



February 9, 2022 Board Minutes

Date: February 9, 2022

Location: Zoom/Telephone Call-in Meeting

Minutes Taken By: Suzan Gage

Time: Meeting called to order at 11:03 am CT

ELCNWF Staff members present: Suzan Gage, Executive Director; Matt Bonner, Administrative Director; Ken Whittaker, Operations Director; Sam Sweazy, Finance Director; Donna Carnley, Children’s Services Director; Lindsay Holmes, Education and Outreach Director; Chelsea Ranew, Contracts and Grants Manager

Guests present: None

Full Board: Yes No Quorum: Yes In attendance: 14/22 (prior to voting of new members)

Executive Comm. Yes No

Roll Call to Include Board Members on Zoom/Telephone: Yes

Executive Committee	First Name	Last Name	Present	Present Via Phone/Zoom	Excused Absence	Unexcused Absence
●	Tony	Bennett		1		
	Rachel	Chima			1	
	Traci	Corbin			1	
	Sharon	Gaskin			1	
	Zach	Gilmore		1		
	Kenny	Griffin			1	
●	Tiffani	Hinds			1	
	Jeanne	Hitchcock		1		
	Miatta	Jalaber			1	
	Liz	Lentz		1		
	Gina	McAllister		1		
●	Jon	McFatter (P)			1	
	Mary	McKenzie		1		
●	Juliana	Melara		1		
	Johanna	Plummer			1	
●	Renaee	Rountree		1		
	Joseph	Seabrook		1		
	Parnell	Smith		1		
●	Jerry	Sowell		1		
	Joe	Taylor		1		
	Richard	Williams		1		
●	Myrtis	Wynn		1		
		Total	0	14	8	

Utilization Report for Direct Services

We reimburse contracted providers in each of the seven counties served. The information below shows the payment to School Readiness and VPK providers for direct services (slots) and compares the previous month.

SCHOOL READINESS		
	November 2021	December 2021
<u>School Readiness</u>	SR Slot Dollars \$1,231,091	SR Slot Dollars \$1,174,765
Payments to Child Care Providers for Direct Services (Slots)	Children Paid – 2,320	Children Paid – 2,240
VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN		
	November 2021	December 2021
<u>VPK Program</u>	VPK Payments \$521,750	VPK Payments \$484,136
Payments to Child Care for VPK services	Children Paid -2,362	Children Paid- 2,324

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS, GUESTS, AND STAFF – Jerry Sowell

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA – Jerry Sowell

VOTE NEEDED: To approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Motion: To approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Motion By: Jeannie Hitchcock

Motion Seconded By: Tony Bennett

Member/s Recusing from Vote: No

The motion carried.

3. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – Jerry Sowell

3.1. Minutes: Board Meeting December 8, 2021 (*See minutes*)

3.2. Credit Card Transaction Report: November 2021 and December 2021 (*See credit card statements*)

3.3. Revenue and Expenditures through 12.31.2021 (*See R&E through 12.31.2021*)

3.4. Updated Organization Chart as of 1.1.2022 (*See Organization Chart 1.1.2022*)

3.5. Property Disposition (*See Surplus Property Form*)

VOTE NEEDED: To approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion: To approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Motion By: Joe Taylor

Motion Seconded By: Jeanne Hitchcock

Member/s Recusing from Vote: No

The motion carried.

4. COMMITTEE/FULL BOARD REPORTS – Jerry Sowell

4.1. Executive Committee- Jerry Sowell

Instead of an Executive Committee meeting, all items brought to the committee are presented to the entire board for information and/or vote, as needed.

4.1.1. Executive Director Annual Review

Jon McFatter, board chair, has met with the Executive Director to conduct her annual performance evaluation and is presenting her evaluation for approval by the board. (*See Executive Director Evaluation*)

VOTE NEEDED: To approve the Executive Director’s annual performance evaluation.

Motion: To approve the Executive Director’s annual performance evaluation.

Motion By: Joe Taylor

Motion Seconded By: Rev. Parnell Smith

Member/s Recusing from Vote: No

The motion carried.

4.1.2. Purpose Statement and Values

The Executive Team is working with WIPFLI consultants to develop internal working documents to help guide the organization’s work plan for the next few years. As part of that work, the Executive Team identified two changes to be brought before the board:

Purpose Statement:

Current: “We exist to grow healthy children, parents, and the relationship between them.”

