



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 17, 2023

Board of Directors:

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

Unable to Attend:

David Prather, Meghan Russell, Michael Lepera, Ronald Ford

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Larry Rein, Neiko Shea, Donna Eprifania, Jason Tracey, Julie DeMar, Susan Eby, Rae Bullard, Deena Ponto, Sheryl Williams, Shanny Tozzi, Tina Lewis, Shakeyia Brown, Margarita Forestier, Briana Calzada, Martin Ortiz, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Dennis Miles, Teresa Janeczek, Traci Schweitzer, Isis Williams, *PB County Youth Services:* Elisa Cramer

CALL TO ORDER – Amy Black, Board Chair

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

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

- Larry Rein announced a change in the senior leadership team by adding a new position called Chief of Staff, filled by Neiko Shea. Unfortunately, Ms. Shea was absent due to a prior commitment. Tina Lewis, the new Director of Human Resources, was introduced. Mr. Rein discussed the need for organizational changes and mentions that Neiko and Tina will play key roles in evaluating and making adjustments. The organization chart was presented showing Ms. Shea reporting directly to Larry Rein and overseeing key personnel, while other C-suite members report to Ms. Shea. Mr. Rein expressed openness to future modifications and invites questions. Amy Black welcomed the new team members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Rebecca Brock, Board Secretary

- Roll was taken, and quorum was established.

The October 27, 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:
 - October 2023 – Margarita Forestier, Family Finding Specialist (PB)
Shakeyia Brown, Director of Service Coordination (Broward)



DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- **Records Management Department – Martin Ortiz – Director of Administrative Services** – Donna Eprifania provided an update on the Records Management department. Martin Ortiz oversees the department, which includes facilities, records management, and transportation. In Broward, Mirna Rodriguez, Supervisor, leads the charge, working with the legal department and managing records maintenance. In addition, Mayra Velez, Records Management Coordinator, supports the Copy Center. The rest of the team consists of Jamesha Newton and Jill Johnson, Records Specialists. The team manages document production using copy machines, creating child resource records, and managing hard copies of essential documents. In Palm Beach, Carmen Rodriguez and Seychelle Atkinson, Records Specialists replicate the process. The department aims to transition to a more efficient and paperless system, highlighting recent improvements like an in-house E-record system and SafeNet document management. The implementation has resulted in cost savings and increased accessibility to records. Board member Amy Black inquired about managing confidential information, and Donna Eprifania explained the secure access protocols in place for the records rooms. The board expressed appreciation for the comprehensive update.

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

- Donna Eprifania, CFO reported that the Committee will meet on 11-29-23. She informed the board that the audit draft cannot be presented yet due to the Department of Children and Families not submitting the final reconciliation of the prior fiscal year to lead agencies. The auditors require this information to complete the single audit portion of the financial annual audit. Ms. Eprifania plans to send an email to the board in December to provide a status update. Larry Rein notes that this issue is statewide.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

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

Lois Marino reported that they have met with some good prospects. One of them is Kimberly Barber with Stiles who was a previous donor with ChildNet. The current committee members are Lois Marino, Chair, Chelsea Bellew, Josefa Benjamin, Donna Korn, and Melissa McIntruff from South Florida Behavioral Health Network. Amy Black, Board Chair asked the committee to provide the amount of donations received last year and what the goal is for 2024.

- 9th Annual Care for Kids Luncheon - “Embracing Smiles” – February 2, 2024 – Boca West Country Club. We are in the process of sending 2,500 invitations. Both Kip Hunter and Joey Epstein are being honored at the luncheon.
 - Thanksgiving Drive – currently have 180 baskets. We need gift cards to purchase turkeys.
 - Holiday Doy Drive – We need gifts for teens, i.e., gift cards, perfumes, lotions, makeup, jewelry, bikes.
- **Governance/Executive Committee – Dr. Victoria Thurston, Committee Chair**
 - **CBC Lead Agency Procurement** – Larry Rein discussed the competitive procurement required by the State of Florida for Community-Based Care lead agencies. The contracts are for five years, with an option for a five-year renewal. ChildNet in Palm Beach is ending its first full five-year contract renewal, while Broward is entering the fifth year of its first new contract in 20 years Mr. Rein expresses surprise and disappointment at the unexpected announcement of the need



for a new lead agency contract in Broward. He outlined the timeline for the procurement process, questions due to Procurement Manager by 11-28-23 and proposal due by 01-24-24, highlighting concerns about the lack of communication and potential competition. Mr. Rein expressed confidence in ChildNet's capabilities but acknowledges the uncertainties of the process. Questions from board members addressed advocacy, the individual consideration of counties in joint proposals, and the timeline for submitting proposals. Neiko Shea, Chief of Staff is taking the lead of preparing ChildNet's proposal.

- **Membership Recruitment** – Larry Rein reported that we have 9 Broward Board members, in accordance with our bylaws. Mr. Rein expressed openness to engaging with new people, even if not immediately for a board position, encouraging involvement in community engagement activities. Currently we have 5 Palm Beach Board members, with 4 applicants in progress awaiting background screenings and further discussions. If successful, this would lead to a full board, potentially a historic moment for ChildNet

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

The committee met on 11-06-23. It was noted that there was one Level III incident in Broward and two Level III incidents in Palm Beach since the last quarter report.

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

Nancy Stamper provided a summary of the meeting held on November 15th. Two reports were discussed: one from the Department of Children and Families for fiscal year 2022-2023, and the other on census trends for the first quarter of 2023-2024. Julie DeMar reported on the accountability metrics, noting adjustments made by the Department after feedback. The preliminary final scores for Palm Beach are 3.2 and for Broward, 3.1, both meeting expectations. Larry Rein acknowledged Julie DeMar and Sheree Tortora for their efforts in highlighting and correcting errors in the Department's calculations. Mr. Rein also commented on positive trends in census data, with a decrease in the number of children entering care in both counties.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- **ChildNet's Anti-Racism Workgroup Update** – Julie DeMar provided an update on behalf of Sheryl Williams and Nicole Slade. There are no significant updates since the last meeting. The Workgroup are currently focusing on reviewing an intake and placement-related policy and procedure, with recommended updates. Additionally, they are working on aspects related to children's length of stay and planning a parent survey to gather feedback on the engagement with parents. No new business is reported at this time.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Amy Black

- No update at this time.

CEO/PRESIDENT REPORT – Larry Rein

- **National Adoption Day** – Larry Rein reported that National Adoption Day in Palm Beach is today, Friday, 11-17-23 starting at 1:00 p.m., and in Broward on Saturday, 11-18-23 @ 9:00 a.m. Adoption Day includes a brief ceremony followed by the finalization of adoptions in multiple courtrooms. Mr. Rein emphasized the impactful experience of witnessing these adoptions and highlighted the success stories, especially those involving keeping families together. Mr. Rein encouraged everyone to attend this special day.



- Sunshine Health – Mr. Rein mentioned the ongoing negotiations with Sunshine Health, led by Neiko Shea, former Vice President of Foster Care for Sunshine Health, who is now ChildNet's Chief of Staff. He expressed gratitude for her contributions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- There is no Board meeting in December 2023, so the next Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 26, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. in person and via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

- Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Rebecca Brock
Board Secretary

Date

(Corporate Seal)