

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL

MINUTES

March 21, 2024

In attendance for the meeting were Melisa Jahner-Chairperson, Wendy Coker, Bob McPartlan, Heather Hancock, Frank DeCarlo, Dylan Tedders, and Toni Wiersma-Executive Director.

Absent: Pat McCoy and William Wallace

Audience: Magi Cable, Russ Brown, Jenna Larson, Sophia Caves, Colleen Larson, Mary Royce Lookabill, Alaina Barron, Leah Suarez, Amber Cook, Sharon Vinson, Marialejandra Ramirez, Jeremy Morgan, Maria Johnston, Paula Younger, Leona Parker and Gabbi Sims, Maria Zapata

1) Meeting called to order by chairman Melisa Jahner at 5:02 PM

- a) Additions or corrections to the agenda
 - i) Toni Wiersma added:
 - (1) 10a – Budget Transfer Request – Healthy Start

Heather Hancock made the motion to accept additions. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2) Approval of Minutes:

- a) Meeting – February 8, 2024. Bob McPartlan made a motion to approve the minutes. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3) Approval of Financial Statements:

- a) Financial Statement– October – February 2024
 - i) Toni Wiersma presented the financial statement:

(1) INCOME

- Total Income - \$1,084,551.65

(2) COST OF GOODS SOLD

- Human Service Expenditures - \$9,207.50

(3) GROSS PROFIT - \$1,075,344.15

(4) EXPENSES

- Administration - \$46,972.28
- Program Services – Agencies – RFP - \$136,389.43
- Special Projects - \$134,786.86
- **TOTAL EXPENSES - \$319,148.57**

(5) NET INCOME - \$757,195.58

(6) CURRENT ASSETS

- SouthState Checking - \$2,034,424.96
- CD –\$412,086.85
- Refundable Agency Grants - -\$(140.00)

(7) TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS - \$2,447,120.18

(8) FIXED ASSETS

- Equipment - \$1,926.00
- Accumulated depreciation - $-(1,177.63)$
- TOTAL FIXED ASSETS - \$748.37

(9) TOTAL ASSETS - \$2,447,120.18

(10) LIABILITIES

- Total Current Liabilities - \$5,913.66
- Total Equity - **\$2,441,206.52**

(11) TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY - \$2,447,120,18

Toni Wiersma also presented the Management Report for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Dylan Tedders made a motion to approve the Financial Statement for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

(4) Special Project Request

- a) **Grad Party - \$10,000.00.** A request was presented by Magi Cable for support of the 35th annual Graduation Party for graduating seniors. The party has evolved due to graduation being held on Saturday morning. After graduation practice on Friday, the seniors will have a field day on the football field and awarded various prizes, food, and activities. The \$10,000 will be used for electronics such as laptops, computers, printers, tablets, etc. Bob McPartlan made a motion to fund \$10,000 for the graduation party. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- b) **FFA Judging Team - \$20,000.** A request was made by the FFA Alumni Chapter on behalf of the Okeechobee Brahman Dairy Judging Team. The team won 1st place and the National FFA conference and as a result they have the opportunity to compete in Scotland. This is the first FFA team in Florida to win 1st place at Nationals and definitely a first for the Okeechobee Brahman Chapter. The team will compete at the Royal Highland Show in Scotland. The students are raising money by a desert auction, Sublime event, and the students are using their reward money from various competitions to pay for the trip. The total cost of the trip is \$31,830.00. The FFA Alumni is requesting \$20,000 to help pay for the trip. Frank DeCarlo made a motion to fund \$20,000.00 for the trip. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5) Request to address the Board

- a) **Alaina Barron – Okeechobee Educational Foundation**

Alaina presented to the Board the accomplishments of the Okeechobee Educational Foundation the first three months of the year. The Foundation was funded by the CSC \$75,000.00. The Foundation has awarded 41 mini grants for \$33,900, Pencil Depot for 4,500 students - \$22,000.00, Literacy Initiative – Parent Engagement-Title I nights with 670 attendees, STEM Camps, College Readiness – SAT camps. The Foundation received a Resiliency through the Community Grant for \$500,000.00. This has enabled for a Fire and Dispatch CTE program and a 1st responder grant. The ROI of \$75,000 has a return of \$740,000.00. Alaina presented many speakers and a power point on all of the activities this year. The Board appreciated the presentation.

- b) Leah Suarez – Our Village

Leah Suarez presented the following letter to the Board:

Letter to the Children's Services Council

March 21, 2024

Good evening council members,

First of all I would like to thank you for your support – if it were not for the CSC, we would not be able to do many of the things we do to help children in our community. Our Village respectfully requests a waiver of the audit requirement for 2023/2024. First, I come to you as a taxpayer. In 1991 when the CSC was formed, I do not know at what time the audit requirement was first added as a requirement. What I do know is that an audit back during that time was approximately \$800.00 - \$1200.00. As a taxpayer it pains me to see us spending taxpayer dollars on an audit when a financial review can suffice based on our structure with the CSC.

