



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2022

Board of Directors:

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

Unable to Attend:

Michael Lepera, Nancy Gregoire Stamper

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Rae Bullard, Susan Eby, Sheryl Williams, Andrea Cunningham, Tamaru Phillips, Julie Janello, Donna Andrews, Sheree Tortora, Tisha Pierre, Dora Garton, Michele Jarrett, *DCF:* Elisa Cramer, Teresa Janeczek

CALL TO ORDER – Amy Black, Board Vice Chair

- Amy Black, Vice Chair, on behalf of Michael Lepera, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dr. Victoria Thurston, Board Secretary

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The February 25, 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 employee:
 - February 2022 – Michele Jarrett, Quality Manager

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) – Sheree Tortora, Director of Continuous Quality Improvement, Palm Beach provided a detailed summary of the CQI Department. The CQI team consists of 4 CQI Managers, two assigned to each county. The CQI Department is responsible for leading and supporting the performance and quality improvement activities of ChildNet. This continuous and agency-wide effort is in place to ensure established outcomes and service and quality standards are met and exceeded. This includes quarterly file reviews, collaboration with other departments and stakeholders, analysis of data, measuring and reporting on performance, identifying gaps, and helping to define improvement activities. Other functions include weekly Report Card meetings, the role of liaison and partner with the Department's Quality Office and providing direct support and recommendations to case management in the form of case specific consultations



or debriefings. Our reviewers, the CQI Managers, use information and trends learned from their reviews to drive performance improvement and often with immediate and long term-positive impacts. The weekly Report Card workgroup meeting is held in both counties where all ChildNet staff are invited to attend. These meetings focus on the quantitative measures for safety, permanency and well-being prioritized by ChildNet. There are currently fifteen measures on our Report Card that are covered on a weekly basis. It is in this workgroup meeting that not only current performance is discussed but success stories, trends, internal goals, and actions to improve are identified by the assigned Champion as well as feedback and assistance are solicited from staff throughout the agency. The CQI department plays a significant role in providing ongoing support to case management. Educational and training opportunities are identified following results of file reviews such as the federal Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) and the Department's newly implemented Life of Case tool for ongoing services. Targeted reviews and special reviews at the direction of executive leadership are completed when necessary to further evaluate compliance with requirements and to identify root causes and further drive change strategies. Our department creates tools and job aids, helping staff at all levels better understand findings and expected outcomes for the children and families we serve.

FINANCE REPORT – Joe Rogers, Board Treasurer and Donna Eprifania, CFO

- Joe Rogers reported that the committee meets next week, and a report will be provided at the next Board meeting.

COVID-19 UPDATE – Larry Rein, CEO and President

- **COVID-19 Update** – Larry Rein reported that following CDC recommendations, as of March 17, 2022, ChildNet is no longer mandating the wearing of masks at our offices. However, whoever wishes to wear a mask is free to do so. The leadership team is in discussions on setting a gradual return date back to the offices. We are in the process of creating more space in both offices for staff.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- **Advisory Board Committee – Col. Josefa Benjamin, Committee Chair**

Col. Benjamin reported that the committee discussed that the Palm Beach census has just over 1,400 children. Larry Rein had shared some concerns on the new statewide Report Card, i.e., not sure how the measures are calculated. The first Report Card will be produced in December 2022. Regarding community-based care, statutorily, each county that has a lead agency must have a community alliance. The Palm Beach Community Alliance, led by Judge Kroll, is a very action-oriented alliance. Discussion held on all of the meetings and initiatives that fall under the Alliance. There is a great cross-section of stakeholders that are engaged in these meetings, i.e., judicial system, school board, interagency review team, etc.

- **Fundraising Committee – Andrea Cunningham, Director of Community Relations**

Andrea Cunningham reported on the following:

- **The Care For Kids Luncheon for Palm Beach** – took place on March 8, 2022, at Woodfield Country Club in Boca Raton with 225 attendees. We received \$70,000 in sponsorships and ticket sales, which included \$17,000 in the Gift from the Heart.
- **The Broward Care For Kids Cocktail Reception** is on April 9, 2022, at Lauderdale Yacht Club starting at 6:00pm. We currently have \$77,000 in sponsorships and \$3,100 in individual ticket sales and tickets are sold out.



