

Children First Board meeting minutes

2-22-2021, Zoom only

At 1:05 pm this meeting of the Children First board was called to order with the following present:

Board members: Carolyn Baker, Rich Harlow, Mike Linnenbrink, Melissa Mahon, Mark Meek, Kathy Osipowicz, Amanda Swan, and Meagan Vogel (out at 1:30 during item #5). Quorum was met with 8 of 11 board members present and maintained at 7 of 11 after Meagan departed.

Board members not present: Dr. Amanda Gerber, Kayla Schwartz and Ryan Wilson

Director: Ginger Knisley

Guests: Jamie Beskow – 1st Five, Jolene Dilks – Learning Tree, Melissa Daugherty – VBPA, Amy Hayes – CCNC, Arin Jones – CPPC, Sarah Leckband – RVAP, Matthew LeClere – Lee Head Start, Jodi Norton – CCR&R, Missy Park – HOPES, Rachael Patterson-Rahn – I-Smile, Morgan Small – Sieda, Paula Vandervelde – CCR&R

*All votes taken by roll call

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

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

Introductions were made in the form of Ginger reading the list of who was on the call/zoom and reminding everyone they were emailed a full list of board and ECTF members prior to the meeting.

Annual Presentation to the Board - Matthew LeClere reported to the board on Lee County Head Start's current grant with Children First. He explained this year's grant is two part. One was to purchase hearing and vision screening equipment which has been utilized well and he shared a 6 minute video demonstrating use of the equipment. One board member asked the percentage of children referred who actually went on to receive treatment for hearing or vision concerns. Matthew said they do track that but he didn't have it readily available. The second part of the grant this year is the IMIL (I am moving I am learning) training for Head Start staff. This is scheduled for March 22 to be held virtually. It is a curriculum that focuses on getting kids moving and addressing the issue of obesity in children. He also explained they are working at getting back up to full capacity in classrooms after having been closed or at reduced capacity due to COVID.

Children’s Behavioral Health Update – Jamie Beskow shared the activities of the Children’s Behavioral Health workgroup and committees. She explained that they are finalizing the asset mapping, looking into therapeutic classrooms, and working on assessing what is available in the region and what needs to be included in CORE services.

Director Report

Ginger gave a Director report including updates on board business, legislation, statewide director’s meeting, and board membership. The Director’s report also included the summary of the quarter two performance measures reported by funded programs.

Financial Report

The expenditures and revenues from January 2021 were reviewed. There was a **motion** by Rich and a second by Amanda to accept the financial reports for January 2021. All voted aye.

Budget Committee Recommendations

Ginger screen shared the notes from the budget committee meeting held 2/18/21 and explained the first recommendation was expansion of current contracts as the primary avenue to spend the surplus funds. Second recommendation was to move forward with the existing RFP/Renewal process for FY22 with limited press release due to level funding expected. (In the RFP process discussion it was settled to hold the board retreat May 20, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm). The third recommendation from the budget committee was to move forward with the Meeting OWL purchase using MISC funds and replacing them when the ICAP check arrives. There was a **motion** by Melissa with a second by Carolyn to accept the budget committee recommendations as presented. All voted aye. Mark thanked the committee members for their work on the budget. Ginger expressed she appreciated the extra effort of multiple board members over the course of two committee meetings who helped her work through the budget process.

Board member report out of EC issues & Public Comment

Ginger shared that the Van Buren County School District appears to be getting awarded the PFS grant they applied for over a year ago to address underage drinking in Lee and Van Buren Counties. It is not clear yet how that will move forward as the primary writer of the grant application is no longer employed by the school.

Paula Vandervelde CCR&R Community Development Specialist took the opportunity to introduce herself.

Adjourn– There was a **motion** by Kathy and a second by Mike to adjourn the business portion of the meeting at 2:01 pm. All voted aye.

Informal discussion and Q&A followed the meeting:

ACEs360 materials to be used at spring retreats of the ECTF and Board to continue the mental health discussions

Melissa asked Ginger if there was any news on returning to in person home visits. Ginger’s short answer was “no”. She went on to explain that it does not appear as though in person home visits will return as routine practice until all of the staff and all of the families have been

vaccinated. Melissa has concern that a few young parents are really struggling. Ginger reminded her that we do have a process given to us from the state ECI office to report families to be served in person but it is an individual process and is per family and perhaps per visit. Missy offered the debate that some families may think it is unfair if they don't get an in person visit and their neighbor does so she is planning to remain all or none for home visits. There was discussion of hot spots for Wi-Fi service to expand where we can host a board meeting. Morgan shared that hot spots can be a bit difficult. Rachael asked if any consideration was being given in the RFP process in recognition of the heavy workload on agencies, especially health departments, with COVID related work. Ginger said she would review the forms and pare them down as much as possible.

The open discussion part of the meeting closed at 2:21 pm

The next **Children First board meeting** will be held via Zoom with a possible in person option on Monday, March 29th at 1:00 pm.

The next meeting of the board's advisory council – **Early Childhood Task Force (ECTF)** will be their spring retreat on Monday, March 22nd 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at a location to be determined.

Gk

Date approved _____ Board officer signature _____