

Jackson County Community Children's Services Fund

Board Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2017, 2:30-5:00 p.m.

Mid-America Regional Council Office, Westview Room

Board Members Present:

Rhonda Holman, Chair
The Honorable Ann Mesle
Brian Kaberline
Dred Scott, Ed.D.
Jovanna Rohs, Ph.D.
Marietta Parker, J.D.
Rachelle Styles

Board Members Absent:

Robert Bartman, Ed.D.

Guests: Perry Hilvitz – UMKC Charter Schools; Denise Cross – Cornerstones of Care; Scott Burnett – Jackson County; Barb Friedmann – Volunteer; Lynn Durbin – Steppingstone; Robin Winner – Synergy Services; Ronald Berrey – St. Charles CCRB; Bruce Sowatsky – CCRB St. Charles; Nancy Atwater – Preferred Family Healthcare; Carey Wilkerson Looney – The H & R Block Fdn. /Marion & Henry Block Family Fdn.; Mayra Aguirre – Hall Family Foundation

Rhonda Holman (Dir. Holman) called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes: Dir. Holman presented the minutes from the August 3, 2017 meeting and asked for a motion to approve and/or amend them. There being no amendments it was moved (Dir. Mesle) and seconded (Dir. Rohs) and unanimously voted that the minutes be approved.

Agenda: Dir. Holman invited directors to review the agenda for needed changes. No changes were made.

Invited Guests: Bruce Sowatsky, executive director, and Ron Berrey, chair of the board of the St. Charles CCRB, related the history of the CCRB. Mr. Berrey and Mr. Sowatsky both emphasized that a CCRB executive director should have a clinical social work background, budgeting and finance skills, and be aware of the children's needs in the county. Mr. Sowatsky has been the executive director since 2005.

The St. Charles CCRB's current budget is \$7.2 million. They operate with a 5% overhead ceiling. They have been able to increase their budget each year. 95% of their funds are contracted with agencies, and they base each agency's funding on its prior year utilization of funds. Agencies can give an explanation if their spending is lower than expected with reasons such as a staff person being on maternity leave resulting in a decrease in productivity. Agencies apply once a year, and they have a protected amount of funding based on their utilization of funds the previous year. Agencies report twice a year on outcome measures. The CCRB insists that agencies identify at least 3 goals for the funds requested. The CCRB assesses its performance against 11 indicators, some of which are among those assessed in the annual, state-by-state Kids Count child welfare ratings. Drawing on data from multiple sources, the CCRB established baselines for outcomes. They move depending on the needs in the county. For example, there has been a 49% drop in teenage pregnancy so funding for that has been reduced. Child abuse has

recently increased due to heroin use. CCRB commissions needs assessments about every 2 years and it has also involved public polling data, feedback from service agencies, consumers, and schools. The CCRB collaborates with United Way and other organizations. The organization has also worked with economic development agencies because the welfare of children is a factor that can attract or repel investment dollars.

An early priority was services accessibility. It is important in a large county to have the agencies spread throughout the county, especially when the county lacks reliable county-wide public transportation. Funded agencies are considered partners but are held accountable. Contracts to agencies are audited twice a year by CCRB staff.

The CCRB has learned that it is very important to get dollars “out the door “and avoid having too much idle money and excessive reserves. Staff does not make decisions about funding. Staff makes recommendations to the board regarding funding. Each agency’s application is summarized and reviewed by board members. The annual process is started in mid-August. The board makes decisions on funding toward the end of November. The agencies are funded on a monthly reimbursement schedule. Contracts range from \$10,000 - \$1.2 million. The organization has rarely awarded multi-year contracts; but it has streamlined the application process to make subsequent applications from previously funded agencies less taxing. Also, the CCRB retains 15% of the annual budget in reserve against needs/opportunities that may surface before the end of fiscal year.

The St. Charles County CSF holds two evening meetings every year to make it possible for more of the public to attend. Surveys of consumers are also done.

