

**Minutes of the
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.
RMDC Board of Directors' Meeting
January 25, 2018**

Members present include: Daniel Pocha, Bruce Day, Mike Delger, Helen Fandrich, Susan Geise, Debbie Havens, Trever Kirkland, Angel Kramer, Jerry Loendorf, Bob Mullen, Lois Steinbeck, Mark Young

Members absent include: Becky Blend, Maria Pace

Guests: Lori Ladas, Gale Anderson, Rod Applegate, Ashlee Bermes, Hannah Danzer, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Deb Hansen, Taya Hovan, Chrisy Irey, Liz Mogstad, Linda Nolan, Ashley Peña-Larsen, Jaymie Sheldahl, Shelly McClain

Call to Order/Roll Call: Daniel Pocha called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m. He thanked everyone for their attendance and everyone present introduced himself or herself.

Joint Board of Directors/Head Start Policy Council Meeting

Policy Council members present include: Mark Young, Angel Kramer, Trever Kirkland, Ericka Vallance, Jennifer Reed, Trista Vonada, Nickey Rangel, Sara Dupre (by phone), Rainee Polty (by phone)

a. Policy Council Report – Mark Young

Mark reported that the Policy Council met before the joint meeting. The Policy Council elected Nickey Rangel as the new Secretary. The Policy Council also approved the letters discussed at last month's meeting, and those should be sent out soon.

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

Ashley referenced the Director's Report and Budget that were included in the Board packet. She said that December was a short month with the holiday break, and that illness has been affecting the Head Start classrooms. Overall, average daily attendance for the extended day classrooms was 89%; in half-day classrooms, attendance was 86%. Ashley explained the credit card charges noted on her report, and mentioned that the Costco credit card will no longer be used or on the report; Head Start will switch to strictly using their Visa Credit Card. The number of Best Beginnings Scholarships has doubled from four to eight since the last report, and more are expected. Applications are looking good at this point. The Federal Government has not yet released income guidelines, so income determination cannot happen yet. Ashley has been accepted to a Director Mentorship program, which will be held at UCLA for one week at the end of February. There is currently one open Teacher Assistant position in Head Start. Ashley reviewed the Head Start budget and noted that the \$225,848.27 amount available to spend each month is slightly less than last month, which is because no in-kind was included in last month's projection. Vacancy savings are helping the budget. Montana Preschool Development Grant funds were not used until September, as carryover funds from the previous year were available until then. A question was asked about Kindergarten readiness for Head Start children. Ashley reported that over 90% of children graduating from Head Start are ready to step into Kindergarten. The addition of Early Head Start in the community helps children get an even earlier foundation for learning.

Trever Kirkland made the motion for Policy Council to move the Director's Program and Budget Report forward to the Board of Directors for approval. Angel Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Debbie Havens made the motion to approve the Director's Program and Budget Report. Helen Fandrich seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

c. Duration of Services Carryover Amendment* – Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley referenced the information included in the Board packet, explaining the Head Start request to move \$40,000 from the equipment fund for the Valley Center to renovation of the building. The formal bids for renovations came in higher than expected, and the decision to incorporate a natural playground at the site reduces equipment costs, especially since the landscaper for the project will be donating time and service to the project. A question was asked about reserve funds for the project; Ashley confirmed that a reserve fund is included in the budget for the project, and that Friends of Head Start is willing to provide some funding if needed for the project.

Trever Kirkland made the motion to move the request to reallocate \$40,000 from the equipment fund of the Duration of Services Carryover to the building renovation fund forward to the Board of Directors. Trista Vonada seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Debbie Havens made the motion to approve the reallocation of \$40,000 from the equipment fund of the Duration of Services Carryover to the building renovation fund. Lois Steinbeck seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

d. 2018-2019 Continuation Grant and Budget* - Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley said this would be the fifth year of the continuation grant, which currently allows service to 236 children, at seven sites, in 15 classrooms, throughout three counties. Outside of the relocation of some Neighborhood Center children to the new Valley center, few other changes are noted for the fifth year of the grant. There is a reduction in transportation funding due to approved changes with bus service in East Helena, and the mental health services position is added into the budget. As presented, the grant budget includes \$2,185,237 in program operations, \$24,982 in training and technical assistance, and \$558,801 in Non-Federal (match) dollars. The match dollars come from sources including STARS to Quality, MPDG, donations, volunteer time, and rent equivalencies for classrooms in schools. The majority of Head Start funding goes toward personnel. The category of supplies includes all items the children use; this amount is supplemented from other sources as well. Contractual charges relate to the mental health consultant who will be hired for the next school year. The category of "other" includes items like rent, meals, background checks, payment of work-study students, and network or utility charges.