Recommended Change: “We exist to help grow healthy children, parents, and the relationship between them.”

VOTE NEEDED: To approve the recommended changes to the purpose statement, as presented.

Motion: To approve the recommended changes to the purpose statement as presented.

Motion By: Jeannie Hitchcock

Motion Seconded By: Renae Rountree

Member/s Recusing from Vote: No

The motion carried.

Values:

Current: We value compassion, dedication, discipline, excellence, honesty, respect, and safety.

Recommended Change: *Our Core Values:*

- 1. Can-do Attitude*
- 2. Tenacious, Energetic, and Hardworking*
- 3. Innovative, Resourceful, and Creative*

- 4. Humility
- 5. Fierce Advocate

VOTE NEEDED: To approve the recommended changes to the values, as presented.

Motion: To approve the recommended changes to the values as presented.

Motion By: Mary McKenzie

Motion Seconded By: Renae Rountree

Member/s Recusing from Vote: No

The motion carried.

4.1.3. Ad Hoc Committee for PEO Services RFP

The coalition released an RFP for Professional Employer Services and is forming an ad hoc committee to score the submissions. We currently have two members that have volunteered to be on the committee. Please let Suzan know if you would be willing to serve on the committee.

NO VOTE NEEDED: Information only

4.2. Finance Committee- Jerry Sowell

Instead of a Finance Committee meeting, all items that would be brought to the committee are presented to the entire board for information and/or vote, as needed.

4.2.1. Current Expenditures

4.2.1.1. School Readiness

During FY 2021, the coalition was initially awarded \$10,799,268 for School Readiness direct services. During that year, the coalition followed the instructions of DEL (then OEL) to enroll as many eligible children as possible (eliminate the waitlist) to help ensure that families could work and attend school during the COVID-19 pandemic. DEL supplemented the coalition's budget by awarding additional dollars to cover the additional children with \$12,530,263 for School Readiness direct services.

For FY 2022, DEL initially funded the coalition at \$11,556,924 for direct services with continued instruction to keep enrolling children, with the understanding that the coalition would receive additional dollars to cover the expenses. Coalition staff has been tracking the projected expenditures since August 2021 using their forecasting tool. In October 2021, coalition staff started to address DEL staff about the projected shortfall. In November 2021, DEL staff communicated that additional funds would be available. On December 2, 2021, the coalition wrote a formal request to re-obligate funds to cover the projected shortfall.

Specifically, the coalition cited:

- The ELC of NWF did not receive any new Wait List funds to support the increase in the number of children placed from the wait list at the direction of DEL.
- The ELC's base SR funding was reduced from the prior FY which is what will cause the projected deficit based on the current level of service.

- Failure to provide the additional SR funds could result in the need to disenroll children and build a substantial wait list after having a zero-wait list for the last 6-8 months.
- At a minimum the ELC will need to stop the placement of school aged children if additional SR funds are not granted near term.
- The sooner the ELC can depend on the additional SR funds the better the ELC can make plans for completing the FY within budget.
- The ELC wants to schedule a budget specific conversation with DEL staff early in the calendar year to assist with our budget planning for the current and the new FY.

Since the written request, DEL has canceled two scheduled meetings to discuss the budget. On January 28, 2022, the coalition received an email stating:

“The Division of Early Learning has identified School Readiness Funding which can be re-obligated to the Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida to meet the needs identified below (\$2M).”

As of this meeting, the coalition has not received an updated notice of award (NOA). The staff's recommendation is to continue to monitor the situation, enroll children following DEL'S instructions, and keep the waitlist at a minimum.

VOTE NEEDED: To continue to monitor the situation, enroll children following DEL'S instructions, and keep the waitlist at a minimum.

Motion: To continue to monitor the situation, enroll children following DEL'S instructions, and keep the waitlist at a minimum.

Motion By: Renae Rountree

Motion Seconded By: Richard Williams

Member/s Recusing from Vote: No

The motion carried.

