



ANNUAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2023

Board of Directors:

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

Unable to Attend:

David Prather, Meghan Russell, Ronald Ford, Sabria McElroy

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Susan Eby, Deena Ponto, Nicole Slade, Shanny Tozzi, Noelle Brillembourg, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Elisa Cramer, Teresa Janeczek

CALL TO ORDER – Amy Black, Board Chair

- Amy Black, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Rebecca Brock, Board Secretary

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The May 19, 2023, 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

- Mr. Rein noted that the staff member being recognized for May 2023 was not able to attend today's meeting so her recognition will be at the August 2023 Board meeting.

BOARD SERVICE – Jason Tracey, CLO

- Approval of Resolutions #248 - #251 – Election of Officers – The following names were brought to the Board for vote for Officer Positions for a one (1) year reappointment, ending June 2024:

- *Chair* – Amy Black
- *Vice Chair* – Dr. Victoria Thurston
- *Treasurer* – Meghan Russell
- *Secretary* – Rebecca Brock

A motion was moved and seconded to approve Resolutions #248-#251 for reappointment of one (1) year, ending June 2024. *A vote was taken.* The ayes have it and *the motion was adopted.*

- Approval of Resolution #252 – Election of Directors – two-year reappointment – The following slate of Directors are up for reappointment of a two (2) year term ending June 2025:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ▪ Chelsea Bellew | ▪ Nancy Gregoire Stamper |
| ▪ David Prather | ▪ Paul Adams |
| ▪ Col. Josefa Benjamin | ▪ Dr. Ronald Ford |
| ▪ Lois Marino | ▪ Sabria McElroy |
| ▪ Michael Lepera | |

A motion was moved and seconded to approve Resolution #252 for re-appointment of two (2) years, ending June 2025. *A vote was taken.* The ayes have it and *the motion was adopted.*



ADDITIONAL ITEM FOR APPROVAL – Jason Tracey, CLO

- Approval of Resolution #253 – Compliance with License Requirements, Regulations and Decrees – Discussion was held by Jason Tracey that this annual compliance check is to ensure that all ChildNet licenses are in place.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve Resolution #253. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted.

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

- FY 2023-2024 Budget – Donna Eprifania, CFO, reported that previously the Finance Committee reviewed the initial budgets in May, in June the budgets get fleshed out, no meeting in July, so then the recommended budgets are presented for ratification to the full board at the August Board meeting. This year, the budget approval process needed to be moved up as the legislature added a new requirement when approving the allocation; lead agency board-approved budgets must have subsequent Department of Children & Families approval prior to any release of the September invoice. DCF has been given the charge to ensure the individual community-based care (CBC) lead agencies can work within their core budget allocation.

The Finance Committee met on 06-21-23 and discussed the budgets thoroughly. Some caveats that are a part of these budgets are when we submit these budgets to DCF, the core or discretionary funding that we receive must be submitted to DCF in a balanced fashion. In order to achieve this, in Palm Beach, we will need a commitment of some of our unrestricted funding (non-DCF generated revenue). Our unrestricted pool has approximately \$2 million; we will need to commit \$438,000 of that funding. In Broward, our roll-forward funding started at \$14 million; we budgeted almost \$4 million this last year but have expended over an additional \$1 million, totaling a \$5 million need from our roll-forward this year. To balance the budget next year, we will need approximately \$6.5 million. In using roll-forward to balance the budget, we will have to demonstrate to DCF that the use of these funds will be supporting non-recurring activities.

- Approval of FY 2023-2024 Broward Budget – Resolution #254 – The Broward budget for FY 2023-2024 is \$97,719,975.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve FY 2023-2024 Broward Budget in the amount of \$97,719,975. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted. This Budget can now be submitted to DCF for their approval.

- Approval of FY 2023-2024 Palm Beach Budget – Resolution #255 – The Palm Beach budget for FY 2023-2024 is \$60,123,292.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve FY 2023-2024 Palm Beach Budget in the amount of \$60,123,292. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted. This Budget can now be submitted to DCF for their approval.

