



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2023

Board of Directors:

Amy Black, Board Chair; Victoria Thurston, Vice Chair; Rebecca Brock, Secretary, Meghan Russell, Treasurer, Chelsea Bellew, David Prather, Josefa Benjamin, Joseph Rogers, Lois Marino, Michael Lepera, Nancy Gregoire Stamper, Paul Adams, Ronald Ford, Tom Lukasik

Unable to Attend:

Meghan Russell, Michael Lepera, Ronald Ford

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Susan Eby, Rae Bullard, Shanny Tozzi, Deena Ponto, Nicole Slade, Andrea Chenet, Krista Beekmann, Stewart Lane, Luis Rios, Grace Kendall, Mariah Golson, Nyasha Nedd Wright, Brianna Waite, Andrew Wallick, Brittany Burnette, Bobbi Combs, Sheree Tortora, Nehemie Bayonne, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Elisa Cramer, Teresa Janeczek, Dawn Liberta, Dennis Miles, *Marcum LLP:* Adam Firestein, Shelby Michel, *BDO:* Joey Epstein

CALL TO ORDER – Amy Black, Board Chair

- Amy Black, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Rebecca Brock, Board Secretary

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The November 18, 2022, meeting minutes were reviewed. *A motion* was moved and seconded to approve the minutes. *A vote was taken.* The ayes have it and *the motion was adopted.*

CHILDNET BOARD EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD – Rae Bullard, CHRO

- The ChildNet Board Employee Recognition Award was presented to the following deserving employees:
 - October 2022 – Kenneth Vargas, IT Developer, Krista Beekmann, Quality Manager and Stewart Lane, MIS Project Manager
 - November 2022 – Christina Sanders, Adoption Specialist, Grace Kendall, Dependency Case Manager, Unit H4 and Mariah Golson, Lead Dependency Case Manager, Unit 110
 - December 2022 – Sheree Tortora, Director of Continuous Quality Improvement (PB)

ITEMS FOR BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL – Amy Black, Board Chair

- **Resolution #245 – Signature Authorization for Contract Year 2023** – This resolution provides Larry Rein, CEO and President, and Donna Eprifania, CFO, signing authority for the contract year. This resolution is signed on a yearly basis.



A motion was moved and seconded to approve Board Resolution #245. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted.

- **Board Candidate – Sabria McElroy** - Larry Rein and Amy Black met with Ms. McElroy, an attorney at Boies Schiller Flexner. Former board member Sigrid McCawley recommended Ms. McElroy. In addition to being an attorney, Ms. McElroy is a former public-school teacher. They both feel that Ms. McElroy would be a great asset to the Board.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve Sabria McElroy as the newest member of the Board of Directors. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted.

AUDIT PRESENTATION – Adam Firestein and Shelby Michel, Marcum LLP

- Joey Epstein, who serves as an AdHoc member on the Audit Committee, introduced Adam Firestein and Shelby Michel from Marcum LLP. They gave a brief presentation on ChildNet’s Audited Financials for FY 2021-2022. ChildNet again received a clean or “unmodified” opinion with zero findings. They noted that the financial statements are now fully comparative with current and prior year information. The financials also include breakdown of in-kind. There were no disagreements with management. The audit of the 990, which is due 05-15-23, needs to be reviewed by the full Board.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- Legal Department – Jason Tracey, Chief Legal Officer – The Legal Department provides legal advice and assistance to support ChildNet’s Mission and provision of client services. Legal also advises the organization regarding corporate, regulatory, and compliance matters. The department consists of a Chief Legal Officer, two Legal Counsels, and a Legal Assistant, with vacancies for a Law Clerk and Legal Intern. The Legal Department:
 - Creates, develops, and implements legal trainings for staff in coordination with the Career Development Department.
 - Supports case management by providing counsel to facilitate case management service delivery, facilitates the communication process between case management and Children's Legal Services (CLS), reviews documents prepared by case management to ensure legal sufficiency, and emphasizes the importance of documenting communications with the Department of Children and Families, CLS, the Office of Regional Conflict Council and partner agencies.
 - Aims to measure and manage legal risk to the organization. The Chief Legal Officer works closely with the Board of Directors and the Executive Team to align its policies and procedures with the mission, vision, and values of the organization.
 - Handles records requests.
 - Counsels Dependency Case Managers on the roles of agencies and parties present in the courtroom.
 - In constant communication, and work hand in hand with staff, outside counsel, parties, and the court.
 - Maintains healthy relationships with various stakeholders which assists with swift resolution of issues, helps to clarify expectations, and creates opportunities for continued partnership.

