



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
March 26, 2009**

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

Day/Date/Time: Thursday, March 26, 2009 – 8:30 a.m.

Location: Office of the Early Learning Coalition
15506 County Line Road
Spring Hill, FL 34610

Board of Director Members Present: Lisa Hammond, Chair; Sister Roberta Bailey, Curt Bromund, James Cook, Denise Gill, Dr. Burt Harres, Sonya Jackson, Dave Meglay, Lydia Pinkowski, Jean Rags, Beth Rawls, Mary Beth Wehnes, Patricia Wisman

Board of Director Members Excused: Susan Arnett, Elizabeth Callaghan, Dr. Steve Kanakis, Joe Mascaro, Nicole Miller

Board of Director Members Unexcused: None

Coalition Staff Present: Pattie Eacobacci, Jim Farrelly, Nicole Flechas, Nicole Gonzalez, Ramute “Jak” Jakubauskas, Betsy Kier, LuAnn LaCava, Maryrose Wersan

Guests Present: Melissa Burnett, Head Start; Carol Eurton, CDS; Jack Hamilton, AWI; Steve Lee, Attorney; Karen Livengood, Discovery World; Martha Maner, Head Start; Mary Ann Nowac, Head Start; Tom Scheffey, CDS

I. Welcome and Call to Order - Ms. Lisa Hammond, Chair

Ms. Lisa Hammond, Chair, called the meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors to order at approximately 8:40 a.m. Roll call was taken, introductions were made and a quorum was present.

II. Action Items

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Ms. Rags moved to accept this motion and Mr. Meglay seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-20**)

- **Approval of Minutes, February 26, 2009 Board Meeting**

Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the February 26, 2009 minutes. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Ms. Rags seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-21**)

- **Treasurer's Report - Ms. Jean Rags, Coalition Treasurer/Board Member**

Monthly Statement of Financials – January 2009

Ms. Rags presented the January Financials and reported there were additional funds from the State for the VPK and Outreach Awareness budgets. She reported higher expenses for training due to a public speaking training for the Quality Manager. She indicated an increase under contract services for billing for the mandated annual monitoring of CDS. Final item was an increase in the line item for external, annual audit services performed by Williams, McRanie, Wardlow and Cash. Ms. Hammond requested a motion to approve the January Financial Report. Mr. Meglay moved to accept this motion and Dr. Harres seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. (**Action Item #0809-22**)

III. Remarks from the Chair and Executive Committee Report - Ms. Lisa Hammond

Ms. Hammond informed Board members that the Executive Committee had met yesterday and Mr. Farrelly had briefed them on the Coalition's Foundation and expiring Board memberships. Ms. Hammond indicated some of the expiring memberships will be changing from Hernando to Pasco representation. She announced that Mr. Cook will not be accepting the Governor's appointment to the Board. Mr. Cook stated he will be leaving the Board in April as he believes the Board is in "good shape."

Ms. Hammond informed the Board members of a new policy initiated by Mr. Farrelly banning Coalition cell phone usage while driving vehicles, either personal or Coalition, while on Coalition business. She informed the Board that Week of the Young Child events will be held in Pasco on April 4 and in Hernando on April 18 and that the Coalition will be involved in both.

IV. Finance and Audit Committee – Mr. Jim Cook, Chairperson

A. Recommend Approval, Re-obligation Request for \$200,000: Transition Planning

Mr. Cook explained that when services are brought in-house there will be a number of costs involved. Coalition staff has learned the State may have additional School Readiness funds and will be requesting \$200,000. Mr. Cook moved that the Board approve issuing a request for \$200,000 as part of the spring “re-obligation” process where available School Readiness funds state-wide may be re-obligated to other coalitions for appropriate programs. Ms. Rags seconded the motion. Ms. Hammond called for discussion. Ms. Hammond requested a vote on the motion, all were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried. **(Action Item #0809-23)**

Mr. Cook spoke to the hold back of 4% from the State. The State returned \$137,508, but has again asked agencies to hold these funds. Dr. Harres stated the State was waiting for funds from the stimulus package to begin arriving and agencies have been told to hold the funds until then. Mr. Farrelly stated the Coalition had been told to hold the funds until the fourth quarter. The funds are currently in unallocated and if the funds will not be needed for additional slots, they can be moved to the Quality budget which has approximately eight (8) spending priorities for available funds.

V. The Challenge of Operating a Childcare Center – Ms. Denise Gill

Ms. Gill distributed a packet of informational handouts and explained that she hopes to try and have the Board understand the detailed work required by providers. She also obtained ideas and suggestions from other providers to share with the Board. She explained that providers answer to a number of agencies including DCF, CDS and the Coalition and each has their own rules and policies resulting in a great deal of paperwork for directors and teachers. In addition to caring for the children, many teachers have to maintain the cleanliness of their classrooms because there are no funds for a cleaning service in their centers’ budgets. Ms. Gill touched on some of the paperwork the providers must maintain, including lesson plans and parent and staff handbooks. She also discussed mandatory special events, staff meetings and parent conferences.