ANNUAL UPDATE – Jason Tracey, CLO

- Discussion of Sunshine Law – Jason Tracey noted that no changes have been made since last year. Mr. Tracey noted that per Sunshine Law, meetings must be open to the public and minutes are to be taken. No use of computers to conduct private discussions regarding board business. Julie Janello will send a link/video to the Board from the Inspector General that discusses Sunshine Law.
- Board Survey Presentation – Jason Tracey provided a brief overview of the board survey results. Discussion was held that “very good” responses increased by 2%; five responses that were “satisfactory” last year moved up to the “very good” category, and five responses in “needs improvement” last year were reduced to three. It was noted that 8 of the 13 Board Directors have served on the Board less than two years, 2 of the 13 Directors have served on the Board between two and four years, and 3 of the 13 Directors have served four years or more.



Larry Rein noted that Board participation was 100% on every question. The duration of Board directors showed 8 have served less than two years so he was very happy with the good reviews.

The national perspective will change a bit in the future. ChildNet is going to join a newly formed organization called the National Center for Community Based Child Welfare. ChildNet is going to take advantage of joining this organization as a founding member and we hope to be a member of the Board of Directors of this organization. The bigger system challenge we face is the continued erosion of the community-based care model. It has been remarkably successful but as we continue in time, legislators and administrators of DCF do not have the perspective to understand just how significant an improvement it has been over the last 25 years. Making the argument and creating the position nationally, and expanding this model across the country, can have great value to us in Florida to maintain and go forward.

Mr. Rein stated that the board's physical presence needs further discussion. Amy Black suggested having another Board social, possibly in October, and to also have an in-person Board meeting prior to December. Lois Marino suggested having a Board meeting and social at BBX Capital on Las Olas in Fort Lauderdale.

- Board/Committee Meeting Calendar, Board Roster/Contact List and Committee Structure and Membership – These documents were updated and provided to the Board. Mr. Tracey noted that there will not be Board or Committee meetings in the months of July and December, unless otherwise requested by the Board Chair.
- Annual Acknowledgement Form – Annually, each Board member is to complete the Acknowledgement Form to note any conflicts of interest. Julie Janello will email the form to full Board for completion.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Adolescent Services Committee – Col. Josefa Benjamin, Committee Chair

Susan Eby reported that the Committee had their quarterly meeting on 06-16-23. They were provided some preliminary data updates and updates on some of the projects that are moving forward. Ms. Eby noted that the Adolescent Care Coordinators are making an impact.

- Community Engagement Committee – Lois Marino, Committee Chair and Shanny Tozzi, Director of Community Relations

Lois Marino reported that the committee has not yet met and are looking at having the first meeting in August 2023. They are looking at growing this committee with additional board directors. Shanny Tozzi, Director of Community Relations introduced Noelle Brillembourg, the new Community Relations Manager. We are trying to bridge the gap in fundraising, in addition to taking care of all graduations and other events. We need more Board participation in future fundraising events. We also need to work on getting relationships with outside organizations to assist with fundraising, donations i.e., furniture companies, and to have more volunteers, to increase our footprint.

- Broward and Palm Beach Graduation Ceremonies – the Palm Beach graduation took place on June 20, 2023 at Embassy Suites; Broward graduation took place on June 22, 2023 at Broward College, Davie. We had over 100 attendees at each graduation. Larry Rein urged the Board to attend these events in the future as they will see amazing success stories and the resilience of these young adults.
- Governance Committee – Dr. Victoria Thurston, Vice Chair and Committee Chair
 - Membership Recruitment
 - Donna Korn – We will send the Board Candidate Application Packet to Ms. Korn, who is a former member of the Broward County School Board. Ms. Korn's family were foster parents.
 - Mr. Rein noted that we are still looking for a candidate in Palm Beach. Col. Benjamin has another potential candidate who works at Broward College. Mr. Rein noted that Judge Kroll suggested that he talk again with retired Judge Debbie Pucillo to see her availability and interest now. Previously, the timing did not work for Judge Pucillo. Nancy Stamper may have someone from Broward Health.



