



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 29, 2017

Board of Directors:

Melida Akiti, Board Chairman; Armando Fana, Vice Chairman; Michael Lepera, Treasurer; Joe Rogers, Secretary, Jeff Dwyer, Kalinithia Dillard, Ken Nolan, Lisa McDermott, Nichole Anderson, Sarah Marmion, Sarah Thomas, Elizabeth Wynter

Unable to Attend:

Armando Fana, Kalinithia Dillard, Ken Nolan, Lisa McDermott, Joe Rogers

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Emilio Benitez, Lourdes Pons, Larry Rein, Donna Skees, Dawn Liberta, Deena Ponto, Theresa Kennedy, Sheryl Williams, Wendy Smith, Lawrence Plaza, Emmanuel Anderson, Kenneth Brighton, Christine Butler, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Raul Ocampo

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Joe Rogers, Secretary

- Roll was taken and quorum was established.

The August 25, 2017 meeting minutes were reviewed. A *motion* was moved to approve the meeting minutes. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unopposed.

TOPICAL CALENDAR PRESENTATION

- Sonny Burnette was unable to attend the Board meeting so this presentation will be rescheduled.

FINANCE REPORT – Michael Lepera, Treasurer and Donna Skees, Interim CFO

- Broward – The closing cash balance at the end of August 2017 was \$1.2 million, which reflects a decrease of \$5.2 million from the prior month. Total expenditures for the month were \$6.7 million with \$166,000 more expended this month than in August 2016. The month-end surplus was \$72,000 with a year-to-date surplus of \$168,000. The Daily Spend Rate increased by \$5,000 compared to August 2016. Emilio Benitez noted that this is the second month in a row that we are reporting a surplus.
- Palm Beach – The closing cash balance at the end of August 2017 was \$405,000, which reflects a decrease of \$4.8 million from the prior month. Total expenditures for the month were \$3.8 million with \$127,000 less expended this month than in August 2016. The month-end budget surplus was \$7,000 with a year-to-date surplus was \$59,000. The Daily Spend Rate decreased by \$4,000 compared to August 2016.

Michael Lepera noted that we do not have a contingency fund so we really need to keep a focus on the budget.



- Federal Changes – Emilio Benitez stated that the Title IV-E Waiver, which allows Florida the flexibility to allocate funding, particularly for prevention, is going to change. One of those areas is a requirement to have relatives now become licensed.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- **Advisory Board Committee**

Larry Rein reported that the committee did not meet this month due to Hurricane Irma.

- **Fundraising Committee – Nichole Anderson, Committee Chair**

Kenneth Brighton, Director of Community Relations, reported that the committee did not meet this month, also due to Hurricane Irma. However, he noted that we are already in the process of getting ready for the holidays. Last year, we collected gifts for 2,200 children. Mr. Brighton did note that due to the hurricanes this year, many of our donors are providing assistance to victims of the hurricanes and will not be able to donate gifts for our youth. Kenny requested Board assistance with getting donations for our children this year. Nichole Anderson and Kenny also suggested a possible on-line fundraiser for holiday gifts.

- **Governance Committee – Armando Fana, Committee Chair**

CEO Performance Goals for FY 17-18 – these CEO Performance Goals were approved by the Governance/Executive Committee.

Caseload Analysis and Statistics – It was reported that we are continuing to trend in the right direction on caseloads.

Membership Recruitment/Services – Discussion was held that several potential candidates have been contacted.

COA – We have started the reaccreditation process.

- **Program Quality Committee – Kalinthia Dillard, Committee Chair**

No report this month.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Melida Akiti

- Anonymous Letter – An anonymous letter was received by many of the Board members noting concerns about morale and staff leadership. Proactively, the Board is supporting Emilio Benitez's efforts to engage a company to meet with leadership and address concerns raised.

PRESIDENT/CEO REPORT – Emilio Benitez

- Hurricane – Emilio Benitez reported that ChildNet did well with Hurricane Irma. BSO called us to use our offices as a command post as ChildNet had generator power, phones and internet. Mr. Benitez also noted that the new provider of SafePlace, Hibiscus, worked very well during this time of crisis.
- Roadmap – Lourdes Pons reported that the Roadmap meeting went well and that we are trending in the right direction. The new Regional Director, Vern Melvin, works a little differently than his



predecessor, Dennis Miles; however she feels that the good working relationship we have with DCF will continue with him.