Ms. Gill explained the greatest challenge to providers is funding as funding contracts can be and have been changed at a moment’s notice. The majority of changes occurs in the VPK program and is not received from the State by the providers on a timely basis. Challenges include children with special needs and finding qualified staff. Another challenge being faced by providers is the new state-wide VPK policy and not knowing what the reimbursements or attendance requirements will be before contracts are signed.

Ms. Gill was thanked for her time and her presentation.

Mr. Cook inquired if this Board puts additional burdens on centers. Ms. Gill replied the Board has been extremely helpful, but feels there is a need to consistently have the same monitors and monitoring tools and to have advance notice given on changes so the centers have time to put them in place.

VI. Executive Director Report – Mr. Jim Farrelly

A. Cancellation of Provider Payment Agreement

Mr. Farrelly introduced Mr. Stephen Lee, the Coalition’s attorney, who will answer any of the Board’s questions.

Mr. Farrelly briefed the Board on the decision to cancel the provider agreement with Kiddie Planet in Pasco County. The Coalition’s monitoring tool evaluation has a minimum standard of 80%. This center was initially evaluated in December and scored a 52%. A Corrective Action Plan was developed and after six (6) weeks the center scored a 51% on their re-evaluation.

A meeting was scheduled between the owner and director and Coalition staff. Because of illness and hospitalization within the ownership, they asked for and were granted another week and then another day. Two (2) Coalition monitors went to the center and a 60% was scored. Mr. Farrelly stated there is no Coalition approved curriculum in place and health and safety violations include not using gloves during diapering, not cleaning changing pads, open diaper pails, exposed electrical outlets and damaged outside equipment.

Mr. Farrelly has consulted with Attorney Lee, developed a “due process” letter and the Program Committee has been kept apprised. The owners were sent a certified letter and were aware they would be discussed at the Program Committee meeting as well as this morning’s Board meeting and were invited to attend both meetings. Mr. Farrelly will terminate this payment agreement, effective in five (5) business days from today. This will give CDS time to contact each parent who can then place their children in other centers. A letter will be sent to Kiddie Planet with information on the Coalition’s grievance policy.

Dr. Harres inquired of Attorney Lee if the Coalition had done everything legally and Mr. Lee replied that it had. Sister Roberta inquired why licensing did not catch the safety violations. Ms. Wehnes answered that licensing does not require some of the items the Coalition does such as wearing gloves during diapering. But, the center was found to be out of compliance with certain licensing requirements.

After further discussion, Ms. Hammond directed Mr. Farrelly to take whatever action he deems appropriate. Mr. Farrelly stated that the Coalition had been advised, via fax, that Kiddie Planet was voluntarily canceling their agreement with CDS within 30 days, although his action would pre-date their own action.

B. Policy Manuals, Revised

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that Policy Manuals have been created for them for easy reference and are available for the members to take with them.

C. Coalition Update

Mr. Farrelly announced that Dr. Pam Phelps will be the keynote speaker at the Coalition's conference on November 7, 2009.

Week of the Young Child begins on Sunday, March 29 with the annual "Hanging of The Hands". The Coalition will be hosting an event here on April 4 as part of the Week of the Young Child activities for Pasco County. The Coalition was presented with a special Resolution from the Pasco County Commissioners in honor of the Week of the Young Child. The annual celebration of "The Week of the Young Child," in which the Coalition has been involved in both planning and implementation, will occur in Hernando County on April 18.

Mr. Farrelly informed the Board that the transition process is moving forward and the Coalition's next step will be to select reimbursement software and field office locations. The Coalition will also be speaking with CDS employees in regards to possible employment.

Mr. Farrelly announced that today would be Mr. Scheffey's last meeting with the Board as he is retiring from CDS.

Mr. Lee announced that he has been representing the Coalition for some time but that this was his initial face-to-face meeting and thanked the Board for allowing him the opportunity.

VII. Central Agency Utilization Reports – Mr. Tom Scheffey

Mr. Scheffey thanked the Board and stated that Ms. Eurton will take his place at future Board meetings.

Mr. Scheffey presented the reports for February 2009. There are no waiting lists in either county; 105 children were placed in Pasco leaving 220 open slots and 75 were placed in Hernando leaving 50 open slots. There are available funds in both counties for slots.

Mr. Farrelly recommends open enrollment in both Pasco and Hernando counties at this time. Ms. Rags moved to approve and Mr. Meglay seconded. All were in favor with no abstentions and the motion carried.

VIII. New/Unfinished Business

Ms. Rawls informed the Board that a van has been reserved for next month after the Board meeting to take them to various targeted locations. Board members are asked to set aside several hours and should anticipate being back at the Coalition at noon.

IX. Public Input

Ms. Wiseman announced that the DCF Access Office will be moving the week of April 6-10, 2009 into their new location at Embassy and US 19.

X. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn this meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. Board of Directors was made by Ms. Rags. With no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ramute "Jak" Jakubauskas
Administrative Assistant