

**Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.**  
**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
**January 19, 2023, 3:00 p.m.**  
**Neighborhood Center Card Room/Zoom Conference Call**

**Members present:** Kate Anderson, Bruce Day, Susan Geise, Jen Gursky, Andy Hunthausen, Trever Kirkland, Jerry Loendorf, Daniel Pocha, Lindsey Richtmyer, Amanda Robinson, Paula Stephenson

**Members absent:** Dannai Clayborn, Bob Mullen, Eric Schindler

**Others present:** Gale Anderson, Joan Anderson, Rod Applegate, Jock Bovington, Frank Cornwell, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Steven Ferriter, Joanna Halland, Taya Hovan, Lori Ladas, Jean Leischner, Samara Lynde, Matt Maloy, Liz Mogstad, Angela Nelmark, Ashley Peña-Larsen

**Call to Order/Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. and a quorum was present. Lori invited everyone to enjoy some cake in honor of Gale Anderson's retirement from Rocky next week. Joanna Halland was introduced as Rocky's new Human Resource Director, effective January 26. Also introduced was Broadwater County Commissioner Lindsey Richtmyer, a new member of Rocky's Board of Directors.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

**Susan Geise made the motion to approve the December 15, 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes and the October 25, 2022 Finance Committee meeting minutes. Jerry Loendorf seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Head Start Policy Council Update**

Ashley Peña-Larsen reported that the Head Start Policy Council met at 12:30 p.m. today, and that all topics on their agenda have either already been reviewed by the Board or will be later in this meeting.

#### **Head Start Director's Report and Budget – Ashley Peña-Larsen**

Ashley reported that Head Start lost one additional staff member, which leaves the program short-staffed by 13 positions. She's recently spoken with two applicants looking for full-time work, which could help fully staff some rooms that are currently understaffed. This evening, Head Start will host RIOT (Reading Instead of Technology) for approximately 200 families. The Board was also invited to attend. Ashley spoke about bills addressing early childhood education during this year's legislative session. Continued funding for the STARS to Quality program is in question, which would impact both Rocky Head Start and Rocky Mountain Preschool Center if discontinued. Other topics of interest include Child Care Licensing regulations, vaccine requirements, Best Beginnings scholarships, and tax credit increases. Ashley also spoke about Head Start partnerships that could be potentially impacted if required school district budget cuts affect supplemental programs that work with Head Start. Ashley mentioned that the article

in the Helena Independent Record about the vandalism at the HHA Head Start brought a lot of community support to the program, and also led to inquiries from several contractors interested in working on the repairs. A program information sheet from the Office of Head Start provided information about COVID mitigation in the program, and Ashley said a disease mitigation policy will be brought to the Board at a future meeting. The budget is looking good due to vacancy savings. A waiver regarding in-kind match will be brought to the Board for approval in February. Ashley explained that in-kind amounts are down, due to changes in how the school district determines in-kind and also due to less voluntary services provided, since fewer families are part of the program than in the past.

**Andy Hunthausen made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program and Budget Report. Susan Geise seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **2023-2024 Grant Proposal and Budget – Ashley Peña-Larsen**

Ashley referenced the grant budget included in Board packets. The United Way funding column was removed, since United Way funding has not been received for the past several years. Various funding sources for the program were reviewed. The STARS program brings in \$101,000, so the loss of this funding would significantly impact the program. The in-kind budget is set at \$706,241. Best Beginnings scholarships bring in \$33,000, and the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program adds nearly \$189,000. Some CSBG funding is allocated to Head Start each year, but it's typically not all used. About two-thirds of Rocky Head Start's expenditures are personnel related, including salaries and benefits. Ashley noted that a 5.2% COLA is expected for Head Start, and a separate COLA grant will provide the funding for that staff pay increase. The Head Start grant for 2023-2024 will include a reduction of 16 children in Lewis & Clark County, which will reduce the total from 192 to 176 children. This reduction will eliminate the half day classrooms for the program, and allow all classrooms to operate full days, which is the preference for families.