FINANCE REPORT – Meghan Russell, Board Treasurer and Donna Eprifania, CFO

- Donna Eprifania reported the Finance Committee met yesterday and discussed several topics. ChildNet previously invested \$45,000 for 1 share of Community Based Care Integrated Health (CBCIH). As a result of being a shareholder, ChildNet has realized a net gain of \$64,000 over two (2) years. CBCIH has contracts with all lead agencies and when they are able to perform well from



a quality perspective, they receive bonuses from the Managed Care Organization (MCO); as a shareholder ChildNet gets a portion of those bonuses. There are two types of bonuses: 1) HBR/health benefit ratio, and 2) quality. From the 2020 calendar year, ChildNet realized a prorated amount, as we purchased our share in February 2021, of \$28,000, and this last year's distribution, using performance-based approach, every shareholder received an equal share for the quality bonus in the amount of \$11,500 for each contract (Broward and Palm Beach), equaling a total of \$23,000 and the higher tier for our performance, as it related to the health benefit ratio of \$29,000 for each contract (Broward and Palm Beach) equaling \$58,000, for a total of \$81,000 in 2022. In summary, we have realized \$109,000 in cash proceeds and we paid \$45,000 for the investment.

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Larry Rein reported that in the State of Florida, Medicaid is operated by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA). AHCA procures managed care organizations to operate the Medicaid system in Florida. There is one specialty plan for children in foster care and children adopted out of foster care. That specialty plan has a separate procurement. That procurement was won by Sunshine Health, who won the procurement the second time as well. A new procurement for all the managed care organizations, in addition to the foster care specialty plan, will be coming out in February 2023. A few years ago, CBCIH was created by the lead agency in Orlando and is now in partnership with all the community-based care lead agencies. CBCIH operates as the middleman between all the lead agencies and Sunshine Health. Donna Eprifania noted that when one of the lead agencies, Eckerd, dissolved, CBCIH, instead of taking the shares of Eckerd and offering them up for purchase, they divided them equally among the remaining lead agencies, so we actually own 1.03 shares now.

Ms. Eprifania noted that the Finance Committee will report on unrestricted funding every 6 months to the Board; February and August. With the November 2022 and December 2022 financials, we are in a good position where we are slightly over-utilizing our resources. The two areas we are focusing on: One is under Service Coordination – one to one services – that has exceeded the budget that we anticipated. We are putting some things in place to ensure we review it every 90 days. The other is residential group care. This is going in the wrong direction, but it is not in a place where it is unmanageable.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

▪ **Adolescent Services Committee – Andrew Wallick, Director of Service Quality**

The Committee is collecting outcomes on all adolescents, 13-17 years old, in licensed, out-of-home care, i.e., foster homes and group homes. These outcomes are provided by their placement, either the group home, child caring agency or the child placing agency. Our Adolescent Care Coordinators will be focusing on the 15–16-year-olds on their caseload.

Review of adolescent outcomes for 15–16-year-olds shows the percentage of:

- compliance of monthly forms
- children who have runaway episodes
- children receiving services by service type
- children attending school
- children making academic progress
- children employed



- children with a Baker-Act
- children arrested
- children who were visited monthly

There are two Adolescent Care Coordinators (ACC) with a caseload of a total of 132 youth, ages 15-16. Of the 132 kids, 50 are in Palm Beach and 82 are in Broward. Some of the successes we have seen are Dependency Case Managers are easy to engage and eager to provide information, the majority of youth have easily engaged with the ACC, and youth are able to identify and verbalize the services and support they need. Some of the challenges are placement changes outside of Broward and Palm Beach, number of youth in DJJ (Department of Juvenile Justice), and number of youth on runaway. It was noted that within two months, November 2022 to January 2023, many good changes have been made and seen between the ACC's and the youth. The Committee consists of two Board members, Lois Marino and Col. Josefa Benjamin, and several staff. The Committee needs more Board members. In addition, there is a vacancy of a Committee Chair.

