

Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.
Board of Directors' Meeting
September 25, 2008
Red Lion Colonial Inn – Capitol Room

Members present: Andy Hunthausen, Charles Notbohm, Marvin Williams, Debbie Havens, Twila Harrington, Daniel Pocha, Jena Grubb, Helen Fandrich, Bill Roberts, Jon Chacopulos, Theresa Ortega.

Members absent: Gregg Groepper, Jerry Loendorf.

Bill Roberts called the meeting to order at 3:42 pm and introduced new Board members Marvin Williams, Special Education Administrator for Helena Public Schools, and Theresa Ortega who manages Good Samaritan Ministries.

Daniel Pocha moved to approve the August 28, 2008, Board Meeting Minutes as read. Twila Harrington seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Board Recruitment Update – Bill Roberts

Bill stated the Board is happy to have new people on the Board and he looks forward to their insights and questions. Staff will do a new Board Member orientation and tonight, members will get a good sample of RMDC's accomplishments last year.

Head Start – Patty Dahl

Director's Report

The program's official enrollment date was September 11 and it began fully enrolled at 248. There are also 35 income eligible kids on the waiting list. There was a Program Instruction sent out recently about filling vacancies that has caused quite a stir nationwide, clarification on this Instruction is expected in the near future. Patty reported that Head Start used to have 30 days to fill the vacancy. You now need to fill the vacancies as soon as they come open, even up to the last day of school...the issue is *full* enrollment

The other most recent Program Instruction has to do with Background Checks and that they are to be completed before staff begins work. Because the Board's involvement in Head Start is so important, Program Instructions or Program Memorandums from the Administration for Children and Families will be given to the Board as they are received by the Program. Our Policy Council has required background checks be completed before staff enters a classroom for the last several years.

Patty also reported that Head Start has signed a Collaborative Agreement with AWARE, Inc., and are excited to begin the partnership. Their clinician is Angelo Spado and he will begin doing the social/emotional screening next week on the Head Start children. Many of the AWARE staff provided training for the head Start staff during pre-

service the past couple of weeks. As children are identified as needing mental health services, staff will meet with parents to initiate appropriate intervention, which could be the services of a Treatment Service Tech in the classroom to services in the home, to family therapy.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) agreement was submitted on September 15, 2008. Part of that agreement is the "Management Plan for Sponsors of Centers," which all Board members received a copy of today. The Management Plan talks about methods used by RMDC to assure adequate oversight of the CACFP by the Board.

The collaboration classroom at Ray Bjork is up and running. Patty commended Debi Belgarde-Ruybal, Peggy Mills, Hillary Mergenthaler, and Lynn Guay for their efforts in making this classroom successful as well as the entire staff at Ray Bjork, especially Peggy Hollow-Phelps, Special Education Teacher, and Sheila Nathe, Special Education Para, Jane McDonald, Building Administrator, Marvin Williams, Special Education Administrator, and Keith Meyer, Assistant Principal. There are 16 children in the morning and 16 in the afternoon.

There is no report on meals since school just started. The last credit card bill for Head Start was in the spring but there will be charges on the next statement for school supplies. The Head Start budget report will be available next month.

Policy Council and Classroom Rep elections will take place Thursday, October 2, 2008. The training session for Policy Council, Class Reps and Board will take place on Saturday, October 25 and last about 3½ to 4 hours. Patty also reminded the Board that the MET-NET Governance Training is going to be on Friday, November 14 but the place has yet to be determined.

Patty reminded everyone that the NAMI Walk is being held on Sunday, September 28. There are 18 RMDC staff members walking on the NAMI Rocks! team.

Patty sadly reported that Sherrie Smith, Head Start's Full Day and Staff Development Manager, will be moving to Kalispell. She greatly appreciates the exceptional job Sherrie has done.

Patty handed out a copy of the Head Start Advisory Teams and would like members to consider joining a team. Helen Fandrich, Twila Harrington and Daniel Pocha offered to stay on the same teams. Jerry Loendorf has served on the Health Services Advisory committee and it is hoped he will continue on that team.