Trista Vonada made the motion to move forward the approval of the 2018-2019 Continuation Grant and Budget to the Board of Directors. Ericka Vallance seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Helen Fandrich made the motion to approve the 2018-2019 Continuation Grant and Budget as presented. Susan Geise seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

e. 2018-2019 Training and Technical Assistance Plan and Budget* - Deb Hansen

Deb briefly spoke about the four goals of the training and technical assistance plan and budget amounts allocated to each goal. The first goal is that families will be provided opportunities to learn about Head Start and their role as the child's first and primary educator. This includes objectives such as providing Head Start families with program information, relational supports for kindergarten transition, opportunities to attend CPR and First Aid training, and fostering a group of parents to advocate for Head Start and early childhood in general. The total budgeted

cost of this first goal is \$1,480. The second goal is that staff will be appropriately credentialed, meeting program standards and licensure regulations. This includes areas such as staff training, professional development for staff, registration and participation in the Early Childhood Project Practitioner Registry, and participation in Pedestrian Safety training. The cost of this second goal is \$11,600. The third goal is that staff and families will receive Professional Development on identified program goals. This includes topics for staff education, including literacy, the ChildPlus System, emergency procedures, and supporting parent education goals. The budgeted cost of this goal is \$7,400. The final goal noted was that staff and families would be “trauma smart”. This includes the areas of building resiliency, professional development, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) trainings, increasing staff skills to address problem behaviors, and work on training regarding child abuse prevention and reporting. The budgeted cost of this final goal is \$1,627.96. Including indirect costs, the grant total of the budget for the Training and Technical Assistance plan is \$24,892.

Jennifer Reed made the motion to move forward for approval the 2018-2019 Training and Technical Assistance Plan and Budget to the Board of Directors. Trista Vonada seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Bruce Day made the motion to approve the 2018-2019 Training and Technical Assistance Plan and Budget. Lois Steinbeck seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

f. 2017 Self-Assessment Action Plan Final Report* - Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley spoke about items that were addressed based on the results of the 2016-2017 Head Start self-assessment. Twelve items were noted as program changes or modifications. These included the following: Policy Council drafting a letter to families; increasing substitute recruitment efforts; utilizing the ChildPlus system and creating a Data Advisory Team; using the Attendance Plan of Improvement and reviewing the program’s Attendance Policy; creation of an ERSEA position; enhancing the tracking system with a consultant with the Montana Preschool Development Grant; continuing a relationship with CLASS observers; ensuring all staff has training available that meets ECP training hours; providing self-care training; continued meetings with Kindergarten teachers; tracking Non-Federal share on a monthly basis by site; and participating the Montana’s STARS to Quality program. All Head Start programs are currently at STAR 3, and the goal is to move forward with the application to become STAR 4 facilities.

Trista Vonada made the motion to move forward for approval the 2017 Self-Assessment Action Plan Final Report to the Board of Directors. Angel Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Susan Geise made the motion to approve the 2017 Self-Assessment Action Plan Final Report. Helen Fandrich seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

g. 2017 Annual Report* - Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley provided a copy of the annual report to all present. The report includes items such as Head Start mission and vision, budgets, community partners, program outcomes, and RMDC Board of Directors and Policy Council members. This report goes out to all stakeholders.

Trista Vonada made the motion to move forward for approval the 2017 Annual Report. Ericka Vallance seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Helen Fandrich made the motion to approve the 2017 Annual Report. Trever Kirkland seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

h. Eligibility Determination Training – Jaymie Sheldahl

Jaymie provided a packet of information, including Head Start standards regarding eligibility, the current eligibility policy, definitions, and a verification form. It is a requirement that the Board be trained on eligibility determination for Head Start annually. Jaymie spoke of the four ways to qualify for Head Start. Children can qualify based on income level, participation in foster care, homelessness, or being on any form of public assistance. Up to 10% of the Head Start slots can be filled by over-income families; for RMDC Head Start, that totals 23 slots. Children must be age three or four by September 10 of the school year to qualify, and must be immunized or willing to immunize. The immunization standard is a licensing rule, not a Head Start rule. Jaymie spoke about the application process, and face-to-face interviews that happen with the families. These can take anywhere from 60 to 90 minutes. When necessary, third party verifications can be completed, such as checking with a homeless shelter about a family. A question was asked about Head Start's service to children with special needs. Ten percent of enrolled children need to have a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This really has no bearing on eligibility for Head Start, and on the verification form, children with special needs would be noted in the over-income category if they do not meet any other category. During the application evaluation, children with special needs are assigned a higher point total, which increases their chances of acceptance in the program.

Trista Vonada made the motion to adjourn the Policy Council meeting. Ericka Vallance seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The Board took a five-minute break and reconvened at 3:55 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mark Young noted a typographical error on page two of the minutes, where the word "Agency" was misused in place of "Aging". The error was noted as not changing the meaning or intent of the minutes as written.