**Susan Geise made the motion to approve the 2023-2024 Head Start Grant Proposal and Budget. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and Daniel Pocha abstained from the vote. The motion passed.**

#### **2023-2024 T & TA Grant and Budget – Ashley Peña-Larsen**

Head Start receives funding each year for training and technical assistance. These funds allow for training of Head Start families and staff, providing educational opportunities to meet the requirements of the Head Start program. A new addition to the grant this year is an allocation for fatherhood engagement. The grant totals \$27,000 as presented.

**Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the 2023-2024 T & TA Grant and Budget. Susan Geise seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Retirement Committee Report – Lori Ladas**

Lori highlighted a few items from the committee meeting minutes. Rocky's pooled account is reflecting the current market, with a year-to-date return of -16%. Since the start of the account

in October of 2006, the rate of return is 6.23%. Last year, the committee made the decision to move half of the bond funds into a 1-year treasury bill, earning 1.7%, as a way to reduce risk in a volatile market. The committee decided to purchase another treasury bill at the January meeting, this one a 5-year bill at approximately 3.6% return. The guaranteed returns on the treasury bills hedge against fluctuations in the market. The committee discussed the cost-basis disclosure, which is a Department of Labor requirement but not a requirement of Rocky's auditors. The lack of disclosure has been included in the supplemental information section of Rocky's audits for several years. The auditors do not anticipate any major risk from this lack of disclosure. Jock Bovington and Matt Maloy from The Investment Group were invited to today's meeting to discuss this topic further. Lori noted that Joanna Halland will join the Retirement Committee when they meet next quarter, as the new Human Resource Director.

**Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the January 10, 2023 Retirement Committee minutes. Paula Stephenson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Jock Bovington and Matt Maloy spoke with the Board about the cost-basis disclosure. They noted this discussion is only relevant to the pooled account of the retirement plan, not the 401(K) plan. Jock addressed the fact that the cost-basis of an account is a relevant tool when looking at a taxable account, but with a pooled retirement account like Rocky's, the cost-basis is not an accurate reflection of the account's performance. A better way to track the performance is a comparison of how much money was put in the account compared to how much the account is worth. Jock noted that the Investment Group has the ability to track the cost basis on accounts like Rocky's going forward and disclosing the information should remove the auditor's note each year.

#### **Personnel Committee Report – Gale Anderson**

Gale presented suggested updates to the Personnel Manual that were approved by the Personnel Committee and Head Start Policy Council, and are being brought forward to the Board for approval. For consistency with government entities, the manual will add Indigenous People's Day to the Columbus Day holiday listing. Revisions were made to clarify that in order to receive holiday pay, employees must work their regularly scheduled hours, or take leave time in the same amount, the day before and after the designated holiday. Policy updates also clarify the ability to bank and trade holidays, for programs that allow that. The presented changes would become effective starting the pay period beginning January 22, 2023.

**Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the Personnel Manual updates as presented. Daniel Pocha seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Andy Hunthausen made the motion to approve the January 12, 2023 Personnel Committee minutes. Susan Geise seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Finance Report – Frank Cornwell**

Frank reviewed the cash balance chart, noting that the cash balance has remained fairly stable around \$2,000,000 over the past three months. Accounts payable balance is \$38,933. Fiscal staff has been working on Rocky's annual audit, currently in progress.

**Director's Report – Lori Ladas**

Lori asked for any questions or comments regarding her written report to the Board. She invited everyone to attend Gale's retirement party after work on January 25.

**Daniel Pocha made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Susan Geise seconded.**

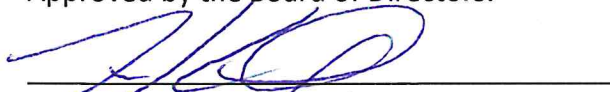
The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar  
Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board of Directors:



Eric Schindler, Secretary/Treasurer

2/23/23  
Date