- **Program Quality Committee – Nancy Stamper, Committee Chair**

Nancy Stamper noted that the Committee met on June 21, 2023 and Julie DeMar discussed the DCF Quarterly Quality Event. In Circuit 15, the overall quality score was 2.7 out of 5, from 07-01-22 to 03-31-23. In Circuit 17, the overall quality score was 3 out of 5, in same timeframe. Susan Eby gave a brief overview of the Evidenced Based Program presentation and reviewed the engagement rates, discharge rates, and freedom from abuse rates in Broward and Palm Beach County.

Every two weeks, ChildNet has internal report card meetings. Larry Rein noted that we are going to incorporate into the CEO Evaluation of where we compare to the State means. After two years, the DCF report card is still a 'work in progress'. There is still need for improvement. The 5-point score is figured on a scale that to us does not make sense. We saw where ChildNet was well above the target and well above the state average, but we still only received "3s" instead of "4s and 5s".

NEW BUSINESS

- No new business to discuss.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- ChildNet's Anti-Racism Workgroup Update – Nicole Slade reported that on Juneteenth they had a bowling event and shared community events in both counties. The Workgroup finished the Resource List for our Black Hair initiative. We continue to work on a parent survey to help improve some of our engagement and to get information about the black parents' experience in the child welfare system. Finishing up the length of stay. We sent a Workgroup representative to be part of the development of the Palm Beach Youth Council. We are continuing our recruitment efforts for the workgroup.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Amy Black

- No report this month.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- Special Appropriations Request – The two (2) Special Local Appropriation Requests for ChildNet Palm Beach were approved by the Governor:
 - 1) Replicate Oak Street Program for 4 of the most complex, dually dependent and delinquent teenage girls in Palm Beach (\$650,000).
 - 2) Parent Engagement Program – Intensive focused case management and support program for parents whose children have been removed due to the parents' substance abuse challenges. This is not an evidence-based model, but a model geared to meeting the specific needs of these families. A key piece of this is we will extend it beyond just reunification to continue to support that reunification and help families should they relapse (\$250,000).

Legislative Update - The CBCs received a significant amount of money from the legislature last year and there were still six CBCs that ended in a deficit posture at the end of this fiscal year. This circumstance has proven difficult for the legislature to reconcile based on their supportive actions. The six CBCs that are in a deficit posture are now applying for back-of-the-bill funding, of which \$18 million is set aside. The back-of-the-bill funding is designed to fill in deficits in the current fiscal year. Even though last year ChildNet Palm Beach received an increase of \$2.7 million, we are one of the six CBCs with a projected deficit of \$1.4 million this year. The previous process was that DCF asks us for our projections in terms of a deficit budget. DCF then vets the deficit projection. Once DCF agrees with the deficit projection, the funds would then be provided to the CBC. Now the CBCs need to go through a new application process, modeled after the risk-pool process. We completed the application process and are awaiting news on our \$1.4 million application.

- Residential Treatment Services – Mr. Rein met with DCF in Tallahassee to discuss residential treatment services. DCF, at its highest levels, is very committed in looking at making significant changes with residential treatment options for children in the State of Florida – not only dependent children but all children. We have



children that we believe are not getting the services in what they really need. We have had two productive meetings and will continue to meet to try to make some important changes in the array of residential treatment services for children in the State of Florida. This is a major priority to ChildNet as it is one of our three Strategic Plan goals. On the statewide level, it is starting to move in the right direction. The Agency for Healthcare Administration, who is the primary funder of residential treatment services for children in the State of Florida, is part of these meetings. We will also be bringing in the Managing Entities to these meetings as well.

- Florida Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse – Larry Rein was appointed by the Governor to serve on this commission two years ago. The Commission has been reauthorized by the legislature to create sub-committee on Children's Mental Health and Substance Abuse. Larry Rein noted that he is one of three committee members appointed to that sub-committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 25, 2023.

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 9:47 a.m.

Rebecca Brock
Board Secretary

8-31-23

Date

(Corporate Seal)