- **Governance Committee – Amy Black, Committee Chair**
 - **Committee Structure and Membership Discussion** – Discussion was held that the PB Advisory Board Committee was a temporary committee created as an interim step to fully integrate the Palm Beach board members, due to the delay in creating the Palm Beach Board as a separate entity. Further discussion was held if there was still a need for this committee and possibly transitioning it into the Program Quality Committee. Goal is to provide same depth of information to both Broward and Palm Beach board directors.
 - **Board Members Meet and Greet** – Discussion was held that all potential restaurants in the Boca area are requiring a minimum contract of \$1,000-\$1,500. Therefore, discussion was held that instead of having this meet and greet to have a luncheon held at the annual Board meeting in June 2022. Discussion held to move the time of meeting to start at 9:00am or 10:00am to include the lunch. Melida Akiti noted that she will see if someone can sponsor this board mixer so that we can have it held in May.
 - **Membership Recruitment** – We currently have seven board members in each county, with a goal of having nine board members in each county. Currently, we are pursuing two candidates, one in each county.
 - **Board Officers** – Discussion initiated on filling officer positions to be effective June 2022.
- **Program Quality Committee – Joe Rogers, Committee Chair**

Julie DeMar reported that the committee focused on COA re-accreditation and discussed the timelines and the site visit that will take place in November 2022. Updates of policies and procedures (P&Ps) will be presented to the committee and/or Board for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

- There was no new business.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- **ChildNet's Anti-Racism Workgroup Update** – The workgroup is meeting next week, and an update will be provided at the next Board meeting.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- **Legislative Update** - Mr. Rein reported that the legislative session concluded last week. At the last Board meeting, he provided news that the House was recommending that ChildNet in Broward and Citrus in Miami-Dade would have monies cut, \$6 million and \$17 million respectively, in order to give to other agencies. Through the efforts of many people and a focused approach, we were able to have the House come to agreement with the Senate to move forward with an increase in child welfare funding statewide of \$150 million for Community-Based Care lead agencies, without making any cuts to any lead agency. This is a major victory. With the current formula, ChildNet Broward will not have any cuts but will not receive any additional funding and ChildNet Palm Beach will receive an increase of \$2.7 million. The State of Florida has made a commitment to recognizing how severely under-funded the system is statewide. The bulk of this money will be going to those lead agencies who have been struggling and are significantly under-funded.

There is a lot of community involvement in child welfare. The Community Alliance, created in Florida Statute, is to be in every area that has a Community-Based Care lead agency. Each Alliance is



different. Broward has a large, robust, and active Community Alliance. The Palm Beach Community Alliance is a smaller group that is more focused, targeted and action-oriented, with some key stakeholders. We received amazing support in the effort to avert this cut from the Broward community. Memorial Healthcare played a significant role. Mr. Rein enlisted aid through the Coordinating Council of Broward, which led to organizations such as the Broward County Board of County Commissioners getting their lobbyists to work on our behalf, and the United Way alerted their lobbyists to work on our behalf as well. It is crucial to always have community support.

There are some good policies coming out of the session which include increased supports to relative caregivers, including Level 1 foster parents. They will now receive support, in terms of funding, equal to that foster parents traditionally receive. There will also be new initiatives, statewide, to support fathers of children in the dependency system. There will also be increased supports to youth transitioning out of foster care.

The legislature also approved Back of the Bill funding. We made a request for Palm Beach and believe that request will be filled. If so, we are hopeful that it will erase any deficit we have in Palm Beach. We are awaiting final decision by the Department of their allocation of this fund.

Special Appropriations – 1) Approved - \$350,000 to sustain a Safety Management Team targeting families with adult substance abuse challenges. 2) Not Approved – replicating Oak Street in Palm Beach (4 bed home for dually dependent and delinquent boys that we wanted to expand to girls). We are, however, in the midst of seeking federal funding to support the expansion of Oak Street in Palm Beach. In Broward, we are replicating that with the sufficient funds we have in Broward. We hope to open our third such home, the second one operated by One Hope United. The third home will be licensed as a foster home rather than a group home.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 22, 2022, via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

- Having no further business, a *motion* was moved to adjourn the meeting. A *vote was taken*. The eyes have it and *the motion was adopted*. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 a.m.


 Dr. Victoria Thurston
 Board Secretary


 Date

(Corporate Seal)