



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 27, 2017

Board of Directors:

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

Unable to Attend:

Kalinthia Dillard, Lisa McDermott

Other Attendees:

ChildNet Staff: Emilio Benitez, Lourdes Pons, Larry Rein, Donna Skees, Dawn Liberta, Deena Ponto, Sheryl Williams, Wendy Smith, Lawrence Plaza, Emmanuel Anderson, Kenneth Brighton, Andrea Chenet, Brian Leitstein, Christine Butler, Julie Janello, *DCF:* Silvia Beebe, *BBHC:* Silvia Quintana, Dr. Rhonda Bohs, *ELC:* Howard Bakalar

CALL TO ORDER

- Melida Akiti, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Joe Rogers, Secretary

- Roll was taken and quorum was established.

The September 29, 2017 meeting minutes were reviewed. A *motion* was moved to approve the meeting minutes. A *vote* was taken. The motion was passed unopposed.

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

- Broward – The closing cash balance at the end of September 2017 was \$985,000, which reflects a decrease of \$213,000 from the prior month. Total expenditures for the month were \$6.1 million with \$195,000 less expended this month than in September 2016. The month-end surplus was \$12,000 with a year-to-date surplus of \$180,000. The Daily Spend Rate decreased by \$7,000 compared to September 2016. We served 53 less children than based on our target number. ChildNet's turnover for the first quarter was 6%, while the CBC in Miami-Dade was 12%.

Federal government changing Title IV-E funding - \$175 million loss just for child welfare. Florida Coalition for Children (FCC) is an advocacy association. The majority of their focus is the whole child welfare system. Melida Akiti stated she wants a deeper meeting with providers to come up with an action plan.

- Palm Beach – The closing cash balance at the end of September 2017 was \$1.2 million, which reflects an increase of \$823,000 from the prior month. Total expenditures for the month were \$3.5 million with \$341,000 less expended this month than in September 2016. The month-end budget surplus was \$1,000 with a year-to-date surplus was \$60,000. The Daily Spend Rate decreased by \$12,000 compared to September 2016. We served one child less than the target budget.

Larry Rein noted that there are more children with in-home cases. The mix of children in out-of-home care has changed. The number of children placed with relative caregivers has dropped by



15% but picked up by group homes. Emilio Benitez noted that Broward and Palm Beach has a good collaboration to increase more housing for parents who had a crisis and are looking to reunify the family. Parents can do everything needed but if housing is not available we cannot reunify the family safely. The presentation by the BBHC on the Family-CPR Project will discuss this in further detail. Armando Fana stated he could assist with coordinating with the housing authority.

BROWARD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COALITION (BBHC) GRANT PRESENTATION

- Families Connecting through Peer Recovery (The Family-CPR Project) – Silvia Quintana, President/CEO of Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, and Dr. Rhonda Bohs, Head of System of Care Partners, discussed the grant. This grant is a collaborative request for funding by the Administration on Children, Youth & Families – Children's Bureau, a division within the Department of Health and Human Services. It targets the parents of children who are addicted to drugs or are using drugs to the degree that children are being removed as a result of their substance abuse. We are bringing in evidence-based practices to change the way and the approach in which we address and engage those parents as part of this research study. This project is one of 11 funded projects in the US. This is a 5-year project and the federal portion of this is \$600,000 a year, for a total of \$3,000,000 over the course of the project. The matching dollars that are required for this will come from the Children's Services Council and from Broward County Human Services Department. The total grant funding, including match, is \$4.3 million across a 5-year period.

This project includes an integrated continuum of care plus intensive family engagement (evidence based practice) plus peer support. This should create increased parental retention in treatment, enhanced provision of targeted services, improved parenting practices and a decrease in family trauma. The ultimate aim is to enhance child and family well-being and reduce incidences of re-abuse, child welfare re-referrals, and removals. This project is a 6-month intervention (EPP – Engaging Parents Protocol). The pilot is to start at ChildNet with 1 Supervisor and 3 Child Advocates (Engaging Parents Care Coordinators).

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- **Advisory Board Committee**

Larry Rein reported that the Committee discussed the final fiscal year Risk Pool presentation as DCF informed that we no longer need to present monthly. However, Mr. Rein noted that internally, staff will meet on a quarterly basis. Also discussed were legislative priorities. Independent Living funding will hopefully be in the black as the Department has responded to our noting our shortfall last year and they have made us whole for this coming year in Independent Living. In addition, we have restored the cut to our case management provider so that they could increase their case management workforce, which is keeping the caseloads from going up with that increase in in-home cases. This will be revisited in January.

