



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 28, 2020

Board of Directors:

Michael Lepera, Board Chair; Amy Black, Vice Chairman; Christopher Cade, Treasurer; Victoria Thurston, Secretary, Armando Fana, Jillian Smath, Josefa Benjamin, Joseph Rogers, Melida Akiti, Rebecca Brock, Sigrid McCawley, Tex Guignard

Unable to Attend:

Sigrid McCawley, Tex Guignard

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Donna Eprifania, Dionne Wong, Julie DeMar, Susan Eby, Deena Ponto, Andrea Cunningham, Kenia Allen, Julie Janello, Addorris Wilcox, Aminah Pointer, Aymee Prieto, Breon Johnson, Brittany Burnette, Brittany Souza, Charmaine Mitchell, Dawseah Hunter, Gabriela Smith, Jacquisa Jarrell Dunbar, Jennifer Leslie, Michael Tyler, Minelva Paschal, Nora Ernest, Roudelyne Joseph, *DCF:* Dawn Liberta, Dennis Miles, Teresa Janeczek

CALL TO ORDER – Michael Lepera, Board Chair

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Victoria Thurston, Secretary

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The June 19, 2020 meeting minutes were reviewed. *A motion was moved to approve the minutes. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously.*

CHILDNET BOARD EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD – Dionne Wong, CHRLO

- The Broward July 2020 and Palm Beach 2nd Quarter 2020 ChildNet Board Employee Recognition Awards were presented to the following deserving employees:
 - July 2020 (Bwd) – Kezia Stewart, Director of Intake & Placement - Broward
 - 2nd Quarter (PB) – SafePlace Coverage Group: Addorris Wilcox, Aminah Pointer, Aymee Prieto, Breon Johnson, Brittany Burnette, Brittany Souza, Charmaine Mitchell, Dawseah Hunter, Destany Anderson, Gabriela Smith, Jacquisa Jarrell Dunbar, Jennifer Leslie, Michael Tyler, Minelva Paschal, Nora Ernest, Roudelyne Joseph

Michael Lepera suggested having an annual celebration of all Board Employee Recognition Winners, in which Melida Akiti offered her office location for space and foods.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- Medical Unit – Kenia Allen, Director of Children’s Wellbeing, oversees the Medical Unit in both Broward and Palm Beach Counties. The Medical Unit has, in Broward, two Nurse Coordinators (registered nurses), five Medical Coordinators and a Supervisor, and in Palm Beach, three Medical Coordinators, one Nurse Coordinator and a Billing Coordinator for both counties. Ms. Allen provided



a brief overview of the process flow from intake through closing of the case. Melida Akiti expressed her concern that this Unit does not have medical oversight, i.e. a physician on board. Mr. Rein noted that once we have a new physician on the Board, we will consult with him as to how to go about contracting with a physician.

FINANCE REPORT – Chris Cade, Treasurer/Finance Chair and Donna Eprifania, CFO

- Chris Cade reported that the Finance Committee met on 08-26-20 and discussed the FY 20-21 budgets. Some new financial systems have been put into place that benefited in the preparation of the budget. The State is having revenue reductions due to COVID and has asked all CBCs to go through an exercise to see how we would fare in the face of certain revenue reductions passed down to us. Broward is in a much stronger position than Palm Beach to weather such a potential reduction. There is a potential investment in CBCIH in which we would become an equity holder in CBCIH which could have some unrestricted financial benefit to us in the future.
- Approval of FY 2020-2021 Palm Beach Budget – Resolution #206 – Donna Eprifania reported that the proposed Palm Beach Budget under consideration for board approval is exceeding the actual revenue base that we intend to receive prior to any budget cuts. We have received our allocation this fiscal year from DCF in concert with what was approved by the legislature in the last Session. There was an increase in our revenue this past year by \$970,000 as it relates to program funding. The predominance of the change, over last year, is that we have moved contracted services from an outsource to an in-house service delivery. Therefore, our personnel services - salaries and benefits - has increased by \$6.8 million. Also included was a 2% COLA for all employees. Another significant highlight was in out-of-home care. The \$914,000 additional resource that is projected is based on the current census. We are serving more children than our budgeted allocation supports. There is a significant decrease in the emergency shelter/residential group care, as the anticipated expense will be realized Foster Home Level 1 and 2 and Foster Home Management. Foster Home Level 1 is the licensing of relative caregivers, these caregivers are now entitled to a stipend that will be ongoing until the child is either 18 or there is a disruption in that placement. We are posturing for the upcoming legislation in October 2021, Families First Prevention Services Act, which will diminish the capacity to be able to reimburse for traditional group care settings, so we are trying to set up our service array in a fashion that affords children placement in a more family-like setting. We are starting the year with a \$327,000 deficit.

A motion was moved to approve FY 2020-2021 Palm Beach Budget in the amount of \$50,167,325. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously.