Lois Steinbeck made the motion to approve the December 21, 2017 Board of Directors' meeting minutes. Trever Kirkland seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Lori Ladas

Lori began her report by congratulating Human Resources Director Gale Anderson on 25 years of service at RMDC. Lori asked the Board if anyone would like to receive the Board Survey included in their packets in electronic format; no one asked for an electronic version. Twenty-one applications were received for the Senior Services Program Director position, and interviews will likely be scheduled for next week. Heather Nicholson has filled the posted Area IV Program Manager position. February 2 will be Walt Hanley's last day at RMDC. Details will follow regarding a retirement party for him. Lori concluded by mentioning that a group of RMDC employees volunteered by helping Helena Food Share prepare Kid Packs on Tuesday evening, and that another group of employees offered their time and energy earlier in the week to move and store a large commodity delivery during a work day. She expressed appreciation for the willingness of staff to help where needed.

Finance Report Update – Chrisy Irely

a. General Update

Chrisy reported that the cash balance is \$626,704, and the AP balance is \$51,265. All totals are current. The fiscal department is currently working a number of projects, including the Head Start budget, assisting Anderson ZurMuehlen during the property audits, working on projections, and preparing for the United Way grant applications.

Committee Reports

a. Retirement Committee

Lori reported that the Retirement Committee met on Tuesday, January 23. As of December 2017, the value of the portfolio is \$2,338,334. The return on the account is 15.51%. The current mix of funds is 67% stocks and 33% fixed income/cash. Jock Bovington recommended a rebalance of the account to return to its initial allocation of 65% stocks, 35% bonds. The committee approved this recommendation. Lori spoke about the comparison of the RMDC profit-sharing account to the S&P 500, and that the RMDC account should not necessarily be keeping up with the S&P 500 since the accounts are not the same; for instance, the S&P 500 has no bonds while the RMDC account consists of 35% bonds. The committee also looked at some Morningstar reports for individual funds, and Jock explained Alpha and Beta scores and how they reflect the performance of any particular fund. Lori concluded her report by noting that the RMDC accounts comply with the Department of Labor rules.

b. Approval of January 23, 2018 Retirement Committee Minutes

Lois Steinbeck made the motion to approve the January 23, 2018 Retirement Committee Minutes. Bruce Day seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Daniel Pocha recommended that an additional Board member join the Retirement Committee going forward. He asked Lois Steinbeck if she would be willing to serve on the committee and she agreed.

Housing Project – Lori Ladas

Lori reported that she, Liz Mogstad, and Kathy Marks recently met with Kevin and Mike Wall, as the Wall Family Foundation had expressed interest in giving some foundation funds to affordable housing. The general proposal is similar to the concept of the High School House, but with income qualifications to align with RMDC's mission. Tying into RMDC's Homebuyer Education classes was also discussed. The biggest challenge in this kind of project is the availability of property at an affordable cost. The project also should not be in direct competition with Habitat for Humanity. Liz Mogstad spoke about how CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funding could be used to subsidize actual costs for this project, and that a number of partners would need to be involved, including NeighborWorks Montana, RMDC Home Buyer Education, and several contractors. Liz plans to use the results of the Housing Needs Assessment to drive the process and the plan, particularly determining what style of housing would be most beneficial (duplex, single-family, townhouse, etc.). Daniel Pocha also mentioned that he had continued conversation with the Superintendent of Helena School District #1 regarding the future of the High School House project, and there is still interest in RMDC being involved in the project in the future. Conversations regarding these projects will continue.

Lori then turned the discussion to the 4%/9% tax credit project, partnering with Gene Leuwer, previously discussed by the Board. This project would include a mix of senior citizen and multi-family units, creating between 90 and 100 units total. Mountain Plains Equity Group in Billings would also be interested in partnering on this project. Liz reported that a letter of intent would need to be submitted in May and presentations would happen in June. If selected to complete a full application, that would need to be completed in 90 days, and then a decision on the project would be made in December. The paperwork needed before starting a collaboration project such as this would need to define boundaries upfront, and the project would need to be known as an RMDC project. Daniel spoke about developer fees, and about the fact that RMDC would want to be the property manager and to get the property back after 15 years, as has been done with other property projects. Discussion followed.

Debbie Havens made the motion to give authorization to Lori to continue conversations with Gene Leuwer and Mountain Plains Equity Group to work toward development of an agreement to be brought to the Board in relation to a 4%/9% tax credit project. Susan Geise seconded. Helen Fandrich opposed. All others voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Board Member Recruitment – Lori Ladas

Lori reported that due to Akilah Lane's resignation from the Board of Directors, there is a low-income representative opening on the Board at this time. The Nominating Committee will meet to discuss individuals to fill this vacancy. Susan Geise mentioned that the Lewis and Clark County Commission had appointed someone new to fill her position on the RMDC Board of Directors, who is not a Commissioner; however, upon review of the By-laws, a Commissioner must fill her slot on the Board, so Susan will remain on the Board of Directors going forward.

Debbie Havens made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Young seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Edgar

Administrative Assistant, III

Lois Steinbeck
Lois Steinbeck

Secretary/Treasurer

2/21/18
Date