Helen Fandrich reported that she attended Head Start's first Risk Management Meeting yesterday with the regional office. John Thomas, the Program Specialist, and Melinda Edwards, the Technical Assistance Specialist, represented the Regional Office in person. Ross Weaver, the Program Manager in the Regional Office; Jeff Newton, Fiscal Officer; Brian Johnson, Fiscal; Marilyn Hosea, Technical Assistance Program

Manager; and Jessica Crothers, Recorder, joined the meeting via telephone. The Board was represented by Helen Fandrich and the Policy Council was represented by Jena Grubb. Gene Leuwer, Chuck Virag and Pam Novak represented RMDC administration and fiscal. The meeting gave RMDC an opportunity to talk about the Program's strengths and concerns. Our Head Start is described as a "low risk" program. The program has many strengths which Patty and her staff listed during the meeting. Information to the Regional Office was garnered from the Program Information Report (PIR) and indicated we are doing well yet continue to make improvements (medical and dental area, enrollment, attendance). There was one minor action plan written at the end of the meeting, which had to do with a fiscal issue in regard to the selling of the High School House. Chuck's response indicated that the action plan was just a formality since the concern has already been taken care of. Other than that, Ross had positive, encouraging statements about the program as did John.

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Bill Roberts appointed Twila Harrington to be RMDC's representative on the Head Start's Policy Council and thanked her for continuing in that capacity.

Policy Council Report – Jena Grubb

Jena reported that the Policy Council just started again and has decided to do the candle fundraiser again for the fall project. They are trying to do programs for the fathers to get them involved. They have also changed the name of the parenting classes to the "Family Enrichment Class" to hopefully get more participation. The structure of the classes was also changed from 10 weekly classes to classes once a month for 10 months. The Head Start Family Advocates are having a Resource Fair

from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm on Monday, September 29, 2008. There will be an array of resources available to parents, refreshments and door prizes for parents. Jena also reported that Policy Council was pleased to be able to give \$2,000 back to the program to help with the mental health screenings AWARE conducted on all Head Start children.

Gene added that Head Start will have a three year review where 8-10 representatives from the federal government and others come here to look at the program. This will happen sometime between now and next May. At that time, they look at all aspects of the Head Start Program. As part of this process, there is the shared governance of the Head Start Program by RMDC's Board, the Policy Council, and Management Staff. Gene recommended everyone who can attend the Head Start training on October 25 and the MET-NET on November 14th or if they would like handouts from the meetings to let us know. They will also be interviewing individual Board Members and Policy Council Members during the review. Patty will have a draft agenda of the October 25 training meeting out soon.

Mental Health Update – Elaine Bruce Compeer Helena

Micky is doing very well with the program, and she is surprised with the volunteers waiting to be matched to clients. The program requires more volunteers than clients because the clinician has to be involved as well. The Helena community is very receptive of the program.

Prevention Services

Elaine reminded the Board members that the Prevention Services were contracted through Boyd Andrew to help prevent kids from smoking, taking drugs, using alcohol and other methods. The State asked us to expand to the greater Lewis & Clark County, which would go from two schools to thirteen, at the same contracted rate. The staff is working together with Youth Connections to develop a curriculum and lesson plans for the State-required media literacy school program.

Crisis Services

Elaine reported that they are making progress with the partnership for crisis services. Lewis & Clark County, the Center for Mental Health and St. Peter's Hospital are key providers working together to bring a consultant to help create a strategic plan. They are also conducting a needs assessment to develop a key plan to tackle an integrated crisis services system for the Helena community.

Drop-in Center

Elaine reminded the Board members that RMDC leased three pieces of the Wesco building located at 631 N Main in June. This is a lease; with RMDC having the building leased through June 1, 2009. The consumers have met for several Saturdays in a row to establish policies and procedures for the center, and we are in the process of hiring staff. The past months, we have been working with Susan Bjerke to design the building improvements to bring the building up to ADA compliance and safety compliance as a

community center. The plan includes adding downstairs bathrooms to ADA compliance, and adding an additional one on the second floor, closing one off as an employees-only bathroom. There are other compliance issues that also need to be done such as a higher railing by the loading dock, an additional stairway to the loft, some plumbing, and building a ramp. After the issues are resolved, it will be an ADA compliant building. RMDC is looking into purchasing the building. Elaine also reported that they were invited to tour the "Straw House," which has been closed. The new owner wants to donate the equipment to non-profits around town. The Drop-in Center is going to receive the commercial grill hood, sink and some big tables. The consumers worked on their first commodities project with Walt. They are excited to do the commodities to help them achieve a self-sustaining facility.

After considerable discussion about the building, Gene requested the Board approve the resolution to borrow no more than \$60,000 from Mountain West Bank for the improvements.

Jon Chacopulos stated that it didn't make sense to make \$60,000 improvements to a building that is for sale. He suggested going for a long term lease and negotiate that the bank take the building off the market. Jon also asked if the bank would make the improvements and increase the monthly rent. Helen questioned the ability of the bank to have the money to complete the improvements. Gene relayed that because the building is repossessed, they are required to sell it within five years and that RMDC would have to take a loan to pay the increase in rent because it is not in the budget. Gene is confident the bank will take the building off the market until next October or November and that they would lease it to RMDC through that time, currently the lease is month-to-month. Gene reported that the current lease rates are \$6.66 per square foot. The Weatherization/LIEAP office lease expires August 2010 and the idea is to have that program move to the building. The current lease for that site is probably around \$12 per square foot, including utilities.

