

Children First Board meeting minutes

2-28-2022, Zoom only

At 1:01 pm this meeting of the Children First board was called to order with the following present:

Board members: Carolyn Baker, Rich Harlow, Mike Linnenbrink, Mark Meek, Kathy Osipowicz, Kris Rankin, Kayla Schwartz (in at 1:16 pm during item #3), and Amanda Swan. Quorum was met with 7 of 12 board members present and maintained with 8 of 12 when Kayla joined the meeting.

Board members not present: Dr. Amanda Gerber, Melissa Mahon, Meagan Vogel and Ryan Wilson

Director: Ginger Knisley

Guests: Amy Hayes; CCNC for LCHD, Tessa Schroeder; 1st Five for LCHD, Jolene Dilks; Director at Learning Tree, Missy Park; HOPES at LCHD, Rachael Patterson-Rahn; I-Smile at LCHD, Morgan Small; Sieda Head Start, Paula Vandervelde; CCR&R, Matthew Le Clare; CAOSEIA Head Start, Breanna Kramer-Riesberg; Empowering Families, Melissa Daugherty; VBPAT

Incoming board members: Chad Reckling

There was a **motion** by Amanda with a second by Kathy to approve last month's minutes and today's agenda with the addition of item 1a to approve a letter of support for Mike Linnenbrink's application to serve on the state ECI board. All voted aye.

There was a **motion** by Mark and a second by Kathy to approve of a letter of support for Mike's application to the State ECI Board. All voted aye.

Carolyn was having trouble with her connection and audio so Mike moved on to information agenda item #3.

Annual presentation to the board

Matt Le Clare shared with the board an overview of Head Start and the goals and initiatives they are working on. He expressed that enrollment and attendance have both suffered due to COVID. He shared that they are shifting some of their regular Head Start slots to Early Head Start and may be applying to the board for assistance in furnishing the spaces with equipment sized for younger children. In terms of the current contract he shared that the new security doors and system are due to be completed in the next month.

With Kayla now in the meeting and Carolyn joining on her phone with full capabilities, Mike backed up to agenda item #2.

Seat New Board Member

Due to continued outside obligations, Ryan Wilson continued to struggle with attending meetings. Ginger, in consultation with board chair Mike, asked Chad Reckling if he would consider rejoining the board to take Ryan's place as the Human Services representative for Lee County. He accepted and is attending today's meeting.

There was a **motion** by Kris and a second from Kayla to seat Chad to the board. All voted aye. Children First remains a board of 12 members.

Director Report

Ginger gave a Director report including updates on board business, legislation, statewide director's meeting, and board membership. Ginger also shared a summary of the mid-year reports from funded programs. Kathy asked about the RVAP program and Ginger shared that they have not held a training yet but the staff is now certified to do the training. Missy shared she has not had RVAP schedule a date for a training with Family Connections. In regards to the child care market studies, Rich shared that Lee County Supervisors are hopeful to have data in August and Chad expressed it may be good to share provider rates with Ryan Page if that data is included.

RFP release for FY23 funds

Ginger reminded the board that they had reviewed and approved a revised RFP form in the fall and proposed that she be allowed to release it for the FY23 process as last year's was released. This would be primarily directed at the currently funded programs but be open to applications from new and innovative programs. She also shared that current guidance is to issue contracts affected by the changes to the CSA map only for a three month start with the opportunity to extend to the balance of the fiscal year should the applying agency be awarded the MCAH contract. Rachael shared that the region including Van Buren County has 2 current MCAH grantees which are American Home Findings and Marion Public Health. Morgan offered that Ginger can direct requests for information of Sieda to her and she will assist in communications as needed. There was a **motion** by Kayla and a second by Mark for Ginger to release the FY23 RFP as proposed. All voted aye.

Financial Report

Ginger pointed out that the allocated amounts had been adjusted in each of the Q1 line items, the newly funded efforts had been added, and a new section was added to show estimated carry forward.

There was a **motion** by Kris and a second by Rich to accept the financial reports for January 2022. All voted aye.

Funding requests

VBPAT applied for hearing and vision screening tools to help them meet standards in the National PAT accreditation process. Melissa shared details about the process. Kayla feels the hearing tool is higher priority due to hearing issues being more difficult to detect. Kris thinks the board should fund the full request and have VBPAT meeting both standards now. Carolyn feels some funds should be preserved and just grant funds for the hearing tool right now and look at the vision tool in the new fiscal year. There was a **motion** by Kris with a second by Rich to fund the full amount. All voted aye except Carolyn who voted nay. Motion passed.

Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center applied for \$510 worth of STEM related supplies to be used in the early childhood center. Chad questioned if funds should go to a private school that may have plenty of money from tuition. Kathy feels the request is quite modest and sees an increase in STEM activities in k-12 that preschoolers should be prepared for. There was a **motion** by Kayla and a second by Kris to grant the request. All voted aye except Chad who voted nay. Motion passed.

Board member report out of EC issues & Public Comment

Chad shared that DHS would be creating a new office of equity in services as part of the alignment process. He expects that the high level org chart should be released in March and some things will start moving around this summer. He also stated there continues to be a great need for staff supports in centers and homes rather than a focus on new build projects to address the child care crisis.

Amy agrees that staff retention is a big issue and is glad to see some retention bonuses being released by DHS. She also shared some schools are looking at 4 day weeks and this will create new challenges for child care sites. Chad shared that WACO and Cardinal are already doing this and Mark shared Van Buren is talking about it. This is something the board will pay attention to and keep in mind as child care sites may be in need of additional supports.

Adjourn– There was a **motion** by Mark and a second by Kathy to adjourn the business portion of the meeting at 2:18 pm. All voted aye.

The next **Children First board meeting** will be held Monday, March 28, 2022 at 1:00 pm via zoom. The next **ECTF meeting** will be held March 16, 2022 at 10:30 am at the Charleston Board of Trade with a zoom option.

Gk

Date approved _____ Board officer signature _____

Post meeting open discussion on trends, needs, gaps in services, etc.

Kathy asked if the ECTF members had any ideas on what is missing for area children and families.

Missy responded that there isn't anything at this time that she knows of, however the COVID supplemental assistance programs are just now ending and she expects there will be

increased needs in the near future. Transportation is not as great a need but SEIBUS is not very flexible for young families.

Ft Madison now has only one OB doctor so if he is on vacation the OB unit is simply closed and families have to go to Burlington. Some families are also going to Scotland County, MO and it is speculated that Carthage, IL hospital is being used as well.

There is concern that as families have to travel further for services they may eventually move closer to the services.

Some members have heard strong hopeful rumors of new providers for OB and Dental possibly coming to the area soon.

Amy shared there continues to be a decrease in demand for COVID vaccinations and the LCHD has reduced to every other week clinics and will reduce further if needed.

Chad asked what the current vaccination rate was for Lee County and it was shared that it is just over 50% in the past few weeks.

Morgan shared that open enrollment is under way for Head Start and there are already very promising numbers for both Douds and Harmony.

The meeting closed at approximately 2:30 pm.
gk