



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
October 13, 2017**

Meeting: Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting

Day/Date/Time: Friday, October 13, 2017 at 8 a.m.

Location: Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc.
15506 County Line Road
Spring Hill, FL 34610

Board of Director Members Present: Pat McHugh, Chair; Dr. Amy Anderson, Bimal Bhojani, Kelli Boles, Lisa Campos, Kathleen Casper, James Cook, Gus Guadagnino, David Meglay, Robin Napier, Neil Thompson, Miguel Velazquez, Mary Beth Wehnes

Board of Director Members Present via Phone: Adam Horn, Angela Porterfield

Board of Director Members Excused: Colleen Kenney, Jessica Weightman, Mike Wells

Board Members Unexcused: None

Coalition Staff Present: Bev Doucet, Pattie Eacobacci, Jim Farrelly, Naomi Gillick, Jak Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier

Guests Present: Lara Bradburn, Jayne Goldstein, Steve Knobl, Ph.D.

I. Welcome and Call to Order – Mr. Pat McHugh, Chair

Mr. McHugh called this special meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors to order at 8:03 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by introductions.

II. Action Items

- **Public Comment on any Action Items**

Ms. Goldstein stated she would like to address the application process for the Executive Director position. She stated it was a pleasure to be interviewed by Board members and thanked them for the opportunity.

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. McHugh requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Thompson so moved and Ms. Boles seconded the motion. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #1718-05)**

III. Remarks from the Chair/Executive Committee Report – Mr. Pat McHugh, Chair

Mr. Farrelly provided a brief description on the search process for a successor Executive Director as he is retiring. His original contract expired as of 6/30/17, but the Executive Committee requested it be extended to 6/2018 and Mr. Farrelly would serve as the search consultant. He explained the process began five (5) months ago with the Executive Committee working on the parameters of what they wanted which included an educational background, experience with large budgets and a non-profit background.

Advertisements were placed with national organizations such as the American Association of School Superintendents and the *Non-Profit Times* as well as more localized advertising with the Florida Association of School Superintendents and the *Tampa Bay Times*. Ads were placed twice with the above mentioned institutions for a total cost of \$6,280.

It was Mr. Farrelly's responsibility as the search consultant to seek out highly qualified candidates. The application process yielded 51 applications with a total of sixteen (16) qualified applicants who met the minimum qualifications. As an application came from a member of the Executive Committee, this individual recused herself from the process. Mr. McHugh appointed Mr. Bhojani, as the Provider Representative, to sit on the Executive/Personnel Committee.

Each of the four (4) Executive Committee members, individually, reviewed the applications. Those applicants that were chosen by two (2) or more committee members moved to the next round. Seven (7) applicants were chosen and screening interviews were conducted by Mr. Farrelly either in person, via phone call or Skype, with Ms. Jakubauskas taking notes of each interview. From these seven (7) candidates, four (4) were chosen to present to the Executive Committee. The Committee agreed to accept an additional candidate who submitted his application the day prior to interviewing on the basis of application review by both Mr. Farrelly and the Board Chair for a total of five (5) applicants.

Two (2) interview sessions were held at the Spring Hill campus of PHSC with each applicant presenting a 15-20 minute PowerPoint presentation of what the candidate would accomplish within the first 30 days, the first 90 days and within their first year of employment; followed by a question and answer period.

At the end of the final interview session, each Executive Committee member completed a score card and Mr. McHugh coordinated a discussion to consider the recommendation of a candidate to the full Board.

Dr. Anderson inquired why three (3) candidates were eliminated after the screening interviews. Mr. Farrelly replied that conversations indicated a short coming of one kind or another, from that which was evaluated by the Executive Committee. For example, Mr. Farrelly indicated that the background on one candidate differed from what was on the resume. Budget questions revealed no actual hands-on budget experience and one individual simply seemed uncomfortable answering questions.

- **Recommendation/Ratification of Successor Executive Director**

At this time, Mr. McHugh requested Vice Chair Mr. Meglay report the Executive Committee's work to the Board. Mr. Meglay stated this was not an easy task as the candidates were all excellent. He stated the meetings were all noticed, but no Board members participated which indicated they had confidence in the Executive Committee. He believes the Committee made an excellent decision in a candidate who fully met the criteria. Mr. Meglay stated that Mr. Farrelly turned things around in the Coalition ten (10) years ago and he sees better things for the future.

Mr. Meglay moved to have Dr. Steve Knobl appointed as Executive Director for the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties and Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Bhojani stated Dr. Knobl is an outstanding candidate and a true visionary.

Mr. Thompson stated the ideal candidate was found who will be a dynamic leader and visionary as well as a servant leader involving both the Board and staff in strategic and business planning. Dr. Knobl will incorporate great ideas and take the Coalition to the next level.

Ms. Porterfield stated she supports all that has been said. When she reviewed Dr. Knobl's background, she was impressed with the support he can provide to providers and families in the community. She thanked Mr. Farrelly for his leadership.

Mr. Velazquez stated he has worked with Dr. Knobl in the past and he is a great asset.

Mr. Meglay stated he has been able to prove himself and has practical knowledge which will make it a smooth transition.

Mr. Guadagnino stated he has worked with Dr. Knobl on the Board and at Rasmussen and he is a great team builder.

Mr. McHugh stated this was not an easy process as each of the five (5) candidates made compelling cases and this could have evolved into an 8-9 hour decision making process.

Mr. Farrelly provided some brief background information on Dr. Knobl from his resume and informed the Board that both Mr. Will Weatherford and Sheriff Chris Nocco filed reference letters on Dr. Knobl's behalf.

At this time, Dr. Knobl presented a brief PowerPoint presentation that included his plans for the first 30 days, the first 90 days and the first year.

Dr. Knobl stated he did not want to let this opportunity to slip by. He realizes the Board is making a large commitment to have him lead the Coalition, but he is also making a large commitment as he would like to stay with this Coalition for the rest of his career. He understands the work and knows Mr. Farrelly. He believes it will be an easy transition as they will work well together. He is excited to be here and he believes in the Board, the staff and the community.

One of Dr. Knobl's strategies will be to visit providers at least twice a month with a Board member. This will give him an opportunity to make an impact and it is important to the Board and to the providers. He will also develop community partnerships by attending local chamber functions and help raise brand awareness which will also help to raise donations.

For his future goals, Dr. Knobl stated he was on the Board when Sunshine Stars was launched and stated it was a great program. He demands quality and innovation from providers. His number one objective is to serve children and to partner with the providers who are with the children every day. He will also be at the Conference as the keynote speaker and believes the Coalition should have 3-4 annual signature events.

Dr. Knobl believes supporting children in the 0-5 years of age is the most critical time for them as this is when the best impact is made and is most long lasting.

Mr. McHugh requested a roll call vote. Ms. Jakubauskas recorded the individual votes from each board member present or on the phone. There were fifteen (15) ayes, no nays and no abstentions. The motion carried. **(Action Item #1718-06)**

Mr. McHugh stated that an employment contract will be prepared for Dr. Knobl with the involvement of the Board attorney.

Mr. Guadagnino inquired if the 4-month dual roles will still be required. Mr. McHugh stated that Dr. Knobl is well prepared and will require a substantially shorter period.

IV. Public Comment

Ms. Goldstein congratulated Dr. Knobl.

V. Adjournment

Mr. McHugh adjourned this meeting of the Coalition's Board of Directors at 8:50 a.m. without further discussion.

Respectfully submitted by:
Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant I