



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 25, 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, Paul Adams

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Susan Eby, Rae Bullard, Deena Ponto, Sheryl Williams, Nicole Slade, Shanny Tozzi, Yeshua Clark, Samantha Ramsaran, Connie Lee, Sheree Tortora, Joe Mbwambo, Sandra Vargas, Alison Serian, Jada Wright, Jerome Williams, Luz Rodriguez, Kaydion Watson, Brianna Waite, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Dawn Liberta, Teresa Janeczek, *Judicial:* Judge Kathleen Kroll

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 June 23, 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

- The ChildNet Board Employee Recognition Award was presented to the following deserving employees:
 - May 2023 – Brianna Waite, Lead Dependency Case Manager, Unit 106
 - June 2023 – Alison Serian, Director of Case Management
 - July 2023 – Yeshua Clark, MIS Support Specialist II

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

- **Board Candidate – Mark Dhooge – Provider Representative** - Larry Rein and Amy Black met with Mr. Dhooge, President & CEO of Kids in Distress and Family Central, who operates in both Broward and Palm Beach Counties. They both feel that Mr. Dhooge would be a great asset to the Board as a provider representative. His position would be a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve Mark Dhooge as the provider representative of the Board. *A vote was taken.* The ayes have it and *the motion was adopted.*



- **Board Candidate - Donna Korn** - Larry Rein and Amy Black met with Ms. Korn, Managing Director of Cushman & Wakefield. Ms. Korn served on the Broward County School Board and Guardian ad Litem. They both feel that Ms. Korn would be a great asset to the Board.

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

Larry Rein noted that Broward Board Directors are filled now that Col. Benjamin is a resident of Broward instead of Palm Beach.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- **Missing Persons Unit** – Samantha Ramsaran, Director of Permanency and Youth Services in Palm Beach, and Constance Lee, Supervisor of Missing Persons in Broward, provided a brief overview of the Missing Persons Unit, in which a copy of the presentation was provided to the Board. The Unit is responsible for the coordination of efforts to locate, recover and prevent future runaway episodes and consists of five staff in Broward and one in Palm Beach. Discussion was held on the roles and responsibilities of the Unit staff. It was noted that some children runaway for a few days, some a few weeks, and some for years. In addition, they go out-of-state and out-of-the-country as well. As of 08-22-23, nine youth were missing in Palm Beach and 12 were missing in Broward. The Unit works with the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and in Broward they are under the jurisdiction of Broward County Courts. Both Ms. Ramsaran and Ms. Lee presented a success story in each county.

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

- Meghan Russell, Board Treasurer noted that there is no update at this time as the Finance Committee will meet next Wednesday, August 30, 2023.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

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

Lois Marino, Chair reported that as this is a new committee, they want to define what exactly the committee's responsibilities are. This committee is not just a fundraising or events committee, but it will also be about connections, conversations and collaborations. They are working on a presentation of recommendations of how we will be utilizing this committee. We want to tell the story of ChildNet effectively, create opportunities to expand awareness within the community through existing or new partnerships, and help to increase the level of services to children and families we serve. As the committee is small, Ms. Marino is asking if more Board Directors would like to join this committee to contact her and/or Shanny Tozzi. Larry Rein noted that this committee is long overdue. There is dramatic need for more fiscal resources in both counties and that requires much better engagement of the community. This committee is about better engaging and getting support, of all kinds, in both counties.

- **Board Mixer/Board Meeting** – October 2, 2023 at 4:30 at BBX Capital in Fort Lauderdale. Light bites and beverages will be served. Discussion was also held that the September 22, 2023 Board meeting will be moved to take place on October 2, 2023 just prior to the Board Mixer at BBX Capital.



- Palm Beach Luncheon - The 2024 Event Sponsorship Packets have been emailed to the full Board. The Palm Beach Luncheon venue has been moved to Boca West for February 2, 2024 honoring Terry Cooper.

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

- **Quarterly Strategic Plan Update – Quarter 2** - Discussion was held on the second quarter of the Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2025, a copy of which was provided to the Committee members.

- Goal 1 – Improve and sustain ChildNet’s workforce by implementing proven and innovative practices. *Evidence of goal progress in one year is ChildNet will reduce annual external voluntary turnover from 30% to 28%.*

Rae Bullard reported that we are on track with turnover. As of June 2023, ChildNet’s annualized turnover is at 25.27% and the 2nd Quarter Year-Over-Year turnover is at 4.43%, down from 9.69% from last year. Human Resources has enhanced the New Hire Onboarding Day 1 and are revising the Reward and Recognition Program to align with the current budget.

