

Jackson County Community Children's Services Fund Board Meeting Minutes

July 6, 2017, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Mid-America Regional Council Office, Westview Room

CCSF Board Members Present:

Rhonda Holman, Chair
The Honorable Ann Mesle
Jovanna Rohs, Ph.D.
Marietta Parker, J.D.
Robert Bartman, Ed.D
Rachelle Styles

CCSF Board Members Absent:

Luis Cordoba, Ed.D.
Dred Scott, Ed.D.
Brian Kaberline

Meeting Minutes

I. Rhonda Holman called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm

II. **Roll call**

The Roll Call of Board members showed the presence of a quorum. Attendance is reported above.

In addition to Board members, guests at the meeting included:

Whitney Miller, Jackson County, MO Legal Counsel Office
Jaime Masters, Jackson County, MO Director of Health Services
Robin Winner, Executive Director, Synergy Services
Barb Friedmann, Nonprofit executive and community collaboration organizer
Joy Torchia, communications consultant, present to take meeting minutes

III. **Review & Approval of Minutes of May 11, 2017 Meeting**

Rhonda Holman called for an **approval of the minutes. Dr. Bartman seconded the motion, and there was unanimous approval by the directors in attendance.**

IV. **Review & Approval of Proposed Agenda**

Action Item:

Ms. Holman asked for **review of the agenda, suggestions for amendments, and approval. Dr. Bartman seconded the motion, and unanimous approval.**

V. **New Business**

A. **Remarks from Invited Guests from the Children's Services Provider Community**

Robin Winner, Executive Director for Synergy Services and **Barb Friedmann**, nonprofit executive and community collaboration organizer, attended the meeting to share their past years' efforts

to establish a Community Children's Services Fund Jackson County, Missouri. Because of the impressive results that these funds have had on children's welfare in 8 other Missouri counties a coalition of more than 19 social service agencies worked to create a Fund here. Ms. Winner reported that the coalition that pursued the initiative was bi-partisan. She remarked that there was strong support from Republican women in the Independence, Missouri area.

Ms. Winner and Ms. Friedmann explained that the work to create the JACO CCSF began several following the 2014 study, [Investment Plan to Address the Needs of At-Risk Children and Youth in Greater Kansas City](#). (Dr. Rohs indicated that the study is available at the MARC website. It can also be found by entering the title into a search engine.) The study was prepared by the University of Missouri Institute of Public Policy for the Children and Youth Team of the Homelessness Task Force of Greater Kansas City. It was funded by the Healthcare Foundation of Greater Kansas City and the Reach Healthcare Foundation. Released in July 2014, the study identified several issues that needed to be addressed at that time to reduce the number of homeless children in Metro Kansas City. The study indicated there was a \$150 million gap in children's services across the 8-county Kansas City metropolitan area. The largest gap existed in Jackson County, MO. Some members commented that there may be a need to review and potentially update the study to confirm whether the needs identified have changed since 2014.

Following the study, Ms. Winner, Ms. Friedmann and others working in social services created a group of community leaders to begin raising funds and initiate the ballot question in Jackson County to create a CCSF. CCSF Directors received a list of the core agencies that worked to get the initiative on the November 2016 ballot. Ms. Friedmann helped to facilitate building this coalition, a role that she has played in the Metro nonprofit sector for many years.

Ms. Winner noted that the local foundation community appreciated the way that agencies came together to address an identified community need. Ms. Winner added that no agency came into this coalition with the expectation that it would automatically benefit from receiving support from the CCSF. Ms. Holman expressed the Board's appreciation for the coalition's advocacy and the selflessness of their motivation because there is no guarantee of funding to any agency.

Ms. Friedmann remarked that the coalition is continuing to explore ways to generate additional resources for serving at risk children and families. The two nonprofit executives expressed hope that the coalition of agencies will be able to work with the CCSF Board and staff in an advisory role on issues and areas of concern. Ms. Winner commented that the coalition is now working to establish a CCSF in Clay County that would offer the same ¼ of a cent sales tax, no sunset date structure that is common to the other Funds in the state. Jackson County's is the only Fund so far with a sunset on the tax.

Ms. Winner reminded the Board that at-risk children's needs in the county are urgent and she said that nonprofit service providers are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to seek funding from the new source. From their contacts at other Missouri counties with CCSFs, providers learned that CCSFs have started awarding funds 3 to 9 months after receiving tax revenue.

