CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL

MINUTES

June 19, 2025

In attendance for the meeting were Melisa Jahner – Chair, Frank DeCarlo, Dylan Tedders, Jessica Lea, Debbie Gillis, Michael Hazellief, Bill Wallace and Toni Wiersma- Executive Director

Absent: Pat McCoy and Bob McPartlan

Audience: Cassidy Medellin, Michele Watson, Banira Pineda-Garcia, Jenny Hickox, Caryn Toole, Dennis Miles, Monica Koger, Leah Suarez, Chaka Smith, Delvin Louis, Amanda Riedel

2) Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

i. Melisa Jahner led the Pledge of Allegiance and Toni Wiersma gave the Invocation

3) Additions/Deletions- Approval of Agenda

(1) 6e – Florida Youth Foundation – Department of Department of DJJ - $1000.00
(2) 6f – Children's Home Society - $4500.00

a) Michael Hazellief made a motion to accept the agenda with the additions. Bill Wallace seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

4) Approval of Minutes: May 1, 2025, 2025

a) Frank DeCarlo made a motion to approve the minutes. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

5) Approval of Financial Statements:

a) Financial Statement– October 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025

i) Mrs. Wiersma presented the financial statement:

(1) INCOME
- Total Income - $1,284,101.91

(2) GROSS PROFIT - $1,284,101.91

(3) EXPENSES
- Administration - $73,427.02
- Program Services – Agencies – RFP - $319,876.02
- Community Scholarships - $68,500.00
- Summer Projects - $135,069.00
- Special Projects - $292,187.67
- **TOTAL EXPENSES - $905392.71**

(4) NET INCOME - $378,849.20

(5) CURRENT ASSETS
- SouthState Checking - $953,133.00
- CD –$944,995.43
- **Total Bank Accounts - $1,962,896.73**

(6) FIXED ASSETS
- Equipment - $1926.00

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

(7) TOTAL ASSETS - $1,963,349.21

(8) LIABILITIES

- Total Current Liabilities - $1690.81
- Total Equity - $1,898,363.62

(9) TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY - $1,898,363.62

ii) Toni Wiersma also presented the Profit-Loss for the Fiscal Year October 2024 – May 2025.

iii) Bill Wallace made a motion to accept the financial reports and the audit report. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

6) Special Project Requests

a) **Okeechobee Fireworks, Inc. - $11585.00**

i) Michelle Watson appeared before the Board to request funds to support children's activities on the 4th of July celebration at the Agri-Civic center. The event will be held from 2:00 pm and conclude with the Fireworks celebration at 9:00 PM. Activities they hope to have for the kids are games, bounce houses, food vouchers, free T-shirts for the first 200 kids and music and entertainment. Michelle estimates that around 800 kids will be in attendance. Bill Wallace made a motion to fund the Okeechobee Fireworks, Inc. $11,500.00 for the event to support children's activities. Jessica Lea seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

b) **Our Village – Back to School Expo - $8,000.00**

i) Leah Suarez appeared before the Board to request funds for the Back to School Expo. This is the thirteenth year of the event. The event includes vendors that hand out informational material for parents and kids. The parents must get signatures from all of the vendors before they are allowed to enter the place with the Back-to-School supplies. These supplies include a backpack, school supplies, socks and other essentials to help kids be ready for school. Leah estimates that around 800 kids will attend. Dylan Tedders made a motion to approve $8,000.00 for the Back-to-School Expo. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

c) **Chobee Community United – Back to School Extravaganza - $12,500.00**

i) Delvin Louis appeared before the Board to request funds to host a Back-to-School Extravaganza located in the Douglas Park Community. All Okeechobee County kids are allowed to attend. This event will help the students living in this neighborhood to attend the event because many don't have transportation to attend other similar events. The event will include food, fun activities, services, information booths and school resources. The goal is to provide this event for 300 kids. Michael Hazellief made a motion to fund Chobee United Community $12, 500.00 for the event. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

d) **Chobee Elite Athletics – Volleyball National Tournament - $12,000.00**

i) Monica Koger appeared before the Board to request $12,000.00 to help the volleyball team attend the AAU National Volleyball Tournament in Orlando from June 13-June 24, 2025. The funds will offset the cost of attendance to the tournament. The Chobee Elite Athletics will send four teams to the tournament. There are two athletes on the team that do not reside in Okeechobee County. CSC can't fund anyone not residing in Okeechobee County. Frank DeCarlo made a motion to fund Chobee Elite Athletics $11,500.00. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