Emilio Benitez noted that the Children's Services Council of Broward County awarded \$700,000 to Legal Aid Services of Broward County to create a dependency unit to help move along some difficult cases.

Ms. Pons also noted that she was appointed by the Florida Bar to serve on the newly created Florida Bar Special Committee on Child and Parent Representation.

- ITN Process – Melida Akiti asked if ChildNet has to go through another ITN process. Mr. Benitez reported that the ITN process is not until 2019. We are first going through the COA reaccreditation. We have had 3.5 years of tremendous struggle, yet during that struggle we were/are performing well.
- Next President/CEO Report – Board Chair asked Mr. Benitez to provide information on the following items at the next Board Meeting:
 - Status of hiring of Consultant for Team Building Skills
 - What is involved in the ITN process?
 - Roadmap Updates
 - Executive Summary – wants a synopsis of any major changes

NEW BUSINESS

- New Agenda Items - Elizabeth Wynter and Melida Akiti requested that the following items be added to the Agenda
 - Provider Advisory Board Update
 - Board Member Goal Updates
- Certified Letter from Grandmother - Sigrid McCawley reported that she and a few other Board members received a certified letter from a concerned grandmother on a case. The issues raised and the court orders on the case are being reviewed to ensure an appropriate response. The issue of ChildNet's role as a witness and not a party were discussed.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was no old business to discuss.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Hazel Rogers – Mayor of Lauderdale Lakes – Mayor Rogers, who is a former State Representative, stated that she received both the anonymous letter and the letter from the concerned grandmother. She stated she was there to ensure these two letters were raised and discussed at the Board meeting. Discussion was had regarding ChildNet's ongoing engagement and efforts on behalf of this community. Also discussed was how there has been a reduction in the number of children in those zip codes served as a result of ChildNet's extensive efforts.
- Sidney Calloway – Shutts & Bowen - Mr. Calloway stated that he sent a letter to the ChildNet Chair and Board members a few days ago ensuring that the organization has noticed that an attorney/client relationship that he had with this organization was terminated. Discussion was held regarding the process by which his discharge as attorney for the Board two was effectuated. Mr.



Calloway informed that he too received the anonymous letter earlier referenced and shared his concerns for the African-American children served and the Board addressing its fulfillment of its mission for the African-American community, especially in light of the upcoming ITN.

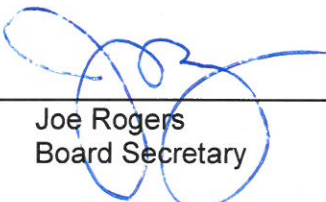
Board member Jeff Dwyer stated he was not aware of the process by how Mr. Calloway was terminated. Discussion was had as to what procedural process had been executed. Melida Akiti stated that the Board had gained insight from the information provided by Mr. Calloway, as our consultant, and that those issues had been addressed sufficiently. The Board apologized to Mr. Calloway for any miscommunication related to Mr. Calloway's role and the process by which it was terminated. Further, the Board stated that any error was not intentional. The Board stated they believed he was paid in full, and if not, to advise us otherwise. Mr. Calloway requested a copy of the Board Action resulting in his discharge and clarified that he had provided a verbal report. MR. Calloway reiterated that he hoped the attorney/client relationship was terminated erroneously. Melida Akiti promised that the record would be reviewed so that ChildNet could learn from our mistakes and issue a formal apology if needed. Further, Melida Akiti addressed Mr. Calloway's concerns related to ChildNet's service stating that every single Board Member is completely committed to the safety and protection of not only our African-American children but also every one of our children. Further discussion was had regarding Board members' personal goals in fulfillment of the ChildNet Mission.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 27, 2017 to be held via teleconference.

CONCLUSION

- Having no further business, a motion was *moved* to adjourn the meeting. *A vote was taken. The motion was passed unopposed.* The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 a.m.



Joe Rogers
Board Secretary

10/29/2017

Date

(Corporate Seal)