

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL

## MINUTES

November 14, 2024

In attendance at the meeting were Melisa Jahner-Chairperson, William Wallace, Wendy Coker, Heather Hancock, Frank DeCarlo and Toni Wiersma-Executive Director.

Absent: Bob McPartlan, Dylan Tedders and Pat McCoy

Audience: Linda Syfrett, Donna Summerall, Magi Cable, Robyn Gardner, Cathleen Blair, Cassidy Medellin, Andrea Medellin, Leah Suarez, and Colleen Larson

### 1) Meeting called to order by chairman Melisa Jahner at 5:40 PM

### 2) Additions or corrections to the agenda

- (i) Toni Wiersma requested to remove from the agenda – Items 7c
- (ii) Toni Wiersma requested the following items to be added to the agenda:
  - 7g: Healthy Start – Giving Tree - \$3500.
  - 7h: Healthy Start – Dad’s Game - \$1250
  - 7i: Healthy Start – Home Visitor - \$27,144.00
  - 7j: Ag Venture - \$6,000.00
  - 7k: Pregnancy Center - \$25,000.00

William Wallace made the motion to accept the agenda with the removed and additional items. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### 3) Approval of Minutes: September 5, 2024

- a) Meeting – September 5, 2024. Wendy Coker made a motion to approve the minutes. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. Heather Hancock noted that a second wasn’t recorded on Item 6. The motion carried with the correction to Item 6 with William Wallace seconding the motion.

### 4) Approval of Minutes: September 23, 2024

- a) Meeting – September 23, 2024. William Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### 5) Approval of Financial Statements:

- a) Financial Statement– October 1,2023 – September 30, 2024

Toni Wiersma presented the financial statement:

#### (1) INCOME

- Total Income - \$1,235,578.45

#### (2) COST OF GOODS SOLD

- Human Service Expenditures - \$27,835.00

#### (3) GROSS PROFIT - \$1,207,743.45

#### (4) EXPENSES

- Administration - \$89,601.91
- Program Services – Agencies – RFP - \$558,046.07
- Scholarships - \$45,000.00
- Summer Projects - \$266,424.38

- Special Projects - \$414,496.83
- **TOTAL EXPENSES - \$1,135,047.12**
- (5) NET INCOME - \$-165,819.74**
- (6) CURRENT ASSETS**
  - SouthState Checking Account 4993- \$0.00
  - SouthState Checking Account 0677 - \$1,190,496.85
  - CD -\$417,564.44
  - Refundable Agency Grants - -\$(140.00)
- (7) TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS - \$1,607,921.29**
- (8) FIXED ASSETS**
  - Equipment - \$1,926.00
  - Accumulated depreciation - -\$(1,177.63)
  - TOTAL FIXED ASSETS - \$748.37
- (9) TOTAL ASSETS - \$1,608,669.66**
- (10) LIABILITIES**
  - Total Current Liabilities - \$2,997.00
  - Total Equity - \$1,751,064.87
- (11) TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY - \$1,608,669.66**

- b) Toni Wiersma also presented the Management Report for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and the Profit and Loss statement for the period October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024. Mrs. Wiersma pointed out to the Board the categories listed on the Profit and Loss Statement and noted that \$165, 819.74 was taken from the Fund Balance.
- c) Toni reported the final tally for Special Projects by Agency
- d) Toni reported the final tally for Summer Projects by Agency
- e) Toni reported the final tally for the RFP's to Agency

**f) Approval of Financial Statements: October**

**(1) Financial Statement– October 1,2024– October 1, 2024**

Toni Wiersma presented the financial statement:

- **INCOME**
  - (i) Total Income - \$0.00**
- **GROSS PROFIT - \$0.00**
- **EXPENSES**
  - (i) Administration - \$7,979.26
  - (ii) Program Services – Agencies – RFP - \$0.00
  - (iii) Scholarships - \$0.00
  - (iv) Summer Projects - \$0.00
  - (v) Special Projects - \$3500.00
  - (vi) TOTAL EXPENSES - \$11,476.28**
- **NET INCOME - \$-(11,479.28)**
- **CURRENT ASSETS**
  - (i) SouthState Checking Account 0677 - \$1,078,865.70
  - (ii) CD -\$417,564.44
  - (iii) Refundable Agency Grants - -\$(140.00)
- **TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS - \$1,496,882.62**
- **FIXED ASSETS**
  - (i) Equipment - \$1,926.00

