



**POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING**  
**United Way of Central Iowa**  
**1111 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Leadership Room**  
**May 25, 2022**

**Voting Members Present:** Ahmed Agyeman, Kevin Abler, Deanna Bennigsdorf, Sandy Carter, Suzanne Cohrs, Sam Early, Jem Gong-Browne, Bryan Huggins, Matthew Klemme, Emily Westergaard; Participation via teleconference: Rob Barron; Tabitha Choquette, Adam Montufar, Eva Morales, Jana Shepherd; Marianka Pille arrived at 8:07 a.m.

**Voting Members Absent:** Dave Arens, Charles Mercer, Eric Tubbs

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** None

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** Aaron Johnson, Barb Merrill

**Staff Present:** Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

**Guests Present:** Leanne Andre, Child Care Consultant Supervisor, Child Care Resource & Referral; Lanette Nelson, Healthy Start Manager, EveryStep; Leslie Taft, Healthy Start Manager, EveryStep; Kay Tannatt, Friends of YJI via teleconference

**Welcome**

Board Chair Ahmed Agyeman called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Quorum was met at this time.

Teleconference and guest introductions were made.

**Approval April Minutes**

Minutes of the April 27, 2022, meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

*A motion to approve the April 2022 minutes was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Suzanne Cohrs. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

**Financial Report April 2022**

Kevin Abler presented the Audit Committee report. Administrative expenses for both grants are in line with historical expenditures. April is the first month of the fourth quarter and is represented by blue on the slides showing the total expended percentage.

Bremner noted Grandview and Healthy Birth Day both submitted invoices in April that fully expended their contracts. She has no concerns with FosterSQUAD. She will communicate with partners next week with end-of-year deadlines.

Marianka Pille arrived at 8:07 a.m.

Dallas Center-Grimes and Bondurant school districts have submitted corrected documentation for an April payment.

### **School Ready**

- FY22 Polk County ECI School Ready funding is \$2,865,988.00
- Carry Forward funds total \$337,907.95
- Total School Ready funds in FY22 budget are \$3,203,895.95
- Interest accrued through April 2022 totals \$3,359.43
- Expended School Ready funds at end of April 2022 total \$1,873,809.71
- At the end of April 2022 57% of School Ready had been expended. FY21 at end of April 2021 58% of funds had been expended.

### **Early Childhood**

- FY22 Polk County ECI Early Childhood funding is \$947,808.00
- Carry Forward funds total \$118,891.75
- Total Early Childhood funds in FY22 budget are \$1,066,699.75
- Interest accrued through April 2022 totals \$1,436.91
- Expended Early Childhood funds at end of April 2022 total \$746,404.68
- At end of April 2022 70% of Early Childhood had been expended. FY21 at end of April 2021 76% of funds had been expended.

*A motion to approve the April 2022 financials was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Deanna Bennigsdorf. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

### **Exec Dir. Compensation Committee**

Agyeman thanked the Compensation Committee (Agyeman, Westergaard, Tubbs, Early, Cohrs, Bennigsdorf, Pille) for their time reviewing executive director evaluation survey results and additional work determining a fair compensation package. Bremner thanked board members for completing the survey and their continued support of her work; there was 100% participation.

Westergaard reported last year the committee decided to not only look at an annual increase for the position, but to dive into the executive director compensation package to make sure the package is still competitive. Survey results indicate Bremner continues to exceed expectations. She goes above and beyond and represents the organization well. Historically she has received increases of 2.5% - 4.7%. The committee looked at where her compensation currently sits compared to other non-profits in Polk County with roughly the same budget size. Although she doesn't fundraise, she spends a considerable amount of time working with our funded partners. The committee recommends a 7% increase for FY23. This will bring the compensation package to the middle of the market rate.

If the board is in agreement, Bremner will build the \$99,168 into the budget and the board will vote on the full budget at the June meeting. All members approved of the increase.

Members discussed the boards succession plan in the event Bremner would leave. Who would take over while searching for her replacement? What level of support does the state ECI office provide? Would board fiscal agent help to post and fill the position? Members would like to have conversations with Bremner to start setting up a succession plan.

Bremner reported there is minimal on-boarding support through the state ECI office. The fiscal agent human resources would help with posting the position and collecting applications. Bremner will work to organize crucial documents and information to form a succession plan.