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

Kenneth Brighton, Director of Community Relations, reported the following:

- 1) Adoption Picnic – Saturday, 11-04-17 @ 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Snyder Park, Ft. Lauderdale
- 2) National Adoption Day – Palm Beach – Friday, 11-17-17 @ 11:30-3:00, Palm Beach Courthouse
- 3) National Adoption Day – Broward – Saturday, 11-18-17 @ 8:30-12:30, Broward Courthouse

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

Approval of Board Candidate – Christopher Cade – Mr. Cade is the VP and Chief Accounting Officer at AutoNation. Mr. Cade has expertise in finances, human resources, and administration. Mr. Cade would be a highly qualified addition to our Board. Mr. Cade meets many of the requirements needed to increase the effectiveness of the Board in meeting diversity and skills needs.

A motion was *moved* to approve Christopher Cade as the newest member of the Board. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unopposed.

Scorecard – Melida Akiti noted that she wants a more in-depth explanation on the scorecard measures.

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

Joe Rogers reported that the committee discussed changes to two procedures.

- **Provider Advisory Board Update – Elizabeth Wynter**

Elizabeth Wynter noted that the intent of the Provider Advisory Board is to work with ChildNet, to provide open dialogue about areas where we see things that could be changed or fixed, and to provide our voice to improve the system of care.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – Melida Akiti

- Discussion with DCF – Melida Akiti reported that on 10-13-17, she received a phone call from the DCF Secretary stating that they did not trust the present leadership of ChildNet and that they were evaluating removing the contract from ChildNet. Ms. Akiti had another conversation with DCF on 10-16-17.

- Retention of Counsel – Ms. Akiti also discussed the letter the Board received from Scott Wagner and Associates who Emilio Benitez has retained as legal counsel. As ChildNet does not have legal counsel, Ms. Akiti asked the Board for authority to explore retaining legal counsel in order to be able to work with Mr. Benitez's attorney. The scope of the legal counsel is to meet with Mr. Benitez's attorney to be able to discuss any employment concerns and to serve as legal counsel for ChildNet.

A motion was *moved* that Melida Akiti, as Board Chair, has the authority to explore retaining legal counsel for the board, get those proposals and to bring back to the Board for vote. A vote was taken. The motion was passed unopposed.

A Special Board Meeting was called for Wednesday, November 1, 2017 @ 5:00 p.m. for Board to discuss and vote on legal counsel.

- Anonymous Letter and Consultant Update – Ms. Akiti reported that a second letter was received. As stated previously at the Governance/Executive Committee and now here, the goal is to engage a company to work with staff and leadership to provide a safe environment where everyone can speak confidentially. Whatever the outcome, they will work with the team on building the foundation of ChildNet. Ms. Akiti stated that by the end of the day, two consultant proposals should be received from: 1) Group Victory and 2) WorkWise Group.



- Town Hall Meeting – Joe Rogers requested that Mr. Benitez meet with staff on Monday, 10-30-17 to inform them that we have a plan in place, that we are not ignoring them and that we are addressing the rumors.

PRESIDENT/CEO REPORT – Emilio Benitez

- Anonymous Letter – Emilio Benitez responded that in regard to the second letter received, he wanted to apologize to Dawn Liberta, Claudene Stetzer and Jennifer Scoff in being brought into this mess unnecessarily.
- ITN – Mr. Benitez stated that starting October 2018, the ITN process will start again. He stated that from whatever he does, he will support ChildNet in any way possible, even pro bono, to ensure that ChildNet wins the ITN
- Roadmap – Emilio Benitez reported that ChildNet will be in the black by the June 2018 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- There was no new business to discuss.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was no old business to discuss.

PUBLIC COMMENT

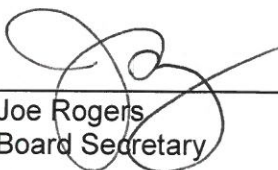
- There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Melida Akiti has called a Special Board Meeting to be held Wednesday, November 1, 2017 @ 5:00 p.m. via teleconference to discuss the two law firms for Board review.
- The next monthly Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 17, 2017 to be held in person.

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 10:07 a.m.



Joe Rogers
Board Secretary

12/15/2017

Date

(Corporate Seal)