



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 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:

Amy Black, Joe Rogers, Meghan Russell

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Rae Bullard, Susan Eby, Andrea Cunningham, Deena Ponto, Tamaru Phillips, Julie Janello, Eric Ellison, Laura Leese, Asha Jawahir, Shakeyia Brown *DCF:* Elisa Cramer, Teresa Janeczek, Dawn Liberta, Dennis Miles

CALL TO ORDER – Amy Black, Board Vice Chair

- Michael Lepera, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dr. Victoria Thurston, Board Secretary

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The March 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:
 - March 2022 – Eric Ellison, Career Development Specialist

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- Human Resources – Rae Bullard, Chief Human Resources Officer, gave an in-depth overview of the Human Resources department. Sixteen months ago, the department started expanding and went from 4 to 10 team members. Each team member specializes in a different area of human resources. Under Human Resources, there are 4 team members who are responsible for employee relations, performance management, HR compliance, policy interpretation, employee recognition and engagement, employee file management and exit interviews. Under Talent Acquisition, there are 3 team members who are responsible for full-cycle recruitment, new hire onboarding and orientation, new hire compliance, internal transfers, and maintain job postings. Under Benefits/HRIS (Human Resources Information System), there are 2 team members who are responsible for managing and maintaining the HR system, vendor management, support benefits administration and audit, wellness program, HR metrics and workflow. The overall HR-led projects include leader-



ship training, performance appraisal process and merit, ongoing compensation reviews and engagement survey results and action plans.

ITEM FOR BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL – Joe Rogers, Program Quality Committee Chair

- Approval of P&P – CN 003.053 – Kinship Placements (formerly Relative Caregiver Program) – Discussion was held that this policy and procedure was changed to address all levels of support given to kinship placements.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve policy and procedure CN 003.053 – Kinship Placements. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted.

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

- Form 990 - Donna Eprifania discussed that when we file our annual taxes with the IRS, there is a requirement of the Board to pre-approve the 990 before it is submitted. We requested and were granted an extension, so our taxes are due to be filed on May 15, 2022. We are meeting with the Finance Committee on April 27, 2022 and will send recommended Form 990 electronically to the full Board for review and approval.

COVID-19 UPDATE – Larry Rein, CEO and President

- COVID-19 Update – Larry Rein reported that ChildNet has conformed to the CDC mandate of not having to wear masks at our offices. However, whoever wishes to wear a mask is free to do so. We made a lot of office space changes, especially in the Broward office, in order to put units together. As office spaces are completed, staff are invited to start coming into the offices on a more regular basis. It was noted that the return to the offices will be gradual; however, all staff are required to have some formal presence in the offices.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

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

Col. Benjamin reported that the committee will meet next week, and a report will be provided at the next Board meeting.

- Adolescent Services Committee – Melida Akiti, Committee Chair

Melida Akiti noted that after a child turns 18 in the judicial system, unfortunately very few thrive, especially among black/brown males. This Committee has just completed a very strong study. Now we are going to be focusing on black/brown youth, starting at the age of 13, to help them transition to adulthood.

Shakeyia Brown, Director of Service Coordination, gave a brief presentation on the Adolescent & Young Adult Project, of which a copy was provided to the Board. Over the past year, a total of 22 youth ages 13-17, were tracked to gain insight into the effectiveness of placements, behavioral health services, residential placements and mentoring/life coaching. What was learned is that caregiver/placement matters, that service provision is not constant and additional staff support is needed. The recommendations of this committee is to expand the committee, identify metrics, expand current successful residential models, i.e., Hope House and Oak Street, improve communication and accountability with independent living service providers, develop staff dedicated to children ages 13-17, and improve education of staff regarding independent living services



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

Andrea Cunningham reported on the following:

- The Broward Care For Kids Cocktail Reception – took place on April 9, 2022, at Lauderdale Yacht Club with 160 attendees. After expenses, we raised a total of \$90,000 in sponsorships, individual ticket sales and donations. We had a lot of first-time attendees and are following up with them to come in for tours and to learn more about ChildNet.
- Palm Beach Independent Living (IL) Graduation – scheduled for June 2, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. at Embassy Suites in West Palm Beach.

- **Governance Committee – Amy Black, Committee Chair**

- **Quarterly Strategic Plan Update**

- Goal 1 – Create a 1% total budget contingency fund through a combination of fundraising and revenue maximization. At the end of the 3rd quarter of the third fiscal year, we have exceeded the goal of 1%. We are at 1.235% of the goal amount of \$1,402,190.
- Goal 2 – Safely decrease the use of residential group care by 30%. At the end of the 3rd quarter of the third fiscal year, the number of children in residential group care - Annual Mean for Broward is a 22% decrease from FY 18-19 and for Palm Beach is a 29% decrease from FY 18-19.
- Goal 3 – Create a fully implemented new corporate structure with management company and two unique organizations with individual boards by May 2020. At the end of the 3rd quarter of the third fiscal year, ChildNet will submit a draft of the formal contract consolidation proposal to DCF Secretary for Administration following ChildNet's receipt of formal notification of FY 2022-2023 CBC lead agency core funding allocations.

- **Board Member's Mixer** – The Board Mixer will be held on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at Prezzo in Boca Raton from 6:00-8:00 p.m. A big thank you was given to Melida Akiti who advocated for funds for the mixer and now Memorial is underwriting the costs for this mixer.
- **Membership Recruitment** – We are waiting on an application from a Palm Beach candidate, and an application will be sent to Broward candidate, Lois Marino from BBX Capital Foundation.
- **Board Officer Slate** – The Board Officer Slate for FY 2022-2023 will be presented to the Board at the May 2022 meeting.

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

Julie DeMar reported that the committee reviewed a couple of procedural changes, and discussion was held on the census trends in both counties.

NEW BUSINESS

- Dennis Miles, DCF Director of Family Wellbeing, reported that local programs will now report directly to Tallahassee. Mr. Miles worked with 13 out of the 19 CBCs and stated that ChildNet and Communities Connected for Kids in Circuit 19 are the best CBCs in the state. Not only are we high performers but that the leadership team is second to none. Mr. Miles noted that Mr. Rein is a key statewide voice and that ChildNet is an impressive operation.



CONTINUING BUSINESS

- ChildNet's Anti-Racism Workgroup Update – Dr. Tamaru Phillips reported that the workgroup is working on effectuating systemic changes within our agency, and we are going to give focus to black/brown teenagers in group care. This population needs our direct oversight more than ever. We have strong committees working toward the goal of placing these youth in foster homes or relative/non-relative care instead of group care. We are also discussing with Rae Bullard, CHRO and Andrea Cunningham, Director of Community Relations, next steps in moving the workgroup further to ensure the continued momentum that we have among our members.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Michael Lepera

- Mr. Lepera noted that he is looking forward to meeting all Board members face-to-face at the Board Mixer. He noted that we need to focus on bringing our brand awareness out to the community. The more that we can communicate ChildNet out to the community, the more we create the awareness, which will result in more support back to ChildNet for the kids and for when we are trying to raise discretionary funding.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- DCF Reorganization - Mr. Rein noted that he has mixed feelings on the DCF reorganization. The relationship between the Department and the Southeast Region has been remarkable and Dennis Miles has been a very strong partner of ChildNet. In the other regions, perhaps there was not the strength in those regional manager positions and that may be driving the move of the reorganization.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 20, 2022, 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 9:28 a.m.



Dr. Victoria Thurston
Board Secretary



Date

(Corporate Seal)