



CHILDREN'S
SERVICES
FUND
OF JACKSON COUNTY

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 20, 2021 – 2:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present:

Ann Mesle (Chair)
Jessica Ramirez (Vice Chair)
Anthony Mondaine (Treasurer)
Brian Kaberline (Secretary)
Robert Bartman
Rhonda Holman
Justice Horn
Brian Kaberline

Board Members Absent:

Ajia Morris

Staff Present:

Rob Whitten, Executive Director
Seth Baker
Katherine Rivard
Moji Shogbamimu

Guests, Affiliations:

Nancy Atwater, Preferred Family Healthcare
Tahir Atwater, Jackson County CASA
Brandi Bair, Hope House
Amy Couture, Rose Brooks
Terry Cunningham, CommCARE
Sarah Forgey, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation
Holly Hanover, The Family Conservancy
Justin Horton, Cornerstones of Care
Lisa Mizell, Child Protection Center

I. Call to Order

Ann Mesle

The Children's Services Fund of Jackson County (CSF) meeting was called to order at 2:32 p.m.

II. Roll Call and Guest Introductions

Ann Mesle

Roll call of the board members was taken, and guests were welcomed and invited to use the chat function to enter their name and organization.

The financial position was reported as follows:

Financial Position – April 2021

• Current Assets		\$22,554,394
Cash	\$ 7,554,394	
Investments	\$15,000,000	
• Accrued Liabilities (2021/2022 Contracts)		\$16,767,327
• Net Assets		\$ 5,787,067

Ms. Shogbamimu reminded that the above liability amount still included the \$3M that was reimbursed to partners due to checks not being cut until the month of May. This will be reflected in the May financials resulting in a reduction in liabilities and cash.

Dir. Mesle expressed appreciation for the clear way the financial information is shared each month by Ms. Shogbamimu.

B. 2021 RFP for 2022 Funding Update

Rob Whitten

Based on previous board approval the following steps have been completed or are scheduled:

- A Letter of Intent (LOI) was opened April 26, 2021, for any applicant.
- Information sessions were held on May 4, May 5, and May 12. There were 143 participants representing 94 organizations.
- The opportunity to submit an LOI will close on May 21st at 5:00 p.m.
- An invitation to submit a full application will be extended to organizations no later than June 25. Organizations not selected to move to a full application will also receive feedback by this date.
- Applications will be due by July 30 at 5:00 p.m.

C. State of Missouri Legislative Update

Rob Whitten

The legislative session closed on May 19. Due to a call scheduled for May 21, 2021 to recap the session, Mr. Whitten asked that this update be deferred until the board meeting in June.

Dir. Mesle asked for information regarding a recent newspaper article reporting potential legislation that would affect public/private schools. Dir. Rohs shared that the legislation put in place was based on an individual's ability to place money into a fund and receive tax credits. While these funds can pay for private schools, there were also caveats regarding size of community and transportation funding requirements.

VI. Strengthening Partners

Partner Engagement

Katherine Rivard

Ms. Rivard indicated that the CSF Program Officers were reviewing all Academic year funded partners' outcomes in preparation for the July 1, 2021, contract. Of the thirty-one partner outcomes, twenty required work to focus more on mental health and

evidence-based practices. It was reported that partners had been very receptive to these meetings and the resulting revisions to their outcomes.

Virtual site visits are underway, with half completed. The following observations were shared:

- Most partners are serving less children than they anticipated when applying for funding pre-pandemic. This was largely due to closing of schools, courts, etc. Conversely, due to the reopening of in-person schooling partners are now anticipating a return-to-normal service level in the fall.
- Most home and community-based programs are continuing to provide remote services. There remain issues around penetration of the vaccine by both staff and the families served. A few indicate an upside to remote services such as the elimination of transportation issues, and a decreasing number of no-show and cancellations for counseling sessions.
- Several partners have reached out regarding the application of the new unit of service model for all CSF funded service areas other than prevention. CSF Program Officers have been working with them to discuss shifting to a unit of service for their submission.
- Feedback from the pre-site visit questionnaire completed by each partner prior to any site visit resulted in some shared responses to the question what the CSF could do for you. First, was a request for convening opportunities to network and collaborate on data outcomes with other partners. Also was a request for data sharing and reporting, and finally was the need for technology and technology support.