The Board then clarified that, while Jackson County voters approved establishing the Fund in November 2016, Jackson County did not begin to receive CCSF tax collections until April 2017. Ms. Winner and Friedmann thought collections had started in January and they said that this

assumption was shared by many others in the provider community. The Board then discussed the need for communication with the public to correct misperceptions and expectations. Ms. Holman urged those present to balance the desire to put CCSF money to work as intended against the need to establish the Fund deliberately and responsibly. Ann Mesle added that CCSFs are not “franchises,” and that each county’s Fund operates a little differently per county administration and community circumstances. She added that while this Board can learn from what worked well and what didn’t work as expected in other counties, the JACO CCSF needs time to establish itself within its context. Rachelle Styles shared that when the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City and the Reach Healthcare Foundation were initially formed, it took two years before they were staffed and distributing funds. She reminded the Board that its process must be thoughtful, with adequate attention paid to staffing and administration, as well as to defining funding priorities and guidelines.

Jaime Masters, director of Health Services for Jackson County, advised that the Board can direct the County Finance Director to handle expenditures on behalf of the CCSF until the new organization can handle its own business affairs. This information was inconsistent with a response that Ms. Holman had received through the County’s HR Department. Ms. Masters and Ms. Holman agreed to meet with the Jackson County legal department following this board meeting.

VI. Old Business

A. Update and Discussion of CCSF Director Appointments and Potential Conflicts of Interest (Holman and Jackson County Legal Staff)

The Board learned that some current CCSF directors may be conflicted, given their employment at organizations that may seek CCSF funding when the Fund begins to request proposals. Ms. Holman said that this issue surfaced after the directors were appointed and the Board has not yet discussed the matter directly with County Legal Counsel. Because this discussion may involve a legal issue the Board may need to meet with the County Counsel in Closed Session. However, Whitney Miller, who was present to represent the JACO Counsel’s Office, said that the matter was not one to be discussed in Closed Session. Ms. Miller exited the meeting after this discussion.

B. Update and Discussion on CCSF By-Laws (Mesle)

Ms. Mesle said that her ad-hoc committee (Parker, Rohs, Holman) are drafting by-laws based on their reviews of by-laws from several nonprofit organizations and other sources. By-laws for the St. Charles County’s CCSF were used as a starting point because they are for the same type of Missouri organization. The current draft of the JACO CCSF by-laws results from significant editing of the St. Charles document to separate by-laws from more operational and implementation-focused policies for finance, disclosing potential conflicts of interest, soliciting proposals and contract administration. Ms. Mesle plans to have a more complete draft of by-laws to review and perhaps adopt at the August 3 Board meeting. As is common practice, CCSF by-laws will be subject to amendments in the future as the organization identifies needed changes.

C. Update, Discussion and Action on Banking Services RFP (Scott)

Because Dred Scott was not at the meeting, Mr. Bartman and Ms. Holman described the work done to date on an RFP for banking services. They stressed the urgent need to establish a bank account so that the CCSF can make purchases and document payments. Ms. Masters reported that the County would post the RFP at its website and that a member of the Purchasing Department would serve as the internal contact for interested banks. After discussion, the directors agreed that the RFP should be amended to shorten response time for banks and trim any other parts of the process that could happen faster without weakening process quality. Ms. Holman said that she would make Dr. Scott aware of requested changes and ask whether he and his ad-hoc committee could have at least a recommendation by the next board meeting, or shortly thereafter. To move the process forward as quickly as possible **Ann Mesle made the motion to post and/or notify area banks of the RFP once the committee is satisfied with its form and content. Robert Bartman seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands.**

D. Update, Discussion and Action on Surety Bond (Styles)

Ms. Styles (Treasurer) shared her work to secure the surety bond required by state law and the ordinance that established the JACO CCSF. She is working with the Tallman Insurance Agency. Her first need was to identify the type(s) of bond(s) needed. She wasn't sure if the Board needed both a surety bond as well as a dishonesty bond, which insures against the Treasurer's misappropriation of funds. Ms. Parker and Ms. Holman agreed that is the latter risk that the bond speaks to since Missouri prohibits a Treasurer from expending public funds until the bond is in place. Ms. Styles was asked to confirm the type of bond required and to bring a recommendation to the Board that includes the source and fee. The fee(s) involved in setting up the bond(s) underscored the urgency for the banking relationship. Until that happens, Ms. Masters said Jackson County could make the payment(s) needed to purchase the bond(s) on behalf of the CCSF if the CCSF board issued a resolution making that formal request of the County Finance Director/Treasurer. Ms. Styles expects that she can have her recommendations completed before the August board meeting.

E. Update, Discussion and Action on Administrative Support (Holman)

The Board discussed the need to secure administrative support for tasks such as taking minutes at Board meetings, scheduling meetings with committee members and other duties as needed to support the Board during this start-up phase. Administrative needs are not currently full-time and Ms. Holman believes the Executive Director should be charged with hiring a full-time administrative assistant as part of her/his staff. Following up on discussion at the May meeting, Ms. Holman and Ms. Parker met with the JACO HR Director to see whether the CCSF could piggyback onto the County's negotiated arrangement with a temporary agency for procuring peak time help. The thought was that the CCSF could tap the temp agency's candidate pool at the County's negotiated rate and reimburse the County from CCSF receipts that are temporarily in the County's care.

