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# BOARD MEETING MINUTES

## August 26, 2022

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### **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, Melida Akiti, Michael Lepera, Nancy Gregoire Stamper, Paul Adams, Ronald Ford, Tom Lukasik

### **Unable to Attend:**

Nancy Gregoire Stamper

### **Other Attendees:**

*ChildNet Staff:* Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Susan Eby, Rae Bullard, Andrea Cunningham, Deena Ponto, Sheryl Williams, Nicole Slade, Diane Rufus, Tara Collins, Hashani Paul, Kathy Entin, Sherrelle Young, Michael Davis, Jamica Smith, Sherley Moncher, Victoria McCullum, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Elisa Cramer, Teresa Janeczek, Dawn Liberta, Dennis Miles

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### **CALL TO ORDER – Amy Black, Board Chair**

- Amy Black, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Rebecca Brock, Board Secretary**

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The June 24, 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:
  - May 2022 – Michael Davis, Dependency Case Manager, Unit H1
  - June 2022 – Sherley Moncher, Lead Dependency Case Manager, Unit A4
  - July 2022 – Jamica Smith, Early Childhood Court Specialist

### **DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

- Case Management – Julie DeMar, Chief Program Officer, provided an in-depth overview of the Case Management department. Ms. DeMar oversees three Program Officers, one in Palm Beach and two in Broward. In Palm Beach, Nicole Slade oversees dependency case management, independent living, and intake and placement. In Broward, Sheryl Williams oversees dependency case management and adoptions, and Deena Ponto oversees dependency case management, independent living, and youth services. In Broward, each Program Officer supervises four directors and in Palm Beach, the Program Officer supervises five directors.

Case Management Roles – case managers are responsible for ensuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children who have been found to be victims of abuse, abandonment, and neglect. Case



managers and supervisors work together to gather information, make case recommendations, share information with others involved in the cases, and work with the parents, caregiver, and children in this process.

Discussion held on the many examples of tasks that case managers have to ensure children are safe, to promote permanency, and to ensure children's needs are met. Discussion was held on the monitoring of case management success and challenges, i.e., DCF completes Life of Case Review tools and CFSR tools on random samples of case files and provides feedback on the status of the casework, internal Report Card meetings held every other week to look at 15 performance measures, and internal CQI Special Focused Reviews when there are performance measures that have identified opportunity for improvement. Discussion was held on the current case management improvement initiatives: Focus on Permanency Being Achieved in a Timely Manner, Identify and Implement Strategies to Improve Kinship Placements, Improved Preparedness for the Life of Case Tool, and Retention of Case Management Staff.

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

- Meghan Russell reported that the Finance Committee is presenting the FY 2022-2023 budgets to the board for review and approval. The Finance Committee had multiple meetings to review this year's budget.

Donna Eprifania reported that last year in Broward, we budgeted \$91.9 million inclusive of \$3.7 million of roll forward funds. We are still sitting on a \$14.5 million surplus balance in Broward. This provided us to utilize our full contract and actually only \$1.1 million of roll forward, so we will still have a balance of \$13 million in Broward.

In both county budgets, we are continuing to expand on the small census group homes and ensuring we could test other initiatives. We did the evidence-based programs last year. This year, we are trying some initiatives for intact families, specifically in zip codes 33011 and 33013. We will be receiving additional resources for fatherhood initiatives. For relatives that become Level 1 foster parents, they will receive a stipend that is equal to the published rate. In addition, there is some support for families that have children 0-5 to receive a \$200 stipend available to use towards childcare. There are additional resources for our young adults. Last year they received a monthly stipend \$1,296 when participating in secondary education. This year it has increased to \$1,702. As it relates to personnel, the budget is inclusive of the C.O.L.A. increase that was distributed in the 07-09-22 payroll and inclusive of calculating a factor for merit increases that will be distributed at the top of the calendar year.

Suggestion was made to include a bonus system. Ms. Eprifania noted that including a bonus system is not an approach that has been available with the utilization of state funds. However, now that we are at a place where we are having a healthy unrestricted balance, which can be used in both counties, it could be something that the Board could consider. Other suggestions would be for ChildNet to provide a holiday party, gift cards, and to look at possibly increasing ChildNet's match to the 403(b). Donna Eprifania and Rae Bullard will discuss and bring back to the Board.

- Approval of FY 2022-2023 Broward Budget – Resolution #242 – The Broward budget for FY 2022-2023 is \$94,204,668, which is an increase of \$2.2 million from last year.

*A motion was moved and seconded to approve FY 2022-2023 Broward Budget in the amount of \$94,204,668. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted.*

- Approval of FY 2022-2023 Palm Beach Budget – Resolution #243 – The Palm Beach budget for FY 2022-2023 is \$59,096,273, which is an increase of \$4.9 million from last year.

*A motion was moved and seconded to approve FY 2022-2023 Palm Beach Budget in the amount of \$59,096,273. A vote was taken. The ayes have it and the motion was adopted.*



## COVID-19 UPDATE – Larry Rein, CEO and President

- COVID-19 Update – Larry Rein reported that we are coming to the end of the COVID-19 updates. We anticipate having an increased presence in the offices in both counties following the Labor Day holiday in September. Each leadership member is formalizing their requirements for staff within their departments.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

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

Col. Benjamin reported the quarterly census and placement trends were reviewed. There was a notable 11% decrease in the number of children served out-of-home, which is the lowest since ChildNet has been in Palm Beach. Discussion was held on contract monitorings. We continue to monitor percentages for improvement. We discussed strategies that remain in place like corrective actions to gain compliance for those providers that are non-compliant.