Dir. Holman asked when partners request more opportunities to talk with other funded agencies are they specific about a topic or would they just like CSF to convene a meeting? Ms. Rivard responded it was both. Some expressed interest in lessons learned from COVID or what databases were being used by others. Others just want the opportunity to talk to peers, which they feel has been lost due to working remotely. Dir. Homan asked if CSF felt they would be able to pull together some of those sessions this year. Mr. Whitten indicated that the focus of the strategic plan deliverables would help determine appropriate staffing levels so that perhaps some of that work could begin this year. Dir. Holman shared that because partners have been asking for this for some time, it was her hope that this is something that CSF could begin this year. Dir. Mesle echoed her support as well.

VII. Honoring Community

A. Audit – Fiscal Year 2020

Moji Shogbamimu

The CSF audit has been completed, with no audit findings. The auditors will meet with the audit committee in the next few weeks with a will plan to present to the entire Board in June.

Mr. Whitten complimented Ms. Shogbamimu for all her work in getting the audit completed.

Mr. Whitten shared that the one observation made in the audit remains the small CSF staff and the resulting limitations with segregation of duties. This has been noted in previous audits as well and has been addressed in part by the oversight provided by the CSF Board.

B. Reauthorization of Sales Tax

Rob Whitten

1. Approve Target Date and Initiative

Action Needed

Mr. Whitten recommended that the Board approve November 2022 as the target for placing reauthorization on the ballot. Dir. Holman asked for confirmation that this ballot would include election to offices in addition to reauthorization. Mr. Whitten indicated that was correct and stated because this would not be a special election, there would be no cost to CSF. Also, if reauthorization was unsuccessful in 2022, there would be two remaining opportunities in 2023 for ballot placement before the sunset in 2024. Dir. Horn asked if the 2023 opportunities would be during the municipal election cycle. Mr. Whitten responded that it would. Dir. Horn asked for Mr. Whitten's opinion regarding how a request for reauthorization would be perceived today? Mr. Whitten responded that this question would lead to his second request of the board, which was to engage Public Progress as a partner in the reauthorization process. Public Progress would do some polling in late summer that would assist in answering the question posed by Dir. Horn. Mr. Whitten feels a strong argument could be made for the success of the fund and the number of Jackson County children who have been impacted by the services and programs the fund supports. Historically, once a tax like this has been established in Jackson County there is a tendency to renew. However, coming out of the pandemic there are certainly folks who are critical of taxes in general. Again, this points to the polling that needs to be done. Dir. Holman agreed with Mr. Whitten but asked how many people beyond our network of providers know about us? This is where she believes the polling would be helpful as this is an unknown audience. She is very encouraged we are taking some early steps to determine what needs to be done if we are going to pursue reauthorization.

Mr. Whitten is also asking the CSF Board to engage Public Progress as a partner for reauthorization, as mentioned above. Mr. Whitten shared their numerous successes both locally, across the state and nationally. Public Progress worked with the Jackson County coalition that established the fund initially. Todd Patterson, of Public Progress, has laid out an 18-month engagement with the CSF and an eventual campaign committee to work on this issue. Mr. Whitten is recommending Board approval for expenditures of costs for 2021 up to \$146k. This would include polling, focus groups, town halls, voter analytics, field programming, direct mail, etc. As a 501(c)3, CSF funds can only be used to educate and share information. CSF funds cannot be used in direct support of an issue. Depending on polling results there may be different costs associated with a campaign after 2021. A Campaign Committee would also need to be established to raise funding for any kind of "vote-yes" activity.