- Goal 2 – Expand the array of appropriate placement and treatment options for children. *Evidence of goal progress in one year is ChildNet will reduce the percentage of children with stays over 14 days at SafePlace from 32% to 30%.*

Susan Eby reported that we are heading in the right direction as Palm Beach is @ 36%, Broward is @ 30% and both overall is @ 33.18%. They have created a Foster Home Recruitment Coordinator position, are opening a new small-census home to serve 4 complex girls in Palm Beach, a community-wide workgroup has been launched to support the no eject, no reject group homes in Palm Beach, and are working, in Broward, with One Hope United for girl home expansion.

- Goal 3 – Improve identification and support of kinship caregivers. *Evidence of goal progress in one year is ChildNet will increase the percentage of children in kinship placements to 60%.*

Julie DeMar reported that Palm Beach is @ 54.26%, Broward is @ 49.28% with both overall @ 52.64%. ChildNet’s Family Finding program is assigned to all youth placed in licensed care when they are sheltered by DCF. The Broward Government Performance Labs (GPL) project has completed the final quarter of work. The project has shifted focus to training ChildNet staff on being a kinship first culture. A Kinship Strategic Workgroup has begun in Broward and will expand to include Palm Beach, and ChildNet’s Continuous Quality Improvement Department created a kinship review tool.

- **FY 2022-2023 CEO Scorecard** – The CEO Scorecard for FY 2022-2023 will be sent to the Governance/Executive Committee, along with the CEO Self-Evaluation, by 09-06-23 with a completion due date of 09-13-23. The CEO Evaluation and Recommendations will then be discussed at the September 2023 Governance/Executive Meeting and Board Meeting.

- **Membership Recruitment** – A Board Candidate Application was approved to be sent to Gregory Fried in Palm Beach.

- **Legal/Human Resources Committee – Rebecca Brock, Committee Chair**

Rebecca Brock reported that the committee met on August 7, 2023. The Risk Management Committee met and reported that ChildNet Broward experienced three Level-3 incidents and none in Palm Beach. ChildNet did not retain any outside legal counsel.



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

Nancy Stamper reported that the committee met and reviewed the Census Trends and the Foster Parent Survey, copies provided to the full board.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- **ChildNet's Anti-Racism Workgroup Update** – Nicole Slade, Program Officer of Case Management and Intake & Placement reported that the Workgroup did a relaunch of their Black Hair Flyer through email to the Service Coordination Department to distribute to the licensing agencies and to the Intake and Placement Department in both counties to be added to the CRR books. This is a centralized email where a couple of people from our workgroup would be answering any questions about how to do black hair or needing resources or a referral to a beautician or someone to help do the children's hair. The workgroup is looking to have more of a presence, not just during the holidays, such as Juneteenth or during Black History month, so that more data and information is sent out on a regular basis, specifically data around demographics like the representation in the child welfare system and how that representation translates to exits, reunifications and length of stay. We have a couple of people from the workgroup joining the Planning Committee for the Youth Board in Palm Beach, so that we have representation there and being able to talk about what some of those issues are, specifically some of our older Black youth that are in the system. The workgroup is working on a Black parent survey project, looking for engagement of our parents and what that experience looks like for our parents being Black in the child welfare system. We are looking to see what we can do differently or suggest in terms of better engagement.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Amy Black

- Amy Black reported that Larry Rein and she have been interviewing for a ChildNet Chief of Staff position. More discussion will be provided next month.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- Larry Rein reported that ChildNet received a response from DCF to our back-of-the-bill funding request for \$1.4 million to fill the deficit in the Palm Beach budget. Palm Beach will receive a little over \$754,000. DCF has approved ChildNet's Palm Beach budget but not yet approved Broward's budget, as there are some questions and concerns of our use of carry-forward or surplus funds from prior years and how we are going to use that in the coming years' budget.

Donna Eprifania reported the use of carry-forward or surplus funding is supposed to be used only on non-recurring activities. This would then allow for a CBC to still work within the annual allocation. When we submitted the Broward budget, we were able to demonstrate about \$4.5 million of true, non-recurring initiatives. We need to ensure that moving forward that the utilization of this year's and next year's roll-forward that we are able to sustain within our core funding allocation.

In Broward, we budgeted \$3.9 million and utilized \$6.9 million. This was an anomaly year with three pay periods and an increase in the census. We have put forth some action plans to get us back into line. We stated that we did need \$6.4 million. By utilizing what we did this year and what we are projecting for FY 23-24 that would deplete almost all of our roll-forward.

In Palm Beach, DCF, in May 2023, gave us additional dollars for residential group care associated with FFPSA, which backfilled about \$367,000. Then with \$754,000 from back-of-the-bill funding, we received about \$1.1 million. Palm Beach will then start FY 23-24 with a deficit in the range of \$250,000-\$350,000.



PUBLIC COMMENT

- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 2, 2023 @ 4:30 p.m., in person at BBX Capital, The Main, 201 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 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 9:37 a.m.

Rebecca Brock
Board Secretary

11.8.23

Date

(Corporate Seal)