- (ii) Accumulated depreciation - -\$(1,177.63)
- (iii) TOTAL FIXED ASSETS - \$748.37
- **TOTAL ASSETS - \$1,496,882.62**
- **LIABILITIES**
  - (i) Total Current Liabilities - \$2,841.11
  - (ii) Total Equity - **\$1,494,041.51**
- **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY - \$1,496,882.62**

(2) Toni Wiersma also presented the Management Report for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 and the Profit and Loss statement for the period October 1, 2024 – October 31, 2024. Mrs. Wiersma pointed out to the Board the categories listed on the Profit and Loss Statement.

## 6) Approval of Extensions of Special Projects from 2023-2024

- a) **Elite Athletic Group – Originally granted \$34,244.00 and they spent \$17,373.17.**  
Frank DeCarlo made a motion to extend the remaining balance of \$9,244.83 to the 2024=2025 fiscal year. Heather Hancock seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- b) **Chobee United Cheer – Originally granted \$24,966.11 and they spent \$9,792.67**  
Heather Hancock made a motion to extend the remaining balance of \$9,792.67 to the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- c) **Our Village Restorative Justice – Originally granted \$18,750.00 and they spent \$7500.00.**  
William Wallace made a motion to extend the remaining balance of \$11,250.00 to the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## 7) Special Project Requests:

- a) **Guardians for New Futures - \$2800.00 – Christmas Gift Cards**  
Cathleen Blair, as a board member of GFNF, represented the group to request gift cards for their clients at Christmas. They serve 28 teens, and they are requesting \$100.00 gift cards for each of them. They take them shopping and allow them to choose their Christmas gifts. Last year we funded this project with \$25,00.00. Frank DeCarlo made a motion to approve the \$2800.00 request. Heather Hancock seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- b) **Okeechobee Battlefield Friends - \$3200.00**  
Magi Cable, as a board member, represented the group to request funding for the Battlefield days when they bring every fourth grader in the County to participate in the Battle of Okeechobee. The funds will be used for bus transportation to the event for all the County students as well as helping to fund the Oproject for \$3,200.00. Heather Hancock seconded the motion. Frank DeCarlo abstained from the vote. The motion carried.
- c) **DHH & Friends Art Experience \$3500.00**  
This item was removed until the December meeting.
- d) **Health and Safety Expo - \$4000.00**  
Chuck Akers presented a request to purchase toys at the Health and Safety Expo in January. Last year the project was funded with \$3000.00. At last year's event they ran out of toys. The request did not have a budget and there was confusion about the anticipated number of kids that would be attending. Frank DeCarlo made a motion to approve the \$4000.00 once a budget was received and the anticipated number of kids that would be attending. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- e) **Okeechobee County Fair -\$30,000.00**  
Linda Syfrett appeared before the Board to request funding for the Okeechobee County Fair. She gave a brief explanation of the history of the fair. Mrs. Syfrett amended her request to \$25,000. She gave a brief testimony about bringing kids from the Real Life Children's Ranch. Wendy Coker made a motion to fund this project with \$25,000.00. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- f) **Our Village – Peer Support \$99,160.00**

Leah Suarez appeared before the Board to request additional funding from the RFP proposal. She received \$80,000.00 in the RFP funding cycle. Last year Our Village received \$40,000.00. William Wallace stated that the need is very real. He sees it in court every day. Wendy stated that Osceola had seen a counselor one day and there is a great need. Leah stated that they have contracted with Papillon Mental for additional counseling services. Heather Hancock made a motion to fund Our Village \$60,000.00 as a Special Project. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**g) Healthy Start – Christmas gifts - \$3,500.00**

Andrea Medellin appeared before the Board to request funding for their Christmas gifts to the families in their programs along with other community programs. Last year Healthy Start received \$2500.00 for this project. Andrea stated that community members adopt children to also help with this project. Last year they served 375 kids, and they work with different organizations so that there isn't duplication. William Wallace made a motion to fund \$3500.00 for the project. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**h) Healthy Start – Fatherhood Program - \$1,250.00**

