

**Children's Services Council
Minutes
January 12, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kenworthy at **5:08 P.M.**

Attendance: Cathleen Blair, Ken Kenworthy, Bob McPartlan, Heather Hancock, Amanda Riedel, Judge Wallace, Melisa Jahner and Frank DeCarlo

Guests included: Jay Zeller, OCRA; JaQuan Bentley, Lake Okeechobee Youth Football; Cindy Kemp, OCRA; John Kemp, OCRA; Heather Tinajero, Chobee Bulls; Tarrance Pryor, Chobee Bulls; Jessica Slovenski, Chobee Bulls; and Heidi Dove.

Chairman Kenworthy asked Cathleen Blair if there were any additions to the agenda. She indicated that there was a special request from Lake Okeechobee Football and Cheer squad. This was placed as 4 c.

There were no other additions or deletions.

A motion was made by Heather Hancock to approve the agenda, seconded by Bob McPartlan, all approved

Ken Kenworthy asked our new member-Frank DeCarlo to tell everyone about himself. He is a County Commissioner, lived in Okeechobee County for many years and has always been active with children, especially in the sports area. He is interested in getting children's programs into Okeechobee County as much as possible as the children of our county don't have a lot to keep them busy.

A motion was made by Judge Wallace to approve the minutes from December, seconded by Amanda Riedel, all approved.

Cathleen Blair reviewed the financial statement. The statement is now in the new version of QuickBooks. Frank DeCarlo made a motion to approve, seconded by Bill Wallace, all approved. Ken Kenworthy asked if we had more than one account as the school board was receiving a higher interest rate. Cathleen Blair indicated that we only have one. Ken Kenworthy asked Cathleen to research if there were other accounts we could receive at the bank to increase the interest received.

Cathleen Blair took over the meeting so we could have an election of officers. Ken Kenworthy was nominated as chairman by Amanda Riedel, Judge Wallace

Seconded, there were no other nominations, all approved Ken Kenworthy as Chairman. Melisa Jahner was nominated for Vice-Chairperson by Judge Wallace, seconded by Ken Kenworthy. There were no other nominations, all approved. Wendy Coker was nominated as Secretary Treasurer, by Melisa Jahner, seconded by Ken Kenworthy, there were no other nominations, all approved.

Ken Kenworthy continued with the meeting.

My Aunt's House requested a \$2,000 special project for socks and underwear. Melisa Jahner made the motion to approve, Judge Wallace, seconded, all approved.

OCRA is in need of helmets and pads and requested \$49,520.00. The field equipment has been returned by Terrance Pryor; this amount can be deducted from the request. The Kemps indicated this is a recreation league as most of the children don't want to travel. They are anticipating 300 children to sign up. Ken Kenworthy asked for a breakdown of the total cost of tackle gear. Mr. Kemp indicated helmet costs have increased. It costs around \$350.00-\$375.00 to suit up one child. Frank DeCarlo asked how much each child is charged. The cost is \$100.00, but a great deal of the children can't pay. The previous equipment is outdated- helmets only last two years for low-end helmets. Amanda Riedel asked if any equipment can be reused-we were told that shoulder pads can be reused. Frank DeCarlo indicated we don't have anything for the children here to do such as movies or skating rinks. We need to fund this type of program to get our kids involved.

Judge Wallace asked why there are three different organizations requesting funds. There are three presents at the meeting tonight. One is just a recreation league, and two are travel teams. Mr. Pryor indicated we need a recreation league so the kids can learn the basics and fundamentals of football. The third group is new and includes not only football and cheer but digital learning and track and field.

Judge Wallace and Ken Kenworthy felt like we needed to hear from all three organizations before determining the amount given.

The Recreation Department would take off \$3,500 as they no longer need the field equipment. Chobee Nation asked for \$11,000. He is the President of the Bulls; they do not have their 501 C3 yet. He indicated he charges \$170.00 per child but only about 20 pays. They do receive gate fees and concessions but that brings in only \$6,000-\$7,000 per year. He is planning on 60-70 children. Ken asked who they would make a check out to-which would be Chobee Nation.

Frank DeCarlo asked about writing grants. Ken Kenworthy indicated that very few of our agencies have the skills.

Okeechobee Youth Football and Cheer is run by JaQuan Bentley. Track and Field are for 5–14-year-olds. He will be adding a digital Media program. He wants to work with Parks and Recreation to develop the program. He is also working with Healthy Start to begin the Fatherhood program. Ken Kenworthy indicated the paper submitted expressed a need for assistance in football and cheer. We need to qualify it a little more. JaQuan Bentley indicated it was for ages 5-14 there is some traveling to communities around the lake targeting to serve 100 kids. Track and field have 30. Major goal for the programs is to raise and teach decent human beings-it's not just about sports. Melisa Jahner asked about the child costs. Track and Field is \$150.00 for AAU events and uniforms plus \$25.00 for each event they enter. Since there is no track here, they use community areas to teach the skills. Frank DeCarlo asked about fundraising. JaQuan Bentley indicated they will begin to work towards this. Right now, they are in the beginning stages of what they can offer our children first. They will be using the soccer field, softball fields and dike to train for track and field.

Heather Hancock asked how many children were going to be served- JaQuan Bentley said 50, Tarrance Pryor said 120 and John Kemp said 50 all for Flag football.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the requests, the numbers, the need for equipment and cost for all three programs.

Ken Kenworthy recommended that the Chobee Bulls request be removed until they get their 501C-3.

Bob Partlan requested costs must be accounted for at the end of the season. Amanda Riedel wondered if we should just fund one agency.

Bob McPartlan made a motion to fund OCRA \$46,020, Frank DeCarlo seconded under the condition that OCRA and Chobee Bulls give back the equipment, all approved. This has been resolved. Pre-existing equipment will stay with the Chobee Bulls and all Field equipment will go to OCRA.

Lake Okeechobee Elite Athletics was recommended by Bob McPartlan, seconded by Melisa Jahner to receive \$12,750.00. All approved both motions.

Ms. Blair brought up the Recommendation to continue to have Wicks, Brown and Williams remain as our auditor/accountant for \$10,270 which is only \$395.00 more than last year. They will continue to do our paperwork that needs to go to Tallahassee. Melisa Jahner made the motion to approve, seconded by Heather Hancock, all approved.

During Open discussion, Cathleen reminded any member who wanted to continue in the council needed to redo their application for the Commissioners and Governor.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 5:01 p.m.