

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL

MINUTES

February 6, 2025

In attendance at the meeting were Melisa Jahner-Chairperson, Bob McPartlan, Dylan Tedders, Pat McCoy, Heather Hancock, Frank DeCarlo, William Wallace and Toni Wiersma-Executive Director.

Absent:

Audience: Shermon Gordon, Matthew Fairchild, Melinda Wherrell, Tucker Vuleta, Cooper Wherrell, Kenady Hopkins, Olivia Wherrell, Shannon Tewsbury, Debra Ganas, Moxel Richardson, Cecelia Askins, Catherine Ludwig-Veloz, Amanda Julian, Mallorie Thomas, Jovanny Torres, and Marcie Osceola

1) Meeting called to order by chairman Melisa Jahner at 5:30 PM

2) Additions or corrections to the agenda

- a) Toni Wiersma added items
 - (1) 8 a – Chobee Bulls - \$15,107.45
 - (2) 12 a. - BOCC PowerPoint
 - (3) 12 b – New Board Members
 - (4) 12 c – Resignation of Wendy Coker Board Member

Pat McCoy made the motion to accept the agenda as presented. Bob McPartlan seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3) Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2025

- a) Meeting – January 9, 2025. Dylan Tedders made a motion to approve the minutes. Pat McCoy seconded the motion.

4) Approval of Financial Statements:

a) Approval of Financial Statements: October – January 2025

(1) Financial Statement– October 1,2024– January 31, 2025

Toni Wiersma presented the financial statement:

- **INCOME**
 - (i) **Total Income - \$1,144,480.95**
- **GROSS PROFIT - \$1,144,480.95**
- **EXPENSES**
 - (i) Administration - \$46,940.05
 - (ii) Program Services – Agencies – RFP - \$133,325.63
 - (iii) Scholarships - \$0.00
 - (iv) Summer Projects - \$0.00
 - (v) Special Projects - \$103,438.06
 - (vi) **TOTAL EXPENSES - \$283,703.74**
- **NET INCOME - \$860,777.21**
- **CURRENT ASSETS**
 - (i) SouthState Checking Account 0677 - \$1,935,312.80
 - (ii) CD –\$433,873.83
 - (iii) Refundable Agency Grants - -\$(140.00)
- **TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS - \$2,429,102.86**
- **FIXED ASSETS**

- (i) Equipment - \$1,926.00
- (ii) Accumulated depreciation - -\$(1,177.63)
- (iii) TOTAL FIXED ASSETS - \$748.37
- **TOTAL ASSETS - \$2,369,139.11**
- **LIABILITIES**
 - (i) Total Current Liabilities - \$2,341.11
 - (ii) Total Equity - **\$2,366,798.00**
- **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY - \$2,369,139.11**

(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 – January 31, 2025. Toni Wiersma pointed out to the Board the categories listed on the Profit and Loss Statement. Toni Wiersma discussed budget vs actual expenses to make sure that the Board remains in their budget.

5) Discussion of possible CD rates:

- a) Toni Wiersma discussed purchasing a CD that would earn more interest than our present checking account of .01%.
 - (1) SouthState rates: 5-month CD 4.35%
 - (2) Truist: 5-month CD 4.0%
 - (3) Bank of America 7-month CD 3.74%
 - (4) SeaCoast: 3-month CD 4.025% and 7-month 3.832%
- b) Bob McPartlan discussed that Martin County CSC had invested in Florida Prime and received 4.7% interest. Dylan Tedders stated that the School Board also had money at Florida Prime. Dylan will investigate and bring back details to the next meeting. Pat McCoy made a motion that we invest \$500,000. In a three-month CD at SouthState Bank. Bob McPartlan seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6) Conflict of Interest Forms

- a) **Toni Wiersma had the Board fill out their conflict-of-interest forms with other organizations.**

7) Logo Presentation by Prosper Noggin students

- a) Melinda Wherrell, program director of Prosper Noggin brought four students to discuss our new logo. The students questioned the Board about what they would like their logo to convey, the size, the purpose and the audience among many other questions. The students took the information and will present a logo at the next meeting. Students participating were: Olivia Wherrell – 8th grade, Kenady Hopkins – 8th grade, Tucker Vuleta – 7th grade and Cooper Wherrell – 8th grade.