Dir. Mesle asked if the Public Progress organization was unique in Missouri to provide expertise in all areas described? Mr. Whitten stated he believed it was. He shared an earlier conversation he had with Ms. Stacey Daniels-Young, former COMBAT Director, and Dir. Holman. In her experience regarding reauthorization, she indicated in addition to Public Progress there were two other resources to be considered. Upon further inquiry one had retired and the other passed away. Public Progress is the expert in Missouri and nationally. They have never failed in getting a fund established when it related to children and families. They understand the statute and the limitations. Dir. Horn asked if there would ever be a time when we will not have to take it to the voters? In response, Mr. Whitten stated that of the nine CSFs across Missouri we are the only one with a sunset. The statute that enables us allows a county or city a ¼-cent sales tax into perpetuity. Through discussions the Jackson County legislature reduced that amount to 1/8-cent with a seven-year sunset when placing the issue on the ballot in 2016. This remains one of the polling questions for next fall. What is the appropriate language for the ballot?

Dir. Holman asked if Mr. Whitten were aware of any work being undertaken by Public Progress with the County that would cause a conflict with this reauthorization work? Mr. Whitten responded that he did not think so. Although they have done work on the County Charter, it is his understanding that they do not do work in support of specific candidates to remain apolitical. Mr. Patterson has indicated that they have turned down work in the past so as not to appear conflicted.

Dir. Rohs asked if Public Progress have any role in building that Campaign Committee, or does it fall on us as a Board? Mr. Whitten indicated that Mr. Patterson has presented him with two budgets. The engagement budget is the one that CSF can support financially. The other budget includes the Campaign budget, which cannot make use of CSF funds. CSF will also continue to check with our attorney Greg Lam to ensure there are no negative implications. Dir. Rohs expressed her appreciation for Mr. Whitten's work on this particularly given the lack of precedence as no other CSF in Missouri has a sunset.

Dir. Holman requested continued updates regarding the strategy of the Campaign Committee. She questioned who does CSF really want on that committee? She would like for the Board to understand what process will be used and how it will be put together. Mr. Whitten indicated this will be a standing agenda item each time the Board convenes. Dir. Holman would like to hear the thinking around putting this committee together and the timing.

Mr. Whitten also shared that CSF has made \$640k in earned interest income. He suggests that any costs for this initiative should be pulled from this and not from the revenue generated directly from the sales tax.

Dir. Mesle asked if we have been able to segregate money used for campaigning versus educational purposes. Mr. Whitten indicated that although this has not been done, it can be done. As we start working with Public Progress it will be set up to show exactly what those expenses were used for, such as

polling and educational sessions. Dir Rohs. stated that once that Campaign Committee gets going all the “vote-yes” pieces will come out of that Committee and should be easier to track.

A motion was made to recognize the November election in 2022 as the point at which the Children’s Services Fund Board would like to see a reauthorization vote for the sales tax that supports the organization placed on the ballot.

First: Rhonda Holman Second: Justice Horn Motion: Approved
Aye: 8 Opposition: 0

A motion was made to engage Public Progress as our partner in this effort.

First: Justice Horn Second: Rhonda Holman Motion: Approved
Aye: 8 Opposition: 0

(NOTE: this is exactly what he said)

VIII. Optimizing Organization

Rob Whitten

A. Strategic Plan Adoption

Action Needed

Mr. Whitten provided an overview of past steps and resulting information that had taken place in the creation of a CSF strategic plan. Mr. Whitten reviewed the strategic imperatives and descriptions, strategic objectives, progress metrics and tactics that had been worked on by the CSF Board and CSF Staff, with input from Partners and all other CSF Executive Directors throughout the State.

Mr. Whitten then recommended that the Board adopt the Strategic Agenda included in the Board Packet, prior to the meeting. If adopted this would govern CSF work over the next three years. If approved, the agenda would be distributed, implemented, and refreshed as needed.

Dir. Mesle and Dir. Holman offered appreciation for the strategic planning process, and particularly the facilitator and Executive Director. They both felt that her careful preparation prior to each session allowed the process to move forward quickly, resulting in a strong strategic plan.

