

Head Start/Early Head Start

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**Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting**

**Date: May 3, 2021**

**Time:** 9:00 am

**Place: Virtual – Zoom Meeting**

1. **Board Members Present**: Jeffrey Meyer, Tammy DeLorme, Cierra Colvin, Teresa DePaul, Susan Hughes, Dianne Cantiello, Rebecca Raymond, Michael Gray, Ben Bishop

**Board Members** **Not Present:** Samuel Hall, Robert Dingman, Dana Hogan

**Staff Present**: Traci Ross, Mary Caro, Emily Fagle, Nancy Warnock, Patricia Salvarezza

Chairman Meyer called the meeting to order at 9:04 am. **Quorum present**.

1. Traci introduced Gretchen Steffan, S/W/W WDB Executive Director and Jen McCloskey, Director of Saratoga County Employment and Training and Fiscal Agent of the WIOA grant.

Gretchen outlined the WDB’s goals which include the following:

* Build relationship and open communication between the WDB and the board of directors
* Plan ahead for a new desired future state of the WDB
* Reimagine how to deliver services
* Formulate new plans for the future in the next 6 months
* Review of DOL survey results to put new models in place
* Ensure all 3 centers have consistent services with consistent ways to deliver services
* Minimize non value-added work that is currently being done
* Strategic Plan (including a Succession Plan) by the end of the year

Gretchen stated that she is looking for the L.E.A.P.’s board’s support to discuss with Washington County leaders the opportunity of having Washington County being the sub-recipient of WIOA funds through the SWW WDB into the Washington County Treasurer’s office and pass through to L.E.A.P thereby making the administrative process of the current voucher system much easier. Ms. Raymond stated that she spoke with Al Nolette, WC Treasurer, and WC has received WIOA funds in the past and offered to do this over a year ago. Mr. Meyer stated that the board is in support of this change and that he will help to facilitate the conversations if needed.

1. The minutes of the April 5, 2021 Board of Directors meetings were presented for review on the board portal.

*Motion to approve and accept the minutes of the April 5, 2021 meeting made by Mr. Gray, Seconded by Ms. DePaul, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. **Committee Reports**:

• **Policy Council** – Patricia Salvarezza reported that they attempted to have a Policy Council meeting last month but did not have a quorum. Beginning to see a lapse in attendance from the parents on the council. We would like to try a socially distanced meeting next month rather than a virtual meeting.

* **Career and Family Services –** Nancy Warnock reported no changes adding today through Wednesday is our CSBG TRACS review. We have submitted all documents requested and we have a call at the end of each day for any additional items needed. Community CARES Coordinator is meeting with Traci and planning Community Needs Assessment. Mr. Meyer asked if we have any reason to be concerned with the WIOA RFP? Traci responded that there has been a concern with how to report data/outcomes. Traci has been working with Nancy and Emily Walter on how to get our outcomes to the WDB. DOL has had conversations with Warren and Saratoga counties about taking over L.E.A.P’s services. Neither county will be responding to the RFP. We are the only ones who have stayed open during this pandemic and we are doing what we say we are doing and the WDB needs to see what we are doing. The RFP will highlight why L.E.A.P. is the right choice for this contract. Mr. Gray added that historically L.E.A.P. has carried this contract. Traci will be attending all the management and WD meetings.
* **Audit/Finance Committee** – Emily reported that we met last week with NBT and EPIC regarding the DBP fund as of 3/31. The fund overall is doing well. On a month to date basis we were a little under as compared to the benchmark but on a year to date basis and a 12-month look it has outperformed the benchmark. EPIC will not have the valuation ready in time for our audit at the end of this month as we are doing the audit a month early. Emily will reach out to Matt Pine at EPIC for a preliminary report.
* **Executive Committee** – Mr. Meyer reported that everything discussed at the meeting is on the agenda as #7 and # 8 for this full board meeting.

*Motion to approve and accept the Committee Reports made by Ms. DeLorme, Seconded by Ms. Hughes, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. **Director’s Reports –**

Career & Family Services – Nancy had no additions to her report.

