

Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.
Board of Directors' Meeting
April 29, 2021, 3:30 p.m.
via Zoom Conference Call

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

Members absent: Dannai Clayborn, Mike Delger, Mary Pat Penley

Others present: Carla Adair, Gale Anderson, Rod Applegate, Hannah Danzer, Mindy Diehl, Shawna Donaldson, Diane Edgar, Sam Hall, Taya Hovan, Chrisy Irej, Lori Ladas, Samara Lynde, Kathy Marks, Liz Mogstad, Kelley Moody, Ashley Peña-Larsen, Suzanne Severin

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

Approval of Minutes

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the March 25, 2021 Board of Directors' meeting minutes and the February 25, 2021 Finance Committee minutes. Bruce Day seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Lori Ladas

Lori reported that since the last board meeting, the Neighborhood Center has been much more lively, with the exercise class, quilters, line dancers, and wood carvers all back in the building each week. Lunch service in the Daily Dinner Club began on Monday, and Rod Applegate reported that between 12 and 15 people have attended most days so far in Helena. Clients have been compliant with Rocky's COVID safety measures, and seating is assigned so contact tracing can occur if needed. Meals are served restaurant style, with no buffet. Rod noted that the Lincoln Senior Center also opened for meals on April 26, and the remaining rural sites are set to start serving lunches on May 3. Rocky's bus in Helena started operating again on April 26. Lori mentioned that a meeting was held with Entre and Rocky is excited about some upcoming upgrades to the IT system. The need for an in-house help desk assistant was discussed and at this time is not found to be necessary. Lori and Liz Mogstad attended a meeting with the city to discuss the Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church property and the potential future project planned there. More information will follow as discussions continue. Lewis & Clark County has expressed renewed interest in the Jackson Street Center building, and facilities staff are working on items found in the inspection report. The largest issue needing attention is the roof. The county has approached Rocky asking about a potential partnership to deliver COVID vaccinations to homebound residents, and the Senior Nutrition staff has been surveying clients to determine if such a service is needed for that client group.

Finance Report Update – Chrisy Irej

a. Finance Committee Update

Chrisy reported that the Finance Committee met just prior to the Board meeting today. Most of the discussion focused on Rocky's pay plan, recruitment, and retention of employees. Proposals regarding the pay plan will be provided to the committee for further discussion. Fiscal staff is working on budgets, and Chrisy noted that the budget will include a 1.22% COLA and a \$25 per employee per month health insurance premium increase. Cash balance is \$1,223,911, and accounts payable is \$40,300. Both

amounts are comparable to last month. Rocky Mountain Preschool Center has applied for and been awarded a second round of Paycheck Protection Program Loans, which will total approximately \$59,000.

b. Rocky 2019 Form 990

Chrisy introduced Suzanne Severin from Anderson ZurMuehlen to speak about Rocky's Form 990, which is due to be filed by May 17. Suzanne explained that the Form 990 is an information return, as opposed to an income tax return. It informs the IRS of the operations of Rocky, its financials, and shows the organization's governance and transparency. Suzanne highlighted the narrative at the start of the form, which showcases operations of the organization. This information is especially important from a board perspective. She explained some additional items included in the Form 990, such as board of directors' information, revenues and expenditures, lobbying activities, fundraisers, grants, and related organizations. Suzanne also noted the Form 990T, for unrelated business income. This form relates to Rocky Mountain Preschool Center, as a for-profit program within Rocky.

Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee – Trever Kirkland

Trever reported on the April 8 Executive Committee meeting, held to discuss two grants for Head Start. The first is the COLA grant, which would provide a 1.22% COLA increase on base wages for all Head Start staff. This would total a \$32,844 funding increase. Additional funds would allow a part time Teacher to move to full time hours, and also support a Permanent Substitute position. The second Head Start grant discussed was the COVID-19 Grant. This is a second round of funding to be used for COVID-related improvements, such as cleaning and classroom supplies. Additional wages may also be supported through these funds.

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the April 8, 2021 Executive Committee minutes. Eric Schindler seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Personnel Committee – Mark Young

Mark reported that the Personnel Committee met on April 5 to review the Executive Director's performance evaluations submitted from board members and Program Directors. The committee was impressed with the scores received. Also discussed was the progress of the Executive Director toward last year's goals, and a review of goals for the upcoming year.