### **FY23 Budget Draft v2**

Bremner shared past fiscal year data on carry forward amounts and non-contracted funds in budgets for both grants. FY20 and FY21 because of COVID impacts the board used non-contracted budget lines to meet emerging community needs. School Ready increased in non-carry forward because of disruptions to preschools. For FY23 School Ready is increased 4%, in part due to redistribution of carry forward funds from ECI areas which exceeded the 20% limit in FY21.

Bremner presented version 2 draft FY23 Early Childhood and School Ready budgets. Both draft budgets include estimated Carry Forward funds. Both budgets fund contracts at the requested amounts. Early Childhood Capacity Building Thank You Bonuses for coalition child care center staff are slightly increased to increase the quarterly bonus amounts from \$400 to \$500. New fall partners approved for FY23 contracts are included in the School Ready General Use budget.

Bremner and Agyeman met with Shalom Community Impact Center to review the specifics of their preschool program budget. The submitted budget had included salaries, rent, snacks, and materials. Discussion included braiding funding, other resources available, and general board practice to not be the sole funder funding 100% of a program. The budgeted \$114,000 covers the request for salaries for two classroom teachers and a driver.

Bremner shared contracts are written with a clause the board can cancel the contract for any reason. We will continue to work with them to make sure they are headed in the right direction. Teachers are hired, they have hired a teacher for the summer that works with the district. Pastor Eugene shared he made a lot of connections with other partners at the May 4<sup>th</sup> community partner event.

After discussion, Bremner recommended a 6-month contract for Shalom Community Impact Center as a way to monitor progress. Agyeman stressed the need to support these types of new programs.

The review committee recommended a 6-month contract for Friends of YJI to monitor the number of children served. This is a new program, and the board would like to see how it grows in the next fiscal year.

### **Administrative Report**

- Bremner thanked board members who were able to attend the May 4<sup>th</sup> funded partner event. Twenty-seven programs had staff attend. Bremner gave a brief overview of Polk

County ECI. Programs were given the opportunity to share about their program. Bremner's PowerPoint is included in today's materials.

- Cohrs – Found the event very informative being a first-year board member. It was a great orientation to the work the board does.
- Klemme – Incredible event, you can tell the early childhood work is very connected in the community by the partnerships already made. For some of the new programs, it may have been better to hear their stories firsthand during the investment process.
- Choquette – Very beneficial, saw connections being made between the programs.
- Early – Having the event in the middle of building the budget gave the full picture of what we are supporting in our work.

Bremner shared she received positive feedback from programs that attended. Thank you emails were sent to all who attended along with all presentation slides and the contact list.

- Leslie Taft, EveryStep – It was a great opportunity to put faces with programs and learn about new programs.
- Bremner will send out a survey to collect members' input on meeting times for the next fiscal year.
  - Early - Having set times and communicating early to get on everyone's calendars would be helpful. Ask for compelling case if requesting a change in time.
  - Bennigsdorf – Most boards either have morning or afternoon meeting times. Having two meeting times can cause more conflicts. Hybrid options could allow for better participation. Is there better participation in morning vs afternoon times?
- Bremner asked board members to think about their contacts to identify new members.
- Westergaard asked about a contingency plan in the event of Bremner's departure.
  - Bremner shared there is little assistance offered at the state level, we do have documents in place in our board materials.
  - Bennigsdorf – Do we need to put a succession plan together? How can United Way support us in the replacement process?
    - Bremner shared their HR department would be at the board's disposal for that type of process.
- Gong-Browne – Do you have any news of upcoming changes at the state level?
  - Bremner – Allocation is remaining flat. It will be a big change to combine IDPH and DHS into the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) headed by one director. She will keep the board informed of any updates.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

- Early – Are we hearing anything from the agencies we support on the formula shortage? Is there anything we can do to help?
  - Leanne Andre – The biggest push is encouraging families to not make their own.
  - Leslie Taft – EveryStep refers anyone to WIC
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### **Public Comment**

- Lanette Nelson shared a flyer for EveryStep's June 25<sup>th</sup> Baby Bloom event. Members were encouraged to share with their networks.
- Leanne Andre shared CCR&R business is running smoothly. CCR&R is busy working towards fiscal year end.

### **Adjournment**

Bennigsdorf made a motion to adjourn the meeting ; Early seconded. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agyeman adjourned the meeting at 9:19 a.m.