1. We do not receive any money from the CSC up front. All dollars we receive, we have documentation that we send in to be reimbursed.
2. We receive federal funding in the amount of +/- \$240,000.00 Our federal threshold for an audit is \$750,000.00 as is our state threshold.
3. We cannot afford the audit without it affecting our current operations.

While we now receive your support at a much higher rate than \$25,000.00, we still know what a world of difference a \$12,000.00 would make for an organization like ours.

\$12,000.00 would pay for 250 hours of case management and peer support. Daily we provide 32 hours of peer support/case management to just our children and their families. We provide another estimated 24 hours of peer support to our adult population, whether they have children or not. While a good majority of this expense is covered by grant funding, this is still a huge financial burden for us, when we must find some way to retain our professional staff.

Our organization includes: 2 Licensed mental health counselors – part time, 1 licensed clinical social worker and qualified supervisor – part time, 3 MSW students, 1 Masters of Non Profit Management and Leadership and current graduate student of Restorative Practices, 2 certified teachers, 1 bachelor's level, 1 associates' level, and 3 additional peer support staff. Our current staff all live locally AND bring 250+ hours of education and experience.

\$12,000.00 would pay for our support of building capacity. It would pay the \$4500.00 tuition costs we pay for our MSW student who is a single mom with a medically needy child; it would pay our tuition for Grad studies in restorative practices \$2124.00. It would

pay for supervision hours of my three graduate students in the amount of \$1200.00 per month. These staff members must work an additional 20 hours per week, without compensation, and could not do this if they worked elsewhere.

It would pay for our Circles of Security Parenting Training (we are the only 2 certified instructors in Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast) at \$2000.00.

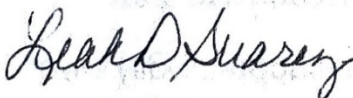
It would pay for our FSU Level 1 and 2 Trauma Certification at the cost of \$1200.00 – three of our staff are certified now.

It would pay for the certification of our peers at the cost of \$1000 – on top of the payment, each peer must have 3000 hours of training and supervision to get that certificate.

And we are not even close to talking about the monthly operating expenses that are not covered by our grants, because we rely on our faithful donor base.

I would ask you to take this into account when deciding. In the past 4 years, we have suffered the death of 4 of Our Village's children – 2 due to a motor vehicle accident and 2 due to suicide; we serve to top 10% who exhaust 90% of the resources (give or take). The money we spend on audits can be used to help us do the healing work that we do. What we have grown in the past 8 years is making a tremendous difference in the lives of children and their families and we look to serve in this capacity for many years to come.

Thank you,



Leah D. Suarez

Discussion from the letter: Paula Younger, accountant for Our Village stated that a 990 would give the same information as an audit. Heather Hancock said she wanted a better explanation of the difference between a 990 and an audit. Bob McPartlan suggested that we consult an attorney to determine the best legal advice. The Board wants more research on following the statutes. Melisa Jahner reminded Mrs. Suarez that she signed the agreement in October stating that she would provide an audit. This was part of the contract that she signed. Bob McPartlan suggested we contact the attorney that Martin County Children's Services Council uses. No decision was made at this time.

6) Monitors and Time for Mid-Year Review

Dylan Tedders will take the two agencies that Ken Kenworthy was monitoring. These agencies are Hibiscus Children's Center and My Aunt's House. Toni Wiersma reminded the Board that it was time for the Mid-Year review. Mrs. Wiersma will send out a reminder to both the agencies and the Board members about the Mid-Year review with the new Mid-Year form review.

7) Results of Scholarship Committee and approval of Scholarships

The scholarship committee comprised of Heather Hancock, Brittany Stanley and Toni Wiersma met on March 18, 2024. The committee recommended that nine students each receive a \$5,000.00 scholarship. The following students were recommend for a scholarship: Catherine Bostic, Maxwell Downing, Delany Fuchswanz, Arianna Granados, Amairani Hernandez, Marlene Huerta, Emily Peralta, Vanessa Qio;arquez and Tanner St. Pierre. Bob McPartlan made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Scholarship committee and award each student \$5,000.00. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion passed with Heather Hancock abstaining.

8) Summer Program Grants

Toni Wiersma presented the list of applicants for the summer grants. The committee will meet on April 8, 2024 to review the grants that were submitted.

9) Microsoft 365 Business - \$99.00 per year

Toni Wiersma requested the purchase of Microsoft 365 Business. Currently the operation system is Microsoft 2016. Heather Hancock made the motion to purchase Microsoft 365. Bob McPartlan seconded the motion. The motion passed.

10) Open Discussion

- a) Healthy Start requested a budget amendment to transfer money from payroll to operating expenses to serve more kids. Dylan Tedders moved to grant the budget amendment. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- b) Melisa stated that in the future she would like to address our Mission and Vision statements.
- c) Heather suggested that we review our guidelines for Special Projects at the next meeting, but there will be three people absent at the next meeting so the decision was to hold this to another meeting.
- d) Toni Wiersma stated that she had reached out to the Digital Design class at the high school to develop possibly new logos.

Motion made by Heather Hancock and seconded by Bob McPartlan to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Wiersma

Toni Wiersma

Executive Director