Bruce Day made the motion to approve the April 5, 2021 Personnel Committee minutes. Andy Hunthausen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

c. Retirement Committee – Lois Steinbeck

Lois referenced the meeting minutes and noted that the total value of the plan is close to \$2.4 million. She mentioned how one-year stock returns ranged from 38% to 70% for Rocky's stock holdings, which is atypical and a result of market fluctuations related to COVID-19. The committee discussed the option of a self-directed retirement plan for Rocky employees, and how much more frequent valuations would impact Rocky's costs. Moving from an annual valuation to a quarterly valuation would increase Rocky's overall

fees from \$9,000 to \$15,000. The committee will continue to review the possibility of changing to a self-directed plan and will brainstorm questions and potential issues with such a change at the next meeting.

Lois Steinbeck made the motion to approve the April 13, 2021 Retirement Committee meeting. Mark Young seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Head Start Update

a. Policy Council Update – Mark Young

Mark reported that the Policy Council met earlier today and a quorum was present. Recruitment was a topic of discussion, and 60 Head Start applications have been received for next school year. The group also discussed Best Beginnings Scholarships, which have been used by fewer Rocky Head Start families in recent years. Finding an incentive to encourage eligible families to apply for these scholarships was discussed. The length of the initial application and the requirement to provide updates were noted as barriers.

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

Ashley reported that the Head Start grant year ends on April 30, and Head Start expects to spend all available funds in their budget by that date. Head Start recently received approval of the amendment which allows for an extra mortgage payment toward the Valley Center at Fern Road in Helena. Head Start plans to carry over the majority of the COVID funding into next year. Ashley spoke about regional meetings she has attended recently, and that current workforce issues are a popular topic of discussion. Head Start lost two staff this week, but fortunately, their sites have had enough staff present to continue to operate and meet ratios.

Ashley then spoke about a proposed change to Head Start for the upcoming year, switching from a four-day program to a five-day program. This will help with enrollment issues and better meets the needs of Head Start families. When polled, 100% of Head Start staff agreed that a switch to five days per week was the best decision for the program. This change could lead to a possibility of reducing total enrollment by 13 children. A remote option will continue to be offered for the next school year. Partial day enrollment will be available if needed for some children. Ashley also reported on an MOU in progress with Boulder Elementary School. Head Start staff are finding community meetings in the Boulder area to attend and encourage enrollment in Head Start. No reduction is planned for the Boulder site at this time. Ashley included more detailed information regarding these possible changes in the report sent home to the Board. She noted that the program hoped to make a formal request to both the Policy Council and the Board in May to approve these changes and asked if an additional meeting would be necessary to answer questions. No board members voiced a need for an additional meeting.

Mark Young made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program and Budget Report. Kate Anderson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Rocky Mountain Preschool Center Program Presentation – Hannah Danzer

Hannah reported that Rocky Mountain Preschool Center serves 50 children, 12 of those under the age of two. The preschool has earned a STAR 4 designation, which provides incentives throughout the year in the amount of \$13,500. Kindergarten readiness and social/emotional skills are a major priority for the program. The preschool serves breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack, and receives

reimbursement through the Child and Adult Care Food Program for providing nutritious meals and meeting nutritional guidelines. The program is tuition-based, and the majority of the preschool's funding comes through tuition. The monthly fee for a child under the age of two is \$860; for ages two through five, the fee drops to \$735 per month. Scholarships are accepted. Rates are comparable to other childcares in the area. The program has nine employees: Program Director, three Lead Teachers, and five Teacher Assistants. The preschool has received a Paycheck Protection Plan loan and grants this year due to COVID-19, and is budgeted to end the year with a positive balance of \$31,000. The pandemic led the preschool to use the Jan Shaw building for its infant classroom. By the end of summer, the goal is to have all the preschool children back at the Neighborhood Center. Future use of the Jan Shaw building is undetermined at this time. After the initial COVID closure, the preschool has only had one additional COVID-related closure, which was in March.

Executive Director Performance Evaluation

The meeting went into closed session at 4:36 p.m. to discuss the Executive Director's performance evaluation.

The meeting reopened to the public at 4:54 p.m.

Mark Young made the motion to approve a one-time bonus of \$3,000, along with 5 personal days in the next fiscal year, for the Executive Director. Jerry Loendorf seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar
Executive Assistant

Approved by the Rocky Board of Directors via Zoom virtual meeting 5/27/21.