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

Andrea Cunningham reported on the following:

- Boca's Got Talent - We wrapped up our Boca's Got Talent event that was held on August 8, 2022 at Crazy Uncle Mikes and Joe Rogers was one of the judges. We raised awareness and interest about ChildNet, and we raised \$3,000.
- Broward Care for Kids Cocktail Reception – May 11, 2023. We will be honoring Melida Akiti.
- Palm Beach Care for Kids Luncheon – February 28, 2023 at Woodfield Country Club, Boca Raton. We will be honoring Dr. Heidi Schaeffer.
- Back to School Drive – we distributed over 700 backpacks in both Broward and Palm Beach.
- Social Media - We are continuing to evaluate social media trends and are making adjustments accordingly, which is why we are focused on creating videos for our newsletters and social media platforms.
- DCF Roundtable – The DCF Roundtable that was held in ChildNet Palm Beach will air three times on Sunday. It is also airing on all of our stations around the state this week and next.
- Donations and Grants - In July 2022, we raised \$16,000 between individual donation and grants.
- Thank-A-Thon - Each year we hold a Thank-A-Thon where board members call at least 5 of our donors to say 'thank you' and to ask the donors why they chose ChildNet. It is a great way for us to thank our donors. This also sets us up for our year-end giving campaign. We need volunteers to commit to calling 5 donors. Ms. Cunningham can provide their name, contact number and a summary of what they have given to, along with a script.

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

- Board Committees – The Board will be updated on all committees to ensure balance of Board members and skills for each committee.
- 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 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the third fiscal year, we have exceeded the goal of 1%. We are at 1.42% 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 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the third fiscal year, the number of children in residential group care - Annual Mean for Broward is a 20% decrease from FY 18-19 and for Palm Beach is a 27% decrease from FY 18-19. The Committee suggested Goal 2 to be a continuing goal for the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.
- 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 contract amendment that confirms an increase in the Palm Beach core funding for FY 2022-2023 for \$2.75 million. Once we receive the amendment amount of \$2.75 million, we will go back to the Department and talk about consolidating the two contracts.

- **FY 2021-2022 CEO Scorecard** – Discussion held that the Governance/Executive Committee provided Mr. Rein with his annual scorecard. Mr. Rein scored 3.67 out of 4 points. There are quantitative measures that ChildNet must meet as an organization. These scores are included in the total score of 3.67 out of 4 points. Mr. Rein was commended on a great year.
- **Membership Recruitment** – Larry Rein reported that both Tom McManus (Broward) and Catherine Coombs (Palm Beach) have both deferred joining our board at this time.

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

Rebecca Brock reported that ChildNet did not retain any outside counsel. Discussion was held that the Risk Management Committee also met. They reported that ChildNet Broward experienced three Level 3 incidences and Palm Beach experienced one Level 3 incident. Discussion was held about the benefit of adding more members to this committee.

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

Julie DeMar discussed that the committee reviewed several procedural updates in preparation of the Council on Accreditation (COA) site visit in November 2022. Reviewed the 15 measures on the Report Card for both Broward and Palm Beach. Overall, a number of measures were met. The few measures that were not met, we are very close to meeting. In addition, Susan Eby presented the Contract Monitoring Outcomes Report to the committee.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- There was no new business.

## **CONTINUING BUSINESS**

- ChildNet’s Anti-Racism Workgroup Update – Sheryl Williams, Program Officer of Case Management and Adoptions, reported Nicole Slade, Program Officer of Case Management, Independent Living, and Intake & Placement, is the new co-chair of the workgroup. Ms. Williams discussed membership recruitment for this committee. Discussion was held on prioritizing our goals within the workgroup for this upcoming year. They include reviewing policies and practices within our agency that will allow us to review and collect data that could focus on changes and adjustments in child welfare in our agency. One of the assignments we started in June 2022, was to look at older teenagers in out-of-home care (majority group homes). We selected 30 teenagers (15 in each county), where 10 workgroup members, worked with 3 teenagers each, by speaking with the foster parent and the teenager to see if there was anything we could have done differently, or needed to do differently, regarding placement and length of stay. We got some feedback from some of the youth. The Intake & Placement team wants the workgroup to focus on



our placement profiles. Will look at what we can do differently to find foster home placements. Some of the workgroup, Andrea Cunningham and Rae Bullard met with Melida Akiti regarding some funding. Also working with Sue Gallagher from Children's Home Society of Broward as their agency is also doing some of this work.

#### **BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Amy Black**

- Board Committee Review – Ms. Black noted that she is working on matching committees to board members and will meet with Larry Rein to review. Also looking at how to incorporate the Palm Beach Advisory Board into another committee. Board Committee Review draft to be provided to the full board at the next Board meeting.
- 2022-2025 Strategic Plan – Ms. Black noted that Mr. Rein will contact the facilitator that was used on the last strategic plan. Our intent is to have the meeting with the facilitator by October 2022 and to have the Strategic Plan in place by the end of the calendar year. Discussed that we would like to include both short-term and long-term goals on the new Strategic Plan.

#### **CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein**

- Larry Rein reported that as he likes our strategic planning process so much, that in his role as the Chair of the Florida Coalition for Children Foundation, they convened the first strategic planning retreat of the FCC in almost ten years and are trying to do something very similar to what we are doing at ChildNet. As part of Mr. Rein's CEO evaluation, he completes a self-evaluation. As he started his self-evaluation, he noted that some goals were not met. Even so, he feels that perhaps this is our most successful year we have had. Never have we worked harder in the face of more significant and substantial challenges. Mr. Rein is proud of his team, staff and of our Board.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- There was no public comment.

#### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

- The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 23, 2022 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 9:44 a.m.

Rebecca Brock  
Board Secretary

Date

(Corporate Seal)