

Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.
Board of Directors' Meeting
February 25, 2021, 3:30 p.m.
via Zoom Conference Call

Members present: Kate Anderson, Bruce Day, Andy Hunthausen, Trever Kirkland, Jerry Loendorf, Daniel Pocha, Eric Schindler, Paula Wright, Mark Young

Members absent: Dannai Clayborn, Mike Delger, Bob Mullen, Mary Pat Penley, Lois Steinbeck

Others present: Gale Anderson, Joan Anderson, Rod Applegate, Mindy Diehl, Tommy Driscoll, Diane Edgar, Taya Hovan, Chrisy Irej, Lori Ladas, Samara Lynde, Jim Marks, Kathy Marks, Liz Mogstad, Kelley Moody, Ashley Peña-Larsen

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. and a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the January 21, 2021 Board of Directors' meeting minutes and December 17, 2020 Finance Committee meeting minutes. Jerry Loendorf seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Lori Ladas

Lori asked for any questions regarding her written report, then asked Mark Young to provide an update regarding the City's traffic study of five-point intersections and the corridors that connect them. The area of interest to Rocky in the study is next to the Jackson Street property. In 2017, Rocky petitioned the city to vacate Jackson Street by Rocky's Jackson Street property, and the commission agreed. The recommendation offered in the study is to use the vacated space for additional parking or an enhanced streetscape with trees and an extended sidewalk. The Board discussed and noted that additional parking spaces would be most beneficial, not only now but in the future if Rocky would try to sell the property. No action is required at this time, further discussion may follow as the City continues its discussion.

Finance Report Update – Chrisy Irej

Chrisy reported that the Finance Committee met just prior to the Board meeting. Cash balance is \$1,296,769 and accounts payable is \$437,007. The cash balance is similar to December's total. Chrisy reminded the Board that January's cash balance was higher due to restricted housing funds waiting to be paid out. Today being a payroll day also impacted the cash total. The accounts payable total includes around \$23,000 in regular Rocky program expenses, along with larger invoices for Golden Eagle Construction, a Lewis & Clark County health insurance payment, and window coverings for Red Alder. The committee discussed the potential impact of a 1.22% COLA on Rocky. Head Start has received notification of a COLA and Rocky reviewed all programs to determine if a similar increase would be possible. The total cost of a COLA increase would be around \$62,000, with about one-third of that total covered by Head Start. The increase appears to be affordable for Rocky. Rocky Mountain Preschool Center would be the exception, as they may need to raise fees to cover the increase. The possibility of applying for a second round of Paycheck Protection Plan loan for Rocky Mountain Preschool Center was also discussed. Staff will report back on this topic next month.

Board Policy Review and Approval

a. Open Meeting Policy

Lori referenced the draft policy included in the Board packet, and noted that Jerry Loendorf had already reviewed the document in advance of the meeting. Lori mentioned one change to the draft, changing the wording in item #1 to begin “To discuss a matter of individual privacy...” for consistency with item #2.

Andy Hunthausen made the motion to approve the Open Meeting Policy as presented with the suggested edit. Bruce Day seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Board Governance Compliance Policy

Lori mentioned that the previous version of this policy was approved in 2015, and was created to encompass all CSBG Organizational Standards. The only content change is updating Strategic Planning to take place every three years, to sync with the Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment. Lori also changed the format of the document, to group standards based on their timeline of recurrence.

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the Board Governance Compliance Policy. Eric Schindler seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

c. Executive Director Appraisal Policy

Lori noted that the timeline in the previous version of this policy no longer reflected current procedures, so the policy was updated to reflect the current timeline.

