

Children First Board meeting minutes

2-4-2020

Donnellson, IA

At 12:30 pm this meeting of the Children First board was called to order with the following present:

Board members: Carolyn Baker, Mike Linnenbrink, Mark Meek, Kayla Schwartz, Amanda Swan, Meagan Vogel, and Ryan Wilson. Quorum was met with 7 of 9 board members present.

Board members not present: Rich Harlow and Amanda Manning-Maras

Director: Ginger Knisley

Guests: Cheryl Flaatten and Matthew Le Clere– Community Action of SE IA, Morgan Small-Sieda Head Start, Melissa Daugherty – VBCH VBPAT, Jolene Dilks – Learning Tree, Missy Park – LCHD HOPES, Jodi Norton – CCR&R, Rachael Patterson-Rahn – LCHD I-Smile, Sarah Tweedy – Raisen Em Up

There was a **motion** by Ryan with a second by Mike to approve today's agenda. All voted aye.

There was a **motion** by Kayla with a second by Carolyn to approve the minutes from the last meeting as written. All voted aye.

Director Report

Ginger gave a Director report including updates on board business, legislation, statewide directors meeting, and board membership. One idea presented for board recruitment was to send a notice through various county interagency groups. Ginger shared that the bylaws committee needs to review the bylaws prior to the March board meeting in order to make recommendations. Ginger will email them to Carolyn and Amanda S. for review and discussion.

Board membership – seat Kathy Osipowicz as the Lee County Education representative to the Children First board. Ginger shared that Kathy is a long time member of the Early Childhood Task Force, a currently certified CPS technician and a retired Director of the HTC Early Learning Centers. There was a **motion** by Carolyn and a second by Mike to seat Kathy to the board. All voted aye. The board now has 10 members.

Financial Report

January 2020 expenditures and revenues were reviewed. There was a motion by Amanda S. and a second by Kayla to accept the financial reports for January 2020. All voted aye.

Mid – year (quarter 2) program reports

Ginger gave the board a written summary of the second quarter reports from funded programs including success stories and trends. Matthew Le Clere clarified the definition Head Start uses of homeless for the board.

Lee County Head Start Annual Presentation to the board

Matthew presented to the board that in looking at data, transportation and attendance do not seem to have a solid correlation. He questions if transportation is an effective use of the funding. He feels that Head Start will probably not provide transportation in Lee County in the FY21 fiscal year. He shared written handouts with various health related statistics and shared that Head Start is looking into having staff trained to implement curriculum/programming to combat obesity in early childhood through good nutrition and increased physical movement. Board members asked about the cost which Matthew did not have at hand. Also asked was the time line for implementation which Matthew estimated at January 2021.

Board member report out of EC issues

Kayla shared that Ft Madison schools is hosting a “Taste of Kindergarten” event March 5th at Richardson and March 12th at Lincoln as well as Kindergarten roundup March 16th at Richardson and March 23rd at Lincoln. Further information is available through the school website or by calling the schools.

Mike also shared he is working with the Bridges out of Poverty effort now underway in Lee County. He is serving as the child care director which Carolyn is helping with. The next class will be starting in Ft Madison June 1st. He sees great benefits to the program.

There was a motion by Ryan with a second by Kayla to adjourn the business portion of the meeting at 1:28 pm. All voted aye.

The next **Children First board meeting** will be held Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 12:30 pm at the Community Room in Donnellson.

The next **ECTF meeting** will be the annual retreat Wednesday, March 11th, 2020 9:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Community Room in Donnellson.

Gk

Date approved _____ Board officer signature _____

Discussion notes from informal portion of the meeting:

Ginger asked for everyone to share what is new, what is needed and what are they seeing in regards to the three subject areas of Child Care/Preschool, Family Support, and Health/Mental Health/Safety.

Child Care/Preschool:

Jodi shared that she had 3 people attend her child care recruiting event in Donnellson and one was from Van Buren County. All three have extensive child care experience and/or education.

It was mentioned there is a new in home child care provider on Highway 2 between Donnellson and Ft Madison.

Cheryl said she hosted her first Director Forum and had 8 attend. The topic was "Managing your Business". There was great discussion and networking and several stayed well past the end time. One of her goals is to encourage peer to peer communication. Centers are having financial struggles and many are not fully enrolled.

Meagan shared she is putting on leadership groups on topics such as office culture, conflict resolution, eliminating gossip, and staff development. They started the sessions at 4 hours but have lengthened them to 6 hours. They had 16 attend the one hosted in Ft Madison. They can also do on site trainings at agencies.

Jolene has a few infant openings at Learning Tree but they are down 1 teacher. She had 2 staff leave to become in home child care providers.

Family Support:

Melissa reports that they have more and more families working and this makes it difficult to schedule home visits. They also have 2 teen moms currently which is something they have not seen for a few years. Mark asked if there was still need for services with so many working and Melissa answered that they just have different needs such as child care and transportation to make it possible to stay employed.

Cheryl reports they have families that are dual enrolled in SVPP and Head Start and only available for a PAT visit one day out of the week.

Missy agrees they are seeing this trend as well. She has one staff member working every other Saturday in order to schedule visits for working parents.

Sarah has a family with no driver's license and they do not have access to a vehicle that is in good enough condition to take the test in. They are DHS involved and it doesn't appear as though actual services to create change are being provided. There are practical things needed in order to solve the problem and break the cycle. Sarah is also concerned that drug use is a major problem in our communities. Missy said she has several families driving every day with no license.

Jolene has a family with children in protective child care and they were doing very well in grandparent's care but are slipping now since back with parents. She has tried to discuss poor attendance with DHS worker and that worker does not appear concerned.

It appears there is a concern with DHS services and how families are or are not being supported.

Missy reported she recently had 4 or 5 referrals in one week for babies born drug exposed.

Health/Mental Health/Safety:

Missy just learned of a mental health agency in Mt Pleasant, Hill Crest. It is a very large facility and she was unaware of it until now.

Kayla reported that there is also a mental health agency just off the square in Mt Pleasant called Elements that sees all ages. There is also an at-risk staff and social worker at Ft Madison Schools for school aged children.

Mark shared that the mental health regions are now tackling the children's mental health system and RYANNE WOOD is a good resource for information on services. There is a nationwide realization of the impact of mental health issues on long term outcomes and even physical health.

Cheryl said a number of sites are having safety issues on their DHS reports that will require some funds to resolve such as Radon issues, Carbon Monoxide alarms, lack of emergency plans being on accepted templates etc.

Rachael reported IDPH dental surveillance of WIC children shows a decrease in decay rates across the state. She credits this partially to the ECI funded work of the I-Smile program. Keokuk has 2 dentists at the CHC clinic, Burlington has added a third dentist, but Ft Madison does not have much available.

ECTF retreat tasks:

Ginger asked for the board members to think about what they need from the ECTF from their retreat work next month.

Kayla would like to hear some ideas on the transportation issue. Melissa says gas cards seem to be good incentive for her clients. Missy shared some families do not know the scope of services available through SIEBUS. Cheryl questions why we don't have Uber type services, Amanda said there was an attempt at this in Keokuk and it didn't have enough ridership to be viable.

The meeting ended at approximately 2:35 pm.

gk