Andrea Medellin appeared before the Board requesting funding the Fatherhood Program began in the Spring of this year. The purpose of the program is to bring dads together for parenting skills and an opportunity to bond with their children and other dads. Healthy Start has employed a full-time dad liaison for this program. In addition to parenting skills, dads will have the opportunity to participate in fun activities with their children so as game nights, fishing days, etc. Heather Hancock made a motion to fund \$1,250.00 for the Fatherhood program. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**i) Healthy Start – Home Visitor Program - \$27,144.00**

Andrea Medellin appeared before the Board requesting funding for their Home Visitor Program. The Children's Services Council did not fund this program last year. The person hired will coordinate care for the very high-risk families. Melisa Jahner reminded Andrea that Healthy Start would have to have an audit at the end of the year. Frank DeCarlo made a motion to fund Healthy Start \$27,144.00. William Wallace seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**j) Ag Venture - \$6,000.00**

Colleen Larson appeared before the Board to request funding for the Ag Venture program. Last year the program was funded for \$5,500.00. This is an educational program for all fourth graders in the county. The students visit different stations and learn about agriculture and how food is grown. This has been a highly successful program since 2010. William Wallace made a motion to fund the Ag Venture program for \$6,000.00. Heather Hancock seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**k) Pregnancy Center of Okeechobee - \$35,000.**

Robin Gardner appeared before the Board on behalf of the Pregnancy Center to request funding for their parenting program. She changed her request to \$25,000.00. The purpose is to help parents learn how to have a healthy home environment and to give the parents support. The parents are provided with everything that they need to bring their newborn home to a safe environment. The center also provides different classes for the parents to attend. The Center also serves the high school parenting class. Heather Hancock made a motion to fund the Pregnancy Center \$25,000.00. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. Frank DeCarlo abstained from the vote. The motion carried.

**8) Goals and Objectives for the Children's Services Council of Okeechobee**

a) The Florida Commerce department requires that every special district is required to establish clear goals and objectives for their programs and services they provide. The Children's Services Council of Okeechobee has developed the following goals and objectives.

**(1) Goal 1:** The Children's Service Council of Okeechobee County will fund programs that aim to intervene in the early stages of substance abuse and support the holistic well-being of children and teens.

**(2) Goal 2:** The Children's Service Council of Okeechobee County will fund programs that encompass a comprehensive approach, integrating parenting education initiatives, enhanced child protective services, support for foster care systems, accessible day care facilities with trained staff, early identified protocols for at-risk children, and rapid crisis intervention.

- (3) Goal 3:** The Children’s Service Council of Okeechobee County will fund programs that aim to intervene in childhood bullying by supporting initiatives that enhance cultural diversity awareness to decrease bullying behavior.
- (4) Goal 4:** The Children’s Service Council of Okeechobee County will fund programs that provide a holistic approach to delinquency prevention that offers a wide range of activities that contribute to the well-rounded development of children. Focus will be on character building initiatives that include sport activities, tutoring, counseling for emotional support, and family involvement.
- (5) Goal 5:** The Children’s Service Council of Okeechobee County will fund programs that seek to intervene effectively in the identified challenges by supporting a range of critical issues such as maternal health for unborn children, childhood obesity, poor food choices, lack of exercise, and teenage pregnancy.
- (6)** The Performance measures for each of these goals will be the number of programs funded, the number of kids impacted and results of the programs.

Heather Hancock made a motion to establish these as our Goals and Objectives for the 24-25 fiscal year. Wendy Coker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## **9) Open Discussion**

- a) Toni Wiersma informed the Board of two upcoming events:
  - Farm City Luncheon will be on Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - The Okeechobee Education Foundation has invited the Board members to attend their annual luncheon on Wednesday, December 4, 2024. Board members should let Toni know if they would like to attend for reservations.
- b) Heather Hancock asked about the status of creating a new logo for the Children’s Services Council. Toni stated that she had not had a chance to follow up with Carey Pung, but that she would follow up.

## **10) Next Meeting Date – Thursday, December 12, 2024 @ 5:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Wiersma

Executive Director