- **Fundraising/Community Relations – Shanny Tozzi, Director of Community Relations**

Shanny Tozzi, the new Director of Community Relations, provided a quick background. Ms. Tozzi has a marketing background and has knowledge of the non-profit sector. Ms. Tozzi is looking to enhance the newly named “Community Engagement Committee” to include fundraising. She is asking for the Board’s help in developing and serving on this committee.

- Palm Beach Care for Kids Luncheon – Tuesday, February 28, 2023, 11:00am-1:00pm at Woodfield Country Club in Boca Raton. We are honoring Dr. Heidi Schaeffer.
- Broward Care For Kids Cocktail Reception – Thursday, May 11, 2023, 6:00pm-8:00pm at Lauderdale Yacht Club in Fort Lauderdale. We are honoring Melida Akiti.

- **Governance Committee – Dr. Victoria Thurston, Committee Chair**

- **2022-2025 Strategic Plan** – Dr. Thurston reported that the draft Strategic Plan was discussed at the Governance/Executive Meeting. Executive Team and staff are working to flesh out the metrics and action steps of the Plan. Larry Rein noted that since the Governance/Executive meeting, we want to firm up the document for all to understand why these goals were selected. We hope to present for review and approval at the February 2023 Board meeting.
- **Membership Recruitment** – Larry Rein noted that Col. Benjamin had suggested having another law enforcement officer, from Palm Beach, serve on the Board. Col. Benjamin will help identify someone and will notify Mr. Rein.

- **Program Quality Committee – Joe Rogers, Committee Chair**

The committee met on 01-11-23 and was provided an update on COA where ChildNet received full accreditation again. A detailed presentation was given on the DCF Accountability Metrics for both Broward and Palm Beach. This is a detailed analysis that DCF goes over matching ChildNet against our peers in child welfare. It included the outcomes for 2021-2022 and the changes in 2022-2023.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- ChildNet’s Anti-Racism Workgroup Update – Nicole Slade reported that the workgroup is finalizing the calendar of activities for Black History Month in February. Workgroup did not meet over the



holidays so will meet shortly to go over the data received from the out-of-home plan. We have some ideas on what we want to do with some of those kids with long lengths of stay in care.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Amy Black

- Strategic Plan – Amy Black added to the report from the Governance/Executive Committee that the Strategic Plan is 90% complete, and for the Board to be prepared to discuss at the February 2023 Board meeting.
- Board Committees – Amy Black noted that we do need more Board members to serve on a few of the committees.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- Strategic Plan – Larry Rein reported that ChildNet’s last Strategic Plan was one of the most important things that we have done at ChildNet. The Plan was simple, well-defined, easy to understand and monitored regularly by the Board. A couple of things that we did not do well, and will ensure we do now, was to communicate about the plan to all staff nor was it communicated well with our community partners. The goals we selected for the new plan are incredibly difficult to achieve. We are picking these areas because they have struggled for a long time, not just for ChildNet, but statewide and possibly nationwide, when it comes to child welfare: stability of the workforce, appropriate and effective placements for the most complex and challenging children, and the use of kinship care and keeping children and families together.
- Children with Complex Needs – Within the last week, a riot was held at Sandy Pines, a residential treatment center in Tequesta, FL, a secure facility because of the intense mental health needs of the children, where 8 children escaped. ChildNet had two Palm Beach children at the center, but they were not involved. This is a secure facility that has incredible staff, yet this happened. Three days ago, there was a riot at a juvenile correction facility in Okeechobee, FL. The level of the acuity and complexity of these kids is really intense. We need to figure out ways to better meet these kids’ needs. These are children that have experienced incredible trauma throughout their lives, many of them likely from birth. It will be well served to start serving these children better, much, much earlier.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 24, 2023 in person and via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

- Having no further business, a *motion* was moved to adjourn the meeting. A *vote was taken*. The ayes have it and *the motion was adopted*. The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

Rebecca Brock
Board Secretary

3.8.23

Date

(Corporate Seal)