4.2.1.2. Disaster Recovery Grant (Operation Kaleidoscope)

The coalition received a disaster recovery grant (DRG) to help with recovery efforts from Hurricane Michael. Beginning in July 2021, coalition staff communicated with DEL regarding a request for extension of the DRG due to uncontrollable extraordinary circumstances brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically:

- Vendor production issues: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, vendors required to implement approved projects have experienced significant difficulty in having their orders filled as approved in the coalitions' Disaster Relief Grant Plans. For outdoor materials alone, which is the largest allocation of the grant, vendors have been experiencing backlogs of 12 weeks or more due to shortages in the availability of plastic and steel.

- Scarcity of available labor: While these projects require special products, they also require specialized labor, the scarcity of which is only exaggerated during these extraordinary times.
- Period of availability: Although the budget period start date for the award was 10/1/2019, the Notice of Award was issued 3/27/2020 and ends 9/30/2022, netting less actual project period than indicated. Due to the planning, documentation, and budgeting associated with developing an agreement for atypical service and commodity types, we executed the first agreement 9/2/2020. The coalition then had to onboard project-funded staff. This series of events further reduced the effective project period by one year.
- Additional funding: In September 2020, the state received an additional \$2,621,553 in disaster relief funding. While the welcomed and needed, it nevertheless requires additional time to efficiently plan for and expend the allocation.
- Ongoing impact: The recent surges in COVID-19 variants have continued to impact local and national workforces, causing additional delays. We anticipate ongoing shortages and delays in labor and supplies for the foreseeable future.

Coalition and DEL staff continue to communicate with the federal government to secure the grant extension.

NO VOTE NEEDED: Information only

4.3. Policy and Personnel Committee-

In place of a Policy and Personnel Committee meeting, all items that would be brought to the committee are presented to the entire board for information and/or vote, as needed.

No New Business

4.4. Education and Program-

In place of an Education and Program Committee meeting, all items that would be brought to the committee are presented to the entire board for information and/or vote, as needed.

4.4.1. Coalition Workforce Initiatives for Early Educators

As part of the CRRSA ACT, DEL has funding available that is to be used to recruit new providers and teachers, upskill current early childhood teachers and staff and retain currently employed early childhood teachers and staff. The Coalition's project grant is \$537,222. Coalition staff received project approval on February 1, 2022, from DEL. Approved activities include:

- Outreach and Awareness for the need for early education professionals
- Recruitment, training, and stipends to new early education professionals
- Grants for increasing current capacity- focusing on infant and toddler and limited access areas
- Retention and longevity stipends for early education professionals
- Supports and stipends for upskilling the current early education workforce

NO VOTE NEEDED: Information only

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

5.1. Organization Update

5.1.1. ARPA Stabilization Funds

The ARPA Stabilization budget amendment was placed on consultation in Tallahassee and, absent formal objection (which is not expected), these funds will be available to be allocated to coalitions to continue to assist with child care stabilization in the next 45-60 days. Our coalition's expected share of the funding is approximately \$13 million. This funding is for SR and VPK contracted and non-contracted child care programs. The specific distribution of funding is to be determined.

5.2. Quality Services December 2021 and January 2022- (*See Quality Services, Service Numbers December 2021-January 2022*)

5.3. Media Coverage/Activity/Events December 2021 and January 2022 (*See Media Coverage December 2021- January 2022*)

5.4. School Readiness and VPK Enrollment Numbers and SR Waitlist through January 2022 (*See School Readiness and VPK Service Numbers and SR Waitlist through January 31, 2022*)

5.5. Help Me Grow Service Numbers December 2021 (*See Monthly HMG Data Snapshot December 2021*)

5.6. Child Care Resource and Referral Numbers December 2021 and January 2022 (*See CCRR December 2021 and January 2022*)

5.7. Coalition Fraud Updates

All open fraud cases are resolved. No follow-up actions are necessary.

5.8. Internal Monitoring

The Coalition completed Quarter 2 internal monitoring in the following areas:

- 5.8.1. Educational Service Delivery
- 5.8.2. SR/VPK Child Eligibility
- 5.8.3. SR/VPK Provider Eligibility
- 5.8.4. CCRR and Family Engagement

Monitoring results are attached. (*See Internal Monitoring Report*)

6. DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REPORT

No report provided.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

8. NEXT MEETING: March 9, 2022

9. ADJOURN – 11:27 am CT