The HR Director indicated that the Finance Director would need to sign off on any arrangement that involved financial transactions between the County and another entity. The HR Director subsequently reported that the Finance Director was not comfortable with the proposed arrangement. He preferred to avoid any co-mingling of County resources with those owned or controlled by another entity. Based on Ms. Masters' information that the CCSF Board could formally request an advance from funds being held on behalf of the CCSF, Ann Mesle moved and Bob Bartman seconded the following: **the CCSF Board asks the Jackson County Finance Director or Treasurer to advance a portion of the funds that the County is holding on behalf of the CCSF so that the Fund can handle its business affairs until it has a bank account and the bonding needed to operate independently. The directors voted in favor of the motion by a unanimous show of hands.** Ms. Masters will shepherd the Board's request through the JACO Executive and Treasurer offices.

VII. Other Matters

A. Future Meeting Agendas and Meetings with Community Organizations and Leaders

When considering how to gather input from community organizations and leaders, Ms. Mesle discussed the option of inviting people to the monthly Board meeting, or potentially having one, two or three board members set up smaller meetings with some of the community leaders/organizations. Ms. Holman thought it was important to invite some leaders to the Board meetings so all Board members hear and engage in the conversations. She pointed out the Board's task list and reminded everyone that they should be mindful of the amount of their 2-hour meeting time that is allotted for these discussions. Ms. Holman then asked the Board members who they want to talk with next.

Dr. Bartman suggested bringing in the Executive Director and/or the Board Chair from the St. Charles CCSF to hear about how they have administered the fund and what they've learned thus far. It was suggested these guests could be invited to come in person or the meeting could be set up as a video call. Ms. Mesle recommended that the Board figure out which counties are most like Jackson County, and learn what they are doing. Ms. Rohs suggested talking with someone in Boone County because it is closer to Kansas City and they have done interesting things with their Fund. Ms. Holman suggested they ask about other CCSFs about how they hired their executive directors. Ms. Mesle suggested that discussion could potentially happen in a committee meeting to conserve Board meeting time for a report of the most salient points from the conversation.

Ms. Rohs then suggested that it would be good to talk to other funders in the Kansas City region to learn from their experience in funding children's issues. Ms. Holman added that the VP at the Hall Family Foundation was interested in talking with this Board, and that she would reach out to invite her to an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Parker suggested inviting the principal investigator from the [2014 study](#). She thought it would be good to know more about how the needs were identified and other details the researcher(s) found when conducting study.

B. Future Tasks, Timelines, Key Dates

The Board then discussed a target date for the first distribution of CCSF contracts. Ms. Rohs said that October 2017 would be six months from when the first funds were disbursed to the County.

Everyone agreed that October 2017 was a good target date to issue the first RFP, but acknowledged that it didn't mean the first awards would/could be distributed by the end of 2017. Funding priorities and guidelines must first be identified to write and issue the RFP.

Developing funding priorities and guidelines calls for another small group of directors to work on recommendations to the full Board. Dr. Rohs indicated her interest in being part of this group.

Ms. Mesle said that once the priorities and guidelines are determined, the Board may want to consider distributing funds more than once a year, maybe two or three times a year. Ms. Rohs reminded the Board that developing very clear criteria up front when writing the RFP will make evaluation of proposals and their outcomes much easier. Ms. Parker said the Board needs to begin working toward hiring an Executive Director, as that leader could administer much of this focusing process. Ms. Mesle advised that there are professional staffs at area foundations who know how to administer philanthropic and public funds, and that the Board might ask them to advise and potentially assist with reviewing proposals as needed. Ms. Holman encouraged directors to speak up should they feel that the calendar is exerting undue influence on Board decision making. She said that awarding contracts as soon as possible is important; however knowing what to fund and who to fund is a surer path to improving at risk children's lives.

Ms. Rohs then asked if the Board had set a target for its next elections of officers. Ms. Holman reminded directors that Board elections were slated to occur again two months after the by-laws are approved.

Dr. Bartman suggested that Board members may want to think about potential candidates for vacated CCSF Board seats. Ms. Masters reminded directors that the enabling ordinance authorizes the Jackson County Executive to fill board vacancies. He has the option of filling vacancies from the pool of applicants that had been previously considered for CCSF Board seats. Dr. Bartman said that the Fund and the County need to think carefully about Board appointees. Some appointments may meet the letter of the law but raise eyebrows, nonetheless. Situations like this can create public relations problems for the Fund.

At 4:25 p.m., Ms. Mesle made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Bartman seconded the motion. All directors voted to approve and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 3, 2017 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm at the MARC office.