Mark Young made the motion to approve the Executive Director Appraisal Policy. Paula Wright seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Head Start Update

a. Policy Council Update – Mark Young

Mark reported that a quorum was not present for today’s Policy Council meeting, so no action items were approved. Those present had a good discussion with the principal and PTA president at Ray Bjork, talking about how to create a partnership between the parents of Head Start children and parents of Ray Bjork students.

b. Director’s Program and Budget Report – Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley asked for any questions regarding her written report or budget submitted with the Board packet. Several bills currently being discussed in the Legislature have potential to impact Rocky Head Start, so those are being monitored closely. Classroom sizes and Best Beginnings scholarships are topics being discussed during the session. STARS money has been cut from the general budget, which totals approximately \$76,000 of Head Start’s budget and if the funding is not returned to the budget, there will be impacts to Head Start’s ability to provide services at its current level. There may be potential to recoup the funding in other ways. Head Start has received notice of a 1.22% COLA, along with additional COVID funds which should total just under \$54,000.

Bruce Day made the motion to approve the Head Start Director’s Program and Budget Report. Andy Hunthausen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution to Extend Operating Deficit Escrow Loan Agreement dated November 20, 2000 – Liz Mogstad

Liz explained that Rocky loaned \$40,000 to Ptarmigan, to cover cash shortfalls, in 2000. This loan matured in 2015, and was extended to 2020. Approximately \$4,760 remains in loan payments at this time. The resolution presented to the Board extends the loan agreement for an additional five years.

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the extension of the Operating Deficit Escrow Loan Agreement as presented. Daniel Pocha seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Strategic Discussion Topic: Housing Development – Liz Mogstad and Lori Ladas

Lori began by mentioning that Gene Leuwer has expressed interest in partnering with Rocky for another housing project similar to Red Alder. The timeline for tax credit applications this year would include a letter of intent submission in April, followed by a presentation in June and full proposal following if accepted. Lori and Liz asked the Board for their thoughts on pursuing another housing project at this time. A location would need to be identified to pursue this idea. Liz spoke about having a template for the process and an idea regarding costs after working on the Red Alder project, and preferred to maintain a partnership rather than working independently. She did note that terms of the partnership would likely need to be renegotiated. She also explained her preference for hiring consultants versus hiring staff who need to be trained for a project of this size. Liz is still very busy with the Red Alder project at this time. A proposed long-range project on Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church property was also discussed. This would be a land trust situation which would partner Rocky with other community resources such as Habitat for Humanity and the YWCA. If the project moves forward, it would align very well with Rocky's mission. The Board acknowledged that these housing projects are good for Rocky and good for the community. However, with Red Alder still requiring a good deal of time, the issue of overcommitting and burning out staff was also addressed. Continuing to look for potential property locations was encouraged, though the immediate need to pursue another project at this time was not considered a top priority. Lori and Liz will consider the comments of the Board as they make their decision about whether to proceed, and will report back to the Board next month.

Affordable Housing Program Presentation – Liz Mogstad

Liz shared a video about Rocky's Affordable Housing program, which provided a general overview of the program and some specific information regarding the Red Alder project. She included detailed information about each Rocky property in the Board packet, and asked for any questions regarding that data. Liz spoke about Rocky's role in managing each of the properties, providing oversight along with meeting accounting requirements. Liz also commended the City of Helena for taking the results of the Housing Needs Assessment seriously, and forging a path for providing affordable housing assistance. The City was a great help with the Red Alder project, particularly with the waiving of permit fees that benefitted the property.

Executive Director Performance Appraisal – Gale Anderson

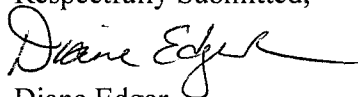
Gale referenced the Executive Director Performance Appraisal policy that was approved earlier in the meeting, and noted the timeline provided. The Personnel Committee members are Mark Young, Jerry Loendorf, Bruce Day, Mary Pat Penley, and Eric Schindler. As Board Chair, Trever Kirkland will also be involved in committee meetings regarding the performance appraisal. Once the first meeting is set, the committee will review and approve the forms for both Board members and Program Directors. These forms will then be sent out and returned to Gale for tabulation once

complete. The committee meets again to review the results, and then meets with Lori in a closed session to discuss the results along with her goals for the upcoming year. The Board then meets in closed session during the April Board meeting to review the appraisal with Lori.

Mark Young made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Andy Hunthausen seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar
Executive Assistant

Approved via Zoom virtual meeting 3/25/2021. 