A motion was made to accept the Strategic Plan as presented.

First: Brian Kaberline Second: Jessica Ramirez Motion: Approved
Aye: 8 Opposed: 0

B. GEO 2021 Learning Conference

Mr. Whitten shared that Dir. Ramirez and Katherine Rivard will join him in attending the conference. The three-day 2021 conference is being held virtually the week of May 24, 2021.

C. CSF Relocation

In preparation for moving from the more recent virtual to in-person and hybrid environment for both Board, Staff and Partner meetings, Mr. Whitten has been

looking at space within the current facility. A space has been identified that would shrink the square footage for staff offices but allow hosting for in-house meeting and secure the technology needed to host a hybrid meeting. In checking with other CSF organizations, they are also considering a return to in-person board meetings, with virtual attendance by guests. Mr. Whitten asked for initial thoughts and feedback regarding this approach.

Questions, comments, and responses were as follows:

- Dir. Bartman asked about any increase in cost, Mr. Whitten responded that rent would be increased by approximately \$18k per year.
- Dir. Ramirez asked about initial costs in securing the existing space. Mr. Whitten responded that Penntower paid for the leaseholder improvements initially, CSF costs were for the purchase of furniture. Dir. Ramirez indicated that the hybrid model seemed to be a good way to return to work.
- Dir. Horn indicated that COVID has shown us we should be in a hybrid model moving forward. It is also an equity issue of meeting people where they are.
- Dir. Rohs shared that in consideration of hybrid meetings CSF should be mindful of norms and that consideration should be given in thinking about the configuration and supporting technology (i.e., that cameras and microphones be able to focus on each individual, with no feedback for those attending virtually) She stated it becomes easy to only focus on those in-person attendees. Engagement also becomes an issue around meetings. Thought should be given to establish norms around what hybrid meetings look like,
- Dir. Holman asked for consideration of implications around the equipment we put in. If it allows us to do more than we have been able to towards our mission, then that is what we ought to do.
- Dir. Kaberline asked about concerns in meeting the requirements of an open meeting? Mr. Whitten indicated that according to the Secretary of State's office, if CSF allows for some method of participation, we are meeting that requirement. Dir. Kaberline also asked when we cut down the size of the offices would this allow for additional growth? Mr. Whitten indicated that it would allow for the growth of two additional staff.

IX. New Business

Dir. Mesle called for any new business. There was no new business presented.

X. Director and Guest Comments

Dir. Mesle called for Director comments. There were no Director comments.

Dir. Mesle called for Guest comments. Ms. Hanover expressed her thanks for allowing The Family Conservancy to be at the meeting.

XI. Closed Session – Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation

I move that this meeting be closed, and that all records and votes, to the extent permitted by law, pertaining to and/or resulting from this closed meeting be closed under Section 610.021, subsection 13 RSMO, for the purpose of discussing the Executive Director's annual performance evaluation.

First: Jovanna Rohs

Second: Rhonda Holman

Motion: Approved

Aye:

Robert Bartman

Rhonda Holman

Justice Horn

Brian Kaberline

Ann Mesle

Anthony Mondaine

Jessica Ramirez

Jovanna Rohs

The meeting was closed at 3:50, on May 20, 2021, virtually via Zoom.

The Board came out of closed session at 4:00 p.m., on May 20, 2021, virtually via Zoom.

Roll call was taken. All Board Members who went into session were present. The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted: Sue Richter

Brian Kaberline, Secretary

Next Meeting: June 17, 2021 - 2:30-4:30 p.m.

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First: Jovanna Rohs Second: Rhonda Holman Motion: Approved

Aye:

Robert Bartman

Rhonda Holman

Justice Horn

Brian Kaberline

Ann Mesle

Anthony Mondaine

Jessica Ramirez

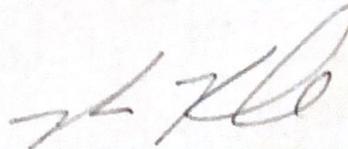
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