Head Start/Early Head Start – Tricia had the following updates to her report:

* We have received the dates for our program review which will be the week of 5/24. The Team Leader will set the schedule and who they want to interview - we have not received them yet. Tricia will keep the board updated.
* We are working on summer programming but are having difficulty with staff not wanting to work this summer as well as difficulty filling vacant positions which continues to be problematic for the program. We have suggested providing some vacation time during the summer program. We have only 1 bus driver who has said they will work.
* Information Memorandum on the board portal regarding new standards during the pandemic.

Human Resources – Mary had no additions to report but updated staffing which continues to be an issue at Head Start. Mary asked board members whether they had a chance to review the draft Wellness Policy on the board portal which we want to include in our Employee Handbook? The majority of board members had not reviewed it so Mr. Meyer asked if we could put off a vote on it until next month’s meeting.

Finance – Emily had no updates to report but added:

o    Emily wanted to point out that numbers are preliminary year end only as the report was done before the books were officially closed.

* EFPR Full Agency Audit will be a virtual desk review beginning on 5/17 and ending on 5/20.
* As a reminder I will be out on leave effective 6/7/21 and will have a plan in place during my absence. She will have a meeting with Mr. Dingman for items that need to be completed.

*Motion to approve Director’s reports made by Mr. Bishop, Seconded by Ms. Raymond, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. **Executive Director’s Report** – Traci had no additions to report.

*Motion to approve Executive Director’s reports made by Mr. Gray, Seconded by Ms. Hughes, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. **Action Items/New Business:**
2. One-time incentive (stipend) for staff (COVID) – Members of the Executive Committee had asked Traci to look into a bonus for staff during COVID. The Executive Leadership Team has been researching ways to acknowledge the work that was and is being accomplished in light of COVID. The team is proposing with a $0.50 stipend for every hour actively worked for the period 4/1/2020-3/31/2021 for active, non-exempt employees. The leadership team would be compensated at a flat $1200 stipend. Total is $67,565 funded through CARES Head Start and CSBG CARES grants. Stipends are allowable expenses under these grants.

Mr. Meyer reported that the Executive Committee had reviewed, discussed and supported this one-time stipend for staff. It would justly compensate them for how difficult the last 12 months have been. Mr. Bishop stated he has no concerns as far as the stipends for the non-exempt or exempt staff adding that the exempt staff had probably shorted themselves with just $1200. He also cautioned that the stipend should come with strong messaging as to the one-time nature of this and that it will not occur again in the future for COVID. Traci will be notifying staff of the one-time nature of this stipend, the timing of the stipend and the way that the amount was determined.

*Motion to approve a one-time stipend of $0.50 per regular hours worked for non-exempt staff and $1200 for exempt staff for the period of 4/1/2020 – 3/31/2021 made by Mr. Bishop, Seconded by Ms. Colvin, 6 Yeas, 3 Nays, Approved, Carried.*

1. Purchase of Bus for Head Start – Mr. Meyer stated that this was discussed at the Executive Committee. Traci stated that the bus is irreparable, and we will be utilizing unspent dollars from the previous Head Start grant (Year 1 4/1/20-3/31/21).

*Motion to approve the purchase of a new bus made by Ms. DeLorme, Seconded by Ms. Cantiello, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. Approval of the addition to Wage and Salary Policy – the following language will be added to the Wage and Salary Policy “L.E.A.P. reserves the right to award one-time stipends to employees for exemplary dedication to the mission of L.E.A.P.” with amended additional language that funds are available.

*Motion to approve the addition of the stipend language as amended to the Wage and Salary Policy made by Ms. DePaul, Seconded by Ms. Colvin, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. **Executive Session –**

*Motion to move to Executive Session at 10:53 am made by Mr. Bishop, Seconded by Ms. Hughes, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

*Motion to return to Regular Session at 11:15 am made by Ms. Hughes, Seconded by Ms. DeLorme, Unanimously Approved, Carried.*

1. *Adjournment*

*Meeting adjourned at 11:20 am*

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jarvis Caro