Jon Chacopulos requested ensuring a method of recovery in the lease for RMDC to recover all or part of the cost of improvements to be written into the lease agreement. The time frame for this project is as soon as possible to get the facility open. Gene reported they are meeting next week to discuss the code issues. As soon as that is done, they would like to get the bids out. The hope is to be under construction within two to three weeks.

Helen Fandrich moved to approve the Resolution to borrow up to \$60,000 to make the improvements necessary to the building located at 631 N Main to bring the building up to ADA compliance and to provide due diligence in obtaining recovery of the total or a portion of the expenses paid to bring the building up to compliance through language in the long term lease if the building is sold. Andy Hunthausen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

LIEAP/Weatherization Update – Liz Moore

Liz reported that the program is going great and there is a good chance funding will be doubled this year.

Montana Youth Homes

Liz reported that the building is in progress and will take a year to complete. Currently, the beds at the Margaret Stewart facility are full. Liz thanked all for coming to the ground breaking.

Homeless Project

Liz reported that they still haven't heard about the SAMHSA Grant. They are funding only 12 projects in the nation so it is slim that we will get the grant. Liz is this district's representative on the Continuum of Care Board. The Continuum of Care group will be conducting the Annual Point In Time Survey of the Homeless in January. By HUD's definition, the homeless number was down to 136. They counted 232, but at any point of time there may be 300+ homeless in Helena. They will be getting numbers for Boulder, Lincoln and Townsend in January. Last year, 38 individuals slept outside on January 31st. The city and county are inviting community leaders to attend a meeting on October 30 to begin the discussion on homelessness. Then on November 17-18 there will be a community forum for the community to come together as a whole to begin creating a plan to address homelessness in Helena. The forum and pre-meeting will both be held at St. Peter's Hospital in the new Education Center. Helena has requested to be the next pilot site for the Governor's Council on Homeless. The Coalition working on this is HATCH: Helena Action Coalition on Homelessness.

Housing Update – Jeff Miller Eagles III

Jeff reported that this project is progressing quickly. Inspections with the city on the fire sprinklers and elevator are scheduled for mid October. The rent up team is confident they will fill the building with transfers from the other properties on campus and external applications. Already, 14 clients are coming from the other property. The project is scheduled for completion for the end of October or early November. The ribbon cutting will be scheduled soon.

Eagles Manor II

This project is the renovation of the oldest building on the property. The engineers didn't surface any concerns. Unfortunately there is a gap between the budget and where the bids came in. We have made application for an additional tax credits for the project and are currently working to get the Partnership Agreement amended and signed but this may not happen still for approximately 30 days. Swank Construction has been asked to visit with his sub-contractors to see if they too can hold their price and grant and additional 30 day extension on their bid. The original bid guaranteed pricing only through September 28. If the contractor is not able to hold his pricing, we will be back in discussion with the granting agencies to review our options which may include going back out to bid on the project with the new timeline in mind.

Montana Youth Homes

The project is going well. Jeff thanked those attending the ground breaking ceremony. They will be holding neighborhood meetings to keep the neighborhood informed about the project, which will help develop a good relationship in the neighborhood and the facility. Jeff reported that the Salvation Army has been helping with water, etc.

Sun Gardens Trailer Park

Jeff reported that the project doesn't pencil out at this time. Unfortunately, the property will only cash flow a loan of \$300,000 and will need an additional \$110,000 in improvements. The gap in financing would have to be filled with grant money and given the current rules limiting the number of grants a specific entity can have open at any given time and in light of our business plan to pursue the redevelopment of another property, we do not want to compete against ourselves.

Miscellaneous

Jeff reported that when we acquired Eagle Manor II and took HUD out of the financing, we acquired a \$188,000 reserve account, and currently that reserve is showing a balance in the range of \$190,000. When the Eagles II renovation is complete we will need to fund a \$128,000 reserve. We are arranging to distribute the \$62,000 or so difference between the current reserve balance and reserve we'll need to fund at project completion from the Eagles II entity to RMDC. The funds will be used for improvements on the campus starting with a new walk-in freezer and new convection oven.

Board Office Election – Bill Roberts

Bill reported that the election will be tabled until next meeting. The Nominating Committee was unable to meet.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Rose Felter
Executive Assistant