Mr. Sowatsky stated that our first priority should be to hire an executive director. The executive director can then hire other staff who can do things such as set up the IT. Our best chance for renewed approval will be in 2020 because of the elections being held then. CCSFs have tended to enjoy greater success at the polls during Presidential elections.

Mr. Berrey recommended that the board members serve on committees which will address finances, personnel and other issues. The board should stay out of day-to-day activities. The board is to deal with things such as policy and strategy. Board members at the CCRB read proposals so that they are engaged in their organization’s core work. He emphasized that stewardship is very important. He also said that we must not expect to be perfect from the beginning.

St. Charles CCRB is currently training faculties of schools to help them establish trauma teams in each school.

Mr. Sowatsky offered to help us in any way possible with phone calls and emails and possibly returning to Kansas City.

Establishing JCCCF’s Initial Funding Priorities: Dir. Rohs reported on the meeting held August 28, 2017, with members of the Children’s Services Fund Coalition. Forty-seven individuals from 37 organizations attended the discussion. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss fund priorities and goals and to determine the top four priorities.

The results were:

- 1) Prevention programs which promote healthy lifestyles among children and youth and strengthen families;
- 2) Home-based or community based family intervention programs;
- 3) Individual, group, or family professional counseling and therapy services;
- 4) Temporary shelter for abused neglected, runaway, homeless or emotionally disturbed youth.

Dr. Rohs said that she would also review the results of polling done to test community support for establishing a CSF in Jackson County. The Kids Count data indicates that Jackson County ranks 104 out of 115 counties. Outcomes and how we measure them will be very important. She distributed a summary of findings from the Coalition discussion.

Dir. Holman expressed the board's appreciation for all the work Dir. Rohs has done.

Executive Director Search Process: Dir. Holman asked for the board's thoughts on the executive director search. The consensus was that the search should be limited to the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area. It was also agreed that an executive search firm or individual should be hired. Dir. Holman and Dir. Mesle have made some preliminary inquiries for the names of individuals and firms. Three or four have come up consistently. Dir. Holman stated that additional names would be welcome. The individual/firm will help write a job description. Dir. Holman indicated that a small group should keep the board informed about its activities. It was agreed that the choice of an executive search firm should be made before the next meeting. There was also a request of all present to propose names of minorities or minority-owned firms that do executive searches.

Dir. Parker suggested that the ED search working group should have two or three members. It was discussed that the group would consist of Dir. Holman, Ann Mesle and two other board members.

Dir. Scott moved and Dir. Parker seconded that the board authorize Rhonda Holman and a working group of directors to identify and negotiate with a search firm. The motion was approved unanimously.

Selection of Legal Counsel: Dir. Mesle and Dir. Parker explained that there are two totally different kinds of expertise: 1) legal expertise in helping create governing documents (which is a very specialized area); 2) legal help for more general needs such as leases and contracts for technical services. Dir. Mesle said that she believes that the Jackson County CSF should initially retain counsel with deep expertise in health services and administration to help establish the proper legal and administrative foundation for its work. Once the organization is fully established the CSF can work with one or more lawyers to provide general counsel, possibly at a much lower hourly rate. Dir. Holman asked for examples of the type of special expertise that would be needed initially. Dir. Mesle stated that there will be forms and documents for employment, HIPAA, financial matters, ethics, and contracts.

Dir. Parker said that she likes the idea that it is not necessary to use a legal firm; a sole practitioner who has the appropriate depth of skills could meet the organization's need. Selecting the lawyer should be timed so that the executive director could have legal assistance right away. Dir. Mesle said that she prefers hiring the attorney first. Dir. Parker, Dir. Kaberline, Dir. Mesle, and Dir. Scott will work on the legal counsel selection. Dir. Holman will work with Dir. Cordoba and Dir. Parker on the executive director search.