8) Special Project Requests:

- a) **Florida Rebels, Inc.-Basketball- \$14,670.00.** Jovanny Torres presented a request for a travel basketball team. The plan is to have six teams. Seventy-one students showed up for the first tryout. The Board reminded Jovanny that the money can only be used for Okeechobee students and that the Board would need documentation of the Okeechobee students. Bill Wallace questioned about the standards to be on the team regarding grades and discipline. Jovanny stated that they hold the standard of a 2.0. They check progress reports and report cards. Pat McCoy made a motion to grant Florida Rebels - \$14, 670.00. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- b) **Elite Athletic Group – Baseball - \$41, 260.00.** Shermon Gordon and Matthew Fairchild presented a request for the travel baseball team. Last year they presented a request for \$34,244.00 and were granted

the request. They do not charge any fees for the boys to play. The money is used for uniforms, travel and tournament fees. They have four teams that travel. The coaches do keep track of grades and behavior in school. They have fund-raising events to cover the rest of the costs of the teams. Pat McCoy made a motion to grant Elite Athletic Group \$41,260.00. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- c) **863 Powerhouse, Inc.-Volleyball - \$20,000.00.** Catherine Ludwig-Veloz presented a request for a travel volleyball team. The purpose of the grant is to help reduce the cost for parents that may not be able to cover the \$2,000.00 fee to play with the club. The club has three teams, and they compete in many different tournaments. The Board reminded Catherine that this can only be used for students that live in Okeechobee County. We would need a list of Okeechobee County students and addresses that are on the teams. Pat McCoy made a motion to grant 863 Powerhouse, Inc. \$20,000. Bob McPartlan seconded the motion.
- d) **Chobee Bulls Elite - Football - \$15,107.45.** xxxxxx presented a request for a football league. The request was specific for new and safer helmets. The company would be Riddell Helmets. Last year Chobee Bulls Elite received \$7,000.00 for the football teams. Dylan Tedders emphasized the importance of reminding students that grades are important, and they must have a 2.0 GPA to participate in high school sports. XXXXXXXX stated that they were checking grades and also benching students that had discipline problems in school. The Chobee Bulls charge a \$175.00 fee to play. They have fund-raisers to pay for referees and other expenses. Pat McCoy made a motion to grant Chobee Bulls Elite \$15,107.45. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

9) Discussion on Committees (One Board member per committee)

- a) Summer Program Committee – meets March 11, 2025. Pat McCoy
- b) Scholarship Committee – meets March 12, 2025. Melisa Jahner
- c) RFP Committee – meets June 5, 2025. Heather Hancock

10) Other Important Dates

- a) Summer applications released – February 5, 2025
- b) Deadline for Summer applications – March 4, 2025
- c) Scholarships packets available – March 6, 2025
- d) RFP applications due – April 24, 2025

11) New Priority Focus

6) Program Service Area: Educational Enrichment and Tutoring

Problem: The Council perceives the need for programs that address academic achievement gaps and promote equitable educational opportunities for children and youth in the community. Many children, particularly those from underserved or vulnerable populations, such as Economically disadvantaged students, students from each major racial/ethnic group, and children with disabilities, face barriers to academic success, such as lack of access to quality tutoring, enrichment activities, and foundational skills support. These challenges hinder school readiness, grade-level proficiency, and long-term educational outcomes, creating a cycle of disadvantages. The council seeks to invest in solutions that foster academic growth, confidence, and engagement, ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Target: Programs designed to provide high-quality tutoring, educational enrichment activities, and academic support for children and youth will be prioritized. Proposals that focus on improving literacy, numeracy, critical thinking skills, and school readiness through evidence-based or innovative strategies are highly encouraged. Preference will be given to initiatives that demonstrate measurable outcomes, such as improved test scores, grade progression, and increased student engagement. Collaborations with schools, families, and community organizations to maximize program impact and sustainability are strongly encouraged. Programs that address the holistic academic needs of children while promoting lifelong skills and closing opportunity gaps will align with this priority area.

- a) Dylan Tedders made to add the sixth priority area: Educational Enrichment and Tutoring. Pat McCoy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

12) Open Discussion

- a) PowerPoint presentation to Board of County Commissioners. Toni Wiersma presented the presentation of the 2023-2024 fiscal year that she will present on February 13, 2025, to the Board of Commissioners.
- b) New Board Members: Currently there are open positions on the Board. Applications that will be presented to the BOCC will be the following: Heather Hancock – term is expiring, Debbie Gillis, Jessica Lee and Stephanie Nostwick-Dybdal. The BOCC will vote and recommend appointments to the Governor.
- c) Wendy Coker submitted her resignation as a Board Member of the Children’s Services Council. The Board was disappointed and commended Wendy for her many years of outstanding service. They will recognize her at the next Board meeting.

13) Next meeting date is March 13, 2025.

14) Meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Wiersma

Toni Wiersma, Executive Director