e) **Florida Youth Foundation – Department of Juvenile Justice – Back to School supplies - $1,000.00**

i) Banira Pineda-Garcia and Jenny Hickox appeared before the Board to request funds for their clients and siblings to provide school supplies such as backpacks and notebooks. Michael Hazellief questioned whether $1,000.00 was enough to cover their expenses. Banira said it should be enough, but if anything is left over, they save it in reserve to provide during the entire school year. Michael Hazellief made a motion to fund the Florida Youth Foundation up to $2,000.00. A check for $1,000 will be issued and if receipts exceed this amount the CSC will fund the rest up to $2,000. Jessica Lea seconded the motion. The motion carried; Bill Wallace abstained from voting; everyone else was in favor.

f) **Children's Home Society - $4500.00**

i) Dennis Miles, CEO of the Children's Home Society appeared before the Board to request funds to help take over the Advocacy Center. The Guardian for the New Futures currently operates the center, but they don't have the funding. Children's Home Society believes that they can run the center financially sound. The $4500.00 request will allow the children of Okeechobee County to continue to receive Children's Advocacy services. Annually, the center provides services to more than 37 children who reside in Okeechobee County. Bill Wallace made a motion to fund Children's Home Society for $4500.00. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion; all were in favor.

7) RFP approvals for 25/26 pending final budget approval

i) Toni Wiersma thanked the committee of Debbie Gillis, Dr. Pat Cooper, Amanda Riedel, Caryn Toole, Tom Peer for the hours that were spent reviewing and deliberating over the proposals. Toni Wiersma explained the entire process that was involved in making the decision to fund the individual programs that were submitted.

ii) The following projects were recommended:

(1) 4-H H2O camp - $30,000.00
(2) 4-H Trek through Florida History - $16,000.00
(3) Big Brothers, Big Sisters - $5,000.00
(4) Children's Home Society - $31,700.00
(5) Early Learning Coalition - $14,650.00
(6) Economic Council of Indian River - $30,000.00
(7) Helping People Succeed – Healthy Families - $45,000.00
(8) Helping People Succeed – Help Me Behave - $30,000.00
(9) Hibiscus Children's Center - $20,000.00
(10) IRSC – Expanding Horizons – $22,000.00
(11) Lake Okeechobee Elite Athletics -$50,000.00
(12) New Horizons - $34,000.00
(13) Nuestro Pueblo - $12,000.00
(14) Our Village – Peer Support - $0.00
(15) Okeechobee Youth Livestock Show - $24,000.00
(16) Rodeo Team - $25,000.00
(17) Tykes and Teens - $80,000.00

Michael Hazellief made the motion to fund the above programs as recommended by the committee. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. The motion carried; all were in favor.

iii) The following project was recommended:

(1) Education Foundation of Okeechobee - $85,000.00

Bill Wallace made the motion to fund the Education Foundation of Okeechobee. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. Dylan Tedders abstained from voting; the motion carried; all members voting were in favor.

iv) The following project was recommended:
(1) Healthy Start – Doula Program - $27,000.00
Dylan Tedders made the motion to fund Healthy Start. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion. Jessica Lea abstained from voting. The motion carried; all members voting were in favor.

v) The following project was recommended:
(1) Martha's House - $73,000.00
Dylan Tedders made the motion to fund Martha's House. Jessica Lea seconded the motion. Bill Wallace abstained from voting. The motion carried; all members voting were in favor.

vi) The following project was recommended:
(1) Real Life Children's Ranch - $25,000.00
Michael Hazellief made the motion to fund Real Life Children's Ranch. Dylan Tedders seconded the motion. Frank DeCarlo abstained from voting. The motion carried; all members voting were in favor.

8) Public comments

a) There were no public comments.

9) Open Discussion:

a) Look at the August meeting dates. We will decide on the July 10th meeting if we need to meet in August.
b) Follow and like our Facebook page
c) Remind all members to file their Ethics form by July 1st to avoid a fine.

10) Next Meeting Date: July 10, 2025

Dylan Tedders made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm. Frank DeCarlo seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Wiersma

Toni Wiersma, Executive Director