Status of JCCSF Surety Bonding: Dir. Styles reported that all paperwork has been submitted to the Miller Group. The bond should be approved very soon. The County has said that, if necessary, that JCCSF can ask the County Treasurer to pay the fee for the bond. Dir. Holman reminded the board that JCCSF can't spend a dime until it has this bond.

Banking Services RFP & Recommendation of Bank Account: Dir. Scott reported that Dirs. Holman, Bartman, Mesle, Parker, and County staff members Jamie Masters and Barbara Casamento helped with the RFP and selection process. Three banks were applicants: UMB, Adams Dairy Bank, and Commerce Bank. Commerce Bank is proposed as the JCCSF bank. The board needed to adopt a resolution regarding the choice of Commerce. Also needed are taxpayer identification and information on who signs checks and authorizes expenditures. The Bank would also like to have copies of the enabling ordinance and statute that allow the Fund's operations. **Dir. Parker moved and Dir. Mesle seconded a motion to empower Dir. Scott to complete the documents to establish the account and attendant banking services. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Dir. Holman reminded the board that there would be another election of officers at the October meeting, in keeping with the board's desire to hold another election 60 days after adopting its first set of bylaws.

Discussions with Possible Fiscal Agents and Contractors to Handle Initial Funding Rounds: Dirs. Mesle, Parker, Styles, Bartman and Holman have met with representatives of the Truman Heartland Community Foundation and the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation (GKCCF). They have the staff and IT infrastructure to solicit, review, award and administer grants and the types of purchase-of-service contracts that the CCSF will award. GKCCF asked how many times a year JCCSF would award contracts and how much of the work the board wants to share. They could come back with a proposed fee based on this information. They also could provide data collection on the awards and performance under contracts, which the CCSF will need to report its activities and results on an annual basis. Dir. Parker reported that the Truman Heartland Foundation proposed a 1% of assets fee for such services.

Dir. Holman suggested that we take temporary measures to get dollars on the street. She recommends thinking about one or two rounds of funding per year and with contracts set up on a calendar year basis. A percentage of the award could be advanced upfront and the remainder paid out during the contract period based on agency performance. She suggested a quarterly or six-month review of contractor performance. She urged the board to focus on funding the right things rather than the mechanics. Dir. Rohs said the board should consider the awards as purchases of services. Dir. Holman said that during their meeting with the GKCCF she and Bob Bartman stressed the importance of the JCCSF establishing its identity as a community funder. Therefore "back room" support for contract award administration from either community foundation should not confuse anyone about the true source of funding.

Board Task List, Timetable and Assignments: Dir. Holman stated that the CCSF needs to elect a Secretary. This office can be filled during the officer elections at next month's meeting.

Public Comments: Jamie Masters reported that Scott Burnett, Chairman of the Jackson County Legislature, sat in on part of today's meeting. Before he had to leave, he said that if the CCSF has an emergency request the County will expend the dollars on the organization's behalf and be reimbursed when the CCSF can make disbursements. She will work on getting Dir. Rohs the public polling

information she wants to review, and she will help connect CCSF directors with the interim director of COMBAT to learn how that program handles its service contracting and monitoring.

Dir. Holman reminded Ms. Masters about an earlier request regarding the ability to post meeting minutes somewhere on the Jackson County website. Dir. Kaberline has agreed to lead the work on establishing a web presence for the CCSF and he will draw on the County's expertise on making a website accessible to as much of the public as possible.

Because he is a staff member at Kansas City, Missouri Public Schools, Dir. Cordoba raised the issue of a future conflict of interest for him when the RFP for agencies is announced. He will have to resign at that time, as may also be necessary for Dir. Scott. Dir. Mesle said that we will need to have policies on conflicts of interest and statements to sign once the Fund begins soliciting applications for contracts.

Dir. Styles commented on the board meeting twice a year in the evening that the St. Charles County program holds to make it easier for people attend if their daytime responsibilities would otherwise prevent them from attending. The consensus was that this is a good idea.

Next Meeting: 2:30 p.m., October 5, 2017, MARC offices.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.