Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc. Board of Directors' Meeting November 30, 2023, 3:30 p.m. Neighborhood Center Card Room/Zoom Conference Call

Members present: Dannai Clayborn, Susan Geise, Jen Gursky, Andy Hunthausen, Trever Kirkland, Teri Lilletvedt, Jerry Loendorf, Erin Lyndes, Bob Mullen, Daniel Pocha, Niki Redford, Eric Schindler

Members absent: Kate Anderson, Bruce Day, Lindsey Richtmyer

Others present: Joan Anderson, Rod Applegate, Hayden Behm, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Steven Ferriter, Jennifer Filipovich, Joanna Halland, Jaymie Hazel, Lori Ladas, Samara Lynde, Jim Marks, Kathy Marks, Liz Mogstad, Kelley Moody, Angela Nelmark, Tom Robel, Lizzie Thompson

Call to Order/Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by Trever Kirkland at 3:32 p.m. and a quorum was present. No public comment was provided. Niki Redford, Head Start Policy Council Chair and new Rocky Board member, was introduced.

Approval of Minutes

Jerry Loendorf noted a needed correction in the October 26 Board minutes, changing the word "committee" to "group" for clarity.

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the amended October 26, 2023, Board of Directors' meeting minutes and the August 24, 2023, Finance Committee minutes. Eric Schindler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Lori Ladas

Lori reported that in preparation for Strategic Planning, an employee survey had been sent to all Rocky staff. So far, 86 responses have been received. The survey will close tomorrow, and data analysis will begin. The first meeting of the Strategic Planning process will be held with Program Directors on December 12. The first session for Board members is scheduled for January 8, and the attendance of at least three to four Board members is needed. Kathy Marks and Steven Ferriter are working on Rocky's year-end appeal mailing, which is expected to mail out next week.

Board Training – Lori Ladas

Lori reminded the Board that training on member duties and responsibilities must be completed every two years per CSBG Organizational Standards. Rocky had a finding in its July 2023 monitoring report as this training was not completed in the required timeframe. Lori explained that the Board is responsible to assure that the organization's mission is met legally, effectively, and efficiently. She highlighted the Board's legal duties, including Duty of Care, Duty of Loyalty, and Duty of Obedience. Lori reviewed the Board's governing documents, including items such as the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. Board responsibilities discussed included development of plans to accomplish the organization's mission, regular attendance at meetings, establishing processes for recruitment of new members, reviewing and updating bylaws, and review and approval of the annual budget. Lori concluded by noting that the Board only has power when they speak together in a corporate motion.

Finance Report - Joan Anderson

Cash balance today is \$2,776,914, which is over \$1 million higher than last month's total. A large portion of this increase is Area IV funding for the months of July through November, which was just received and has not yet been distributed to Area IV contractors. The funds invested in a First Interstate Bank money market account this summer earned just over \$4,000 in interest. Accounts payable balance is \$47,668.38, which is current.

Approval of Pinion Audit Fee Agreement - Joan Anderson

Joan referenced the audit fee agreement that was included in Board packets. This is a new document provided this year, which breaks down the costs of the Rocky audit along with the cost of each Rocky property audit. The properties each pay for their own audit costs. The costs reflect the services connected to completion of the Rocky audit for FYE 6/30/2023 and the property audits for FYE 12/31/2023. The rates increased a sizable amount, estimated between 30-40% over last year's audit amounts. The Finance Committee discussed this agreement in depth during its meeting earlier today and had several questions needing clarification prior to signing the agreement. The recommendation of the Finance Committee was to ask the Board to defer to the decision of the Executive Committee, who will meet to review this document again with additional information provided by the auditor and Rocky management.

Susan Geise made the motion that the Board defer to the Executive Committee to make a decision regarding the approval of the audit fee agreement. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Head Start Director's Program Report and Budget - Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley reported that the Policy Council met this week and reviewed the policies which will be reviewed by the Board during this meeting. Ashley referenced her written report and asked for any questions. Currently, Head Start is fully staffed in all of its operating classrooms. The budget looks good due to vacancy savings. In February, Head Start plans to present a budget amendment to the Board, in order to purchase vehicles for the Head Start locations in Whitehall and Townsend.

Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program Report and Budget. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Head Start Reduction Budget and Organizational Changes – Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley provided information on organizational changes that are expected with the proposed reduction of 51 slots at Head Start. Two Family Service Staff positions would be added to the program, and they would also be certified to act as substitutes in the classrooms when needed. Each Family Advocate will have a smaller caseload than held currently, which will allow them to function more mindfully. A part-time health assistant will also be added, to help with dietary and overall health needs in the program. While speaking with staff, they expressed a need for support as opposed to supervision. To address this need, one current supervisor position will transition into a coaching role. Ashley reviewed the projected budget, noting areas where income and expenses will shift due to the reduction in children served. This includes areas such as meal costs, scholarships received, phone and network fees for classrooms that will close, and personnel/salary expenses. CSBG funding currently needed by Head Start would no longer be necessary, and the indirect cost to Rocky for the program has also been adjusted. Ashley noted that the reduction budget does balance but the specific amounts may adjust and fluctuate as reduction details are finalized.

Andy Hunthausen made the motion to approve the Head Start Reduction Organizational Changes and Budget as presented. Jerry Loendorf seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Head Start Policy Updates - Jennifer Filipovich

Jennifer highlighted updates and additions to several Head Start policies which need to be reviewed annually. In the Eligibility Determination Policy and Procedure, training for staff was updated to be held annually. The language of telephone call was changed to audio or video call for enrollment interviews, and summer intakes will be limited to six per day, rather than the previous limit of five. Next, she reviewed the Eligibility, Selection, Enrollment, and Class Placement Policy and Procedure. The language of audio or video call instead of telephone call was changed in this policy. In addition, text was added to address the possibility of immunization record exemptions, per Montana Child Care Licensing requirements. Changes were also made to the point system used for eligibility categories, and Jennifer explained those updates. She noted that in terms of acceptance to Head Start, categorical eligibility is the first item considered, followed by points within the eligibility categories. The date of application is the tiebreaker. A final change to this policy changed the mailing dates for acceptance letters to June for returning students and August for new students. The only update to the Eligibility Determination Policy Agreement was a wording change from "homelessness" to "living unhoused", using people-first language. The final document reviewed by Jennifer was the 2024-2025 Head Start Recruitment Plan. She noted that the monthly numerical goals and supporting actions remained the same as last year, but the main change is that the plan will start with returning students in January rather than February, in an effort to fill all open spots by the start of the school year.

Susan Geise made the motion to recognize and accept the Head Start policy changes as presented. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

The Board decided to move the date of the December meeting to Thursday, December 14.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Edgar

Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board of Directors:

Eric Schindler, Secretary/Treasurer