- Approval of FY 2020-2021 Broward Budget – Resolution #205 – Donna Eprifania reported that the proposed Broward Budget under consideration for board approval is fully utilized (zero balance). Two years ago, we created a surplus in the amount of \$3.2 million, this year, we are creating a surplus in the amount of \$6.4 million, so Broward has a carry forward of \$9.7 million. We are continuing to budget based on our annual allocation and treat carry forward as contingency funding. Other items of note in the 20-21 Broward budget, we have competitively procured two homes (similar to the Oak Street project in Palm Beach): one a boys' home and one a girls' home. We have increased an additional team for the Human Trafficking clients and include the Kinship Navigation initiative. We have approximately \$500,000 set aside to ensure that when we phase back into the office, we can appropriately be set-up for COVID from a fiscal and structural situation.

A motion was moved to approve FY 2020-2021 Broward Budget in the amount of \$83,630,987. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously.



- **Budget Reduction Exercise** – The Department of Children and Families has asked each CBC lead agency to provide plans for how they would handle cuts of 3% and 6% to this fiscal year’s allocation. For Palm Beach a 3% reduction equals \$767,000 and 6% reduction equals \$1.5 million. For ChildNet Broward a 3% reduction equals \$1.3 million and a 6% reduction equals \$2.5 million. Larry Rein noted that the legislature is the body that can actually reduce our budget. The Department nor the Governor cannot do it on their own. The Secretary feels a little more confident that reductions to child welfare, if they happen, will be more limited. The Secretary will be meeting with each CBC to discuss details about their meeting any of these reductions.
- **Investments** – Donna Eprifania reported that ChildNet has an opportunity to purchase a 1% share in CBCIH (Community-Based Care Integrated Health). CBCIH was established to support the behavioral health and physical and medical needs of children in the foster care system. There is an arrangement with CBCIH and all lead agencies to provide coordinated care. This is how the Medical Unit positions are funded. The current value of a share is \$47,900 which would be a one-time investment. The lead agency in the Treasure Coast, immediately to the north of Palm Beach, was an original CBCIH partner and had first year gain of 60%, and thereafter, since 2014, they have had a \$226,000 gain. Larry Rein noted that this would truly be unrestricted funds for our use much like the rental income from the home for Swaying Palms. Joe Rogers asked if CBCIH is non-profit or not. Leadership will do due diligence and also confirm that there will be no risk to ChildNet beyond its initial investment. The Finance Committee will review the documents recently provided and will discuss further at the next meeting.

COVID-19 UPDATE – Larry Rein, CEO and President

- Larry Rein reported that we continue to operate remotely. At the direction of DCF, beginning this month, home visits of children are now done face-to-face once every 90 days. We have just begun opening up supervised and therapeutic visitation in a very controlled way, particularly focusing on those children birth to three whose visits are supervised by interns from Nova Southeastern University and Florida Atlantic University. We continue to have regular communication with staff, providers, DCF and the FCC. We continue to maintain a good inventory of PPEs. We also are ensuring we are engaging our workforce during this pandemic. As of 08-27-20, numbers testing positive: 59 children, 26 provider staff, 11 ChildNet staff and 51 caregivers.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- **Advisory Board Committee – Armando Fana, Committee Chair**

Armando Fana reported that the committee discussed in-depth the year-end census and placement trends. Mr. Fana noted that we are having good trends even through COVID.

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

Andrea Cunningham reported the following.

- **Grants** – Children’s Services Council - \$15,000 with a matching grant of \$15,000 from the United Way of Palm Beach County for COVID. In addition, we received an AT&T Grant for \$25,000 for COVID to be used in both counties.
- **Pending Grants:**
 - 25,000 Palank Foundation- Broward
 - \$28,000 Truist Foundation-Broward



We are continuing to research grant opportunities through corporate and private foundations.

- GIVI App - A downloadable App that you can use to donate to ChildNet - Getgivi.com.
- Facebook - We added two more tabs to Facebook - a Join Our Mailing List tab and a Donate Now tab. Both links back to our website.
- Toy Drive - We are gearing up for our annual toy drive. Emails will be sent in the next few weeks.

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

- FY 19-20 CEO Scorecard – Amy Black reported that Larry Rein has done a wonderful job moving this organization forward. Mr. Rein scored a total of 3.51 points out of 4 points. The Committee recommended that the Board approve a 2% increase to Mr. Rein’s compensation to be consistent with the rest of the staff’s increase.

A motion was moved to approve a 2% increase to Mr. Rein’s compensation. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously.

