

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Date of Meeting: April 10, 2023

Members Present: Chair Pat Heydinger, Vice Chair Nicole Blakley, Secretary Jim Nicholson, Bill Hope, Bennie Allen-Stanford, Mary Stentz, Judy Forney

Members Excused: Treasurer Jason Murray

Members Absent:

Others Present: Nikki Harless, Nicole Foulks, Kevin Goshe, Sarah Soliday, Recording Secretary Amy Hackedorn

Others Absent:

The regular monthly Board meeting was held on Monday, April 10, 2023, in the Board Conference Room at Richland County Children Services. Heydinger called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. of Board members present and representing a quorum.

AGENDA

Heydinger stated that there is need to add an Executive Session to the agenda immediately following payment of the bills. Under the Finance Committee report section, there is need to add approval of revisions to Policy 4.10 (Reimbursement of Expenses) and approval of a resolution (04-10-23-01) for the 2023 levy recommendation.

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Stentz, the Board unanimously approved the revised agenda by all Board members in attendance.

MINUTES

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously approved the March 13, 2023, regular Board meeting minutes as presented.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Harless commented on our first adoption mediation meeting. Prospective parents have had a child placed in their home for two years, and they wanted to continue receiving the foster care rate (\$912.00 per month) until the 4-year-old turns 18 years old. We negotiated for a lesser amount as a result of the mediation meeting. The last time we had to do this was about 7 years ago. Heydinger commented on the fact that the Agency has had a lot of good publicity lately. Harless mentioned the Child Fatality Review that she attended in March for all of the child fatalities in 2022. Harless also informed everyone present that prospective Board member Renda Cline had to decline the possibility of serving due to time constraints. A former RCCS employee (Christole Page, now Christole Harris) has expressed interest in serving. She has a master's degree in management and runs her own daycare locally.

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Stentz, the Board unanimously agreed to recommend Christole (Page) Harris to the Richland County Commissioners for appointment to the vacant Board position.

Soliday stated that we have almost filled all of our vacant positions. Hope asked about internships. Soliday is the point of contact for all potential interns. Harless mentioned that we like hosting interns here because it gives them experience in this field and allows them to determine whether this job would be a good fit for them prior to employment.

On a motion by Allen-Stanford, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously accepted the Executive Director's report.

Executive Committee Report

No report at this time. Heydinger informed the other Board members present that the Executive Committee met prior to this meeting, and their discussion will be part of the Executive Session.

Finance Director Report

March Finance Report

Goshe distributed and reported on the March 2023 Final Financial Report regarding the revenues and expenditures. This included a beginning balance of \$8,027,897.91, \$700,160.27 in revenue, and \$907,113.40 in expenses with an ending balance of \$7,820,944.78. The ending fund balance reflects 58.1% or about 7.0 months of the 2023 budget.

Goshe stated that revenue for the year was 11.3% lower than budgeted at the end of March. This is typical, as revenue has traditionally always lagged behind the budgeted amount each year until the first real estate tax settlement is received in April. All expense lines were lower than budgeted. As a follow up to discussion from the March Board meeting, Park National Bank credited the Agency back the \$9,800.00 for the fraudulently cashed Save-A-Lot check. This amount was deposited into the Other Revenue line item.

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Blakley, the Board unanimously accepted the March 2023 Final Financial Report.

Finance Committee Report

Levy Recommendation – Resolution 04-10-23-01

Hope stated that the Finance Committee met on Friday (4/7/23) to discuss placing an RCCS levy on the ballot in November of this year. The Committee's recommendation is to begin the process for putting a 10-year renewal levy on the November 7, 2023, ballot. Goshe stated that we work with an attorney in Cleveland regarding ballot language. Once that attorney approves our verbiage, Goshe would take this to the Commissioners. The Commissioners would decide if the requested funding is necessary and then verify with the Auditor how much money would be collected. The levy would generate approximately \$2.3 million per year, which is about 20% of our annual budget. Our current \$8 million fund balance is less than one year of our operating expenses, so putting a levy on the ballot would be in the Agency's best interest long-term. Harless is going to meet with the Commissioners prior to our submission of the Resolution of Necessity.

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Allen-Stanford, the Board unanimously agreed by roll call vote and signature to allow the Agency to begin the process for putting a 10-year renewal levy on the November 7, 2023, ballot.

Policy Revisions (4.10 Reimbursement of Expenses)

The Auditor of State mentioned some revisions that should be made to our Reimbursement of Expenses policy (Policy 4.10). Goshe spoke with Andrew Keller about this matter, and they developed some language that meets the requirements mentioned by the Auditor of State. Verbiage was added to the policy stating that RCCS employees must utilize the least expensive option available when traveling via commercial airlines barring specific circumstances. Language was also added which states that the Agency does not pay relocation expenses for employees or potential employees.

On a motion by Hope, seconded by Stentz, the Board unanimously accepted the proposed revisions to Policy 4.10 – Reimbursement of Expenses.

Personnel Committee Report

No report at this time.

Services and Program Report

No report at this time.

BILLS

Payment of Agency Bills - On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously approved payment by signature of the Agency bills.

Executive Session

At 4:03 p.m, Chair Heydinger recommended an Executive Session. On a motion by Hope, seconded by Blakley, the Board voted unanimously to move into Executive Session by roll call vote in order to consider matters concerning personnel. At that time, each Board member responded as follows: Blakley, “yes”; Nicholson, “yes”; Allen-Stanford, “yes”; Stentz, “yes”; Hope, “yes”; Forney, “yes”; and Heydinger, “yes.” Heydinger asked Goshe, Foulks, Hackedorn and Soliday to leave the meeting. Harless was also asked to leave the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Hope, the Board voted unanimously to return to open session at 4:28 p.m. The lobby was checked, and there were no members of the public waiting to be admitted. Harless, Goshe and Hackedorn were permitted to rejoin the meeting at this time.

Executive Director’s Contract

Following discussion in Executive Session, Heydinger put forth a 2-year employment contract and 2.8% increase in salary for Executive Director Nikki Harless. This contract would retroactively begin back when her previous contract expired (January 13, 2023) and runs through December 31, 2024. The 2.8% increase in salary will be effective as of July 1, 2023.

On a motion by Blakley, seconded by Nicholson, the Board unanimously agreed to approve Executive Director Nikki Harless’ contract extension and 2.8% salary increase as presented.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Nicholson, seconded by Hope, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Pat Heydinger, RCCS Board Chair
Amy Hackedorn, Recording Secretary