY RUSS: It's very concerning.

20 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay.

21 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Does there appear
22 to be a link between the --

23 MS. EBONY RUSS: Honestly, I'm not sure. But,
24 just reviewing the information, you would think maybe
25 suicide pact. But we're not sure. We're still

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1 following up.

2 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: A suicide pact?

3 MS. EBONY RUSS: Uh-huh.

4 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: Okay.

5 MS. EBONY RUSS: So that's something that we
6 really do want to address.

7 BOARD MEMBER CHARLES FLYNN: So a safety plan
8 could do it.

9 MS. EBONY RUSS: Correct.

10 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Okay. All right. Is there
11 any other business?

12 (NO RESPONSE)

13 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Is there a motion to adjourn?

14 BOARD MEMBER DAVID WHATLEY: I'll make a motion
15 to adjourn.

16 BOARD MEMBER ANDREW WATSON: I'll second.

17 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: We've got a motion and a
18 second. All right. All in favor say aye.

19 (CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIR ANDY ALTOM: Vote with your feet. Thank
21 you guys.

22 (THEREUPON, the meeting was adjourned at 2:32
23 p.m. on April 22, 2021.)

24

25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2021

Laura Carnahan

Bushman Court Reporting

501-372-5115

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
BEFORE THE STATE OF ARKANSAS
CHILD WELFARE AGENCY REVIEW
BOARD
Thursday, April 22, 2021

I, Laura L. Carnahan, a Certified Court Reporter in and for the aforesaid state, certify that I reported the proceedings in the aforementioned case; that said recording has been reduced to a transcription by me, or under my direct supervision, and the foregoing pages numbered 1-54 constitute a true and correct transcript of the proceedings held, to the best of my ability.

WITNESS my hand and seal as such Court Reporter
10th day of May, 2021.

Laura L. Carnahan



LAURA L. CARNAHAN

BCR#96004

Supreme Court Certified Reporter No. 569