- Resignation of Tex Guignard – Mr. Guignard resigned due to a conflict of interest with a new subcontracted provider, Florida United Methodist, in which Mr. Guignard is employed. Mr. Rein is looking at possible former foster youths to gauge their interest in joining the Board.
- Potential Board Candidate – Dr. Ronald Ford – Melida Akiti recommended Dr. Ronald Ford, Chief Medical Officer at Joe DiMaggio Hospital, who is the successor to Dr. Rosha McCoy. Mr. Rein met with Dr. Ford and has provided him the Board Candidate Application in which we hope to present at the next Board meeting.
- New AdHoc Committee – Independent Living Services for Youth 13-17 – This is a short-term committee to ensure youth ages 13-17, who are in foster care, are receiving the services in which they are entitled. ChildNet is in the process of hiring an Independent Living and Adolescent Services Coordinator who will take the lead in ChildNet’s activities. This committee would then transition over to the Program Quality Committee. Michael Lepera, Board Chair, offered the Committee Chair position to Melida Akiti who gladly accepted.
- *A motion was moved to approve the creation of the Independent Living Services for Youth 13-17 AdHoc Committee. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously.*
- Palm Beach Case Management Transition – Larry Rein reported that effective 08-24-20, ChildNet assumed full responsibility for case management services in Palm Beach as Children’s Home Society (CHS) decided not to renew their contract. There were more vacancies in the case management program than was known which caused a 25% reduction in the CHS workforce. We currently have hired 12 case management trainees to fill vacancies and we already have hired 15 trainees for the September class. We will continue to overhire until Palm Beach is fully staffed.

- **Legal/Human Resource Committee – Sigrid McCawley, Committee Chair**

- Dionne Wong reported that we have retained Maritza Pena for AdHoc projects. Ms. Pena also serves as ChildNet’s defense counsel. The Risk Management Committee met and focused on COVID. The Information Technology (IT) department gave an overview of the continued emphasis on supporting data security of the organization. Facilities noted their ongoing efforts



in providing PPEs. The Contracts department continues to support our providers. Andrew Wallick, Director of Service Quality, recently joined the committee, and spoke about clinical fidelity, and the priority that has been placed on performance of provider services. In addition, the IRS 1095 ACA (Affordable Care Act) penalty has been forgiven.

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

- Scorecard Review - Julie DeMar reported that the Committee reviewed the 4th Quarter Scorecard and discussed all 12 measures. Measure 1-6, 8-9 and 11 were met. Measure 7 and 12 were slightly below the goal, and Measure 10 was below due to dental offices being closed and/or having reduced staff due to COVID-19. Larry Rein noted that we are going to continue our relationship with Gold & Associates in Broward with a marketing campaign focusing solely on foster homes for teenagers and foster homes for sibling groups. The Kinship Navigator Program, an evidence-based program supports relative caregivers. Our hope is that this will enable us to develop more homes and give more support to relatives to take sibling groups and teenagers.

NEW BUSINESS

- There was no new business to report.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Michael Lepera

- At-Large Vacancy on Governance/Executive Committee - Michael Lepera reported that there was an at-large vacancy on the Governance/Executive Committee as Victoria Thurston moved from that position to Board Secretary. Mr. Lepera reached out to Rebecca Brock to gauge her interest and availability in joining the committee. Rebecca Brock has accepted to fill that position.
- Connection/Engagement - Mr. Lepera encouraged everyone to continue to connect with colleagues, teams, family and friends to provide support during this time of working remotely. It helps to keep morale positive and energetic.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- CEO/President report noted above under Finance.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- Racial Equity – Dr. Tamaru Phillips and Sheryl Williams are co-chairs of ChildNet’s Anti-Racism Workgroup. Dr. Phillips reported that ChildNet’s leadership supports building the culture that is committed to dismantling racism practices in the workforce. ChildNet acknowledges that now is the time to actively engage in anti-racism work in the organization. The Workgroup administered a survey to both Broward and Palm Beach staff and received 196 responses. Currently, the workgroup has 28 members and had their first meeting on 07-31-20. The meeting was well-attended, and the members were engaged, excited and looking forward to all of the changes to come. The meetings are scheduled the last Thursday of each month. Dr. Phillips noted that the majority of the members are black with 5-6 being non-black.

Melida Akiti recommended supporting this workgroup by bringing in external support that would look at policy. Larry Rein noted that senior management does not want to be in the meetings unless invited, but we are support to the Workgroup. The co-chairs report to senior management on a weekly basis. We have engaged Corey Best, Consultant from Casey Family Programs, to be our



guide in addressing racial equity. It was noted that the Workgroup needs to encourage more non-black members with Dr. Thurston stressing the importance of inclusivity. Melida Akiti requested from Michael Lepera, Board Chair, to have a summary of ChildNet's Anti-Racism Workgroup meetings to be incorporated into the Board agenda. Mr. Lepera agreed that this would keep the Board updated. Mr. Lepera feels that engagement is key and supports the consultant role but wants to emphasize the employee voice. The consultant can help with policy or direct us. Mr. Lepera agreed that we needed to create a formalized structure or committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

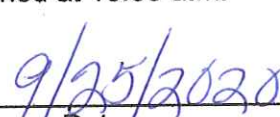
- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next Board meeting is scheduled on Friday, September 25, 2020 via Zoom.
- Having no further business, a motion was *moved* to adjourn the meeting. *A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously.* The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.



Victoria Thurston
Board Secretary



Date

(Corporate Seal)