



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa
Conference Room A, B, C
May 22, 2024
AMENDED

Voting Members Present: Deanna Bennigsdorf, Jessica Bruning, Sandy Carter, Alicia Chilton, Suzanne Cohrs, Sam Early, Matthew Klemme, Marianka Pille, Christian Ramierz, Shay Scholtes, Eric Tubbs, Emily Westergaard, Stephen White; participating via teleconference: Eva Morales; Dave Arens joined via teleconference at 8:30 a.m.; Rob Barron joined via teleconference at 8:45 a.m.

Voting Members Absent: Kevin Abler, Tabitha Choquette, Adam Montufar

Ex-Officio Members Present: Brook Rosenberg

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aaron Johnson

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Lora Patton, Regional Director, Child Care Resource & Referral; Tony Rouse, Finance Director, United Way of Central Iowa

Welcome

Board Chair Sam Early welcomed members and called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Quorum was met at this time. Guest introductions were made.

UWCI Audit Presentation

Tony Rouse, United Way of Central Iowa Finance Director, reported the organization is in the process of hiring for Chief Financial Officer. Sarah Roy, current CFO, will retire June 30, 2024.

Rouse presented the Audit Report completed by BerganKDV. Polk County finances are included in the United Way of Central Iowa audit. The audit process includes a review of Polk County ECI contracts and finances. It was a clean audit again for 2022 and 2023.

Bremner has uploaded the audit in iowagrants.gov as a part of required reporting.

Members were encouraged to reach out to Bremner or Rouse with any questions.

Approval April Minutes

Minutes of board meeting April 24, 2024, were presented. Early asked for changes or corrections to the minutes as presented.

A motion to approve the April 2024 minutes was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Eric Tubbs. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

April FY24 Financial Report

Alicia Chilton presented the April FY24 financial report. End of April is 83% of way through fiscal year. Expenditures are tracking as expected. Bremner is in contact with programs to determine any unexpended amounts and to estimate total carry forward amounts. The SE Polk contract for preschool programming support will have approximately \$50,000 unexpended. This district has decided to use funds for individual student scholarships. Bremner met with district administrators to discuss the contract to let them know next year's contract will be an average of the last three expenditures. Members discussed how the districts use the preschool programming funding. Bremner and the committee are working to reduce the preschool programming funding to no greater than 15% of the School Ready budget. In proposed FY25 budget, preschool programming is 17% of the full School Ready budget.

School Ready

- FY24 School Ready funding is \$2,965,062
- Carry Forward funds total \$304,473.51
- FY24 Total School Ready funds \$3,269,535.51
- Interest accrued through April 2024 totals \$13,635.92
- Expended School Ready funds end of April 2024 total \$2,038,612.58
- At the end of April 2024 62% of School Ready had been expended. End of previous April 2023 65% of funds had been expended.

Early Childhood

- FY24 Early Childhood funding is \$969,361
- Carry Forward funds total \$141,469.91
- FY24 Total Early Childhood funds \$1,110,830.91
- Interest accrued through April 2024 totals \$4,701.98
- Expended Early Childhood funds at end of April 2024 total \$690,915.89
- At end of April 2024 62% of Early Childhood had been expended. End of previous April 2023 68% of funds had been expended.

A motion to approve the April FY24 Financial Report was made by Suzanne Cohrs and seconded by Deanna Bennigsdorf. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Dave Arens joined via teleconference at 8:30 a.m.

FY25 Budget Drafts v2

A second draft of budgets for both grants was presented. Changes were made based on the discussion of the April board meeting. Bremner presented the v2 Early Childhood budget.

- Quality Support for Coalition Centers line reduced in consideration of the Operational Grant funding for centers.
- Oakridge Prepare2Care was a pilot program funded last year. The committee recommends not funding for FY25.

- IAEYC T.E.A.C.H. is a new request to cover any potential wait list for the program. The board last funded the program during FY23 \$92,000. SFY24 they received HHS funding to enroll participants statewide. SFY24 IAEYC has HHS funding of \$7 million for T.E.A.C.H and WAGE\$. SFY25 will be status quo HHS funding maintaining \$7 million. Bremner met with Jillian Herink and Ashley Otte with IAEYC to discuss the request. Program staff will have a clearer idea of potential wait list in November/December. The board could issue a contract which could be amended dependent on waitlist status. Bremner met with Wendy Hoogeveen, HHS Child Care Program Manager, who reported spring 2025 HHS will evaluate the outcomes and funding for T.E.A.C.H. Hoogeveen believes HHS will continue funding T.E.A.C.H. and funding may be increased for SFY26, dependent on budget unknowns at this time.

Emily Westergaard departed at 8:36 a.m.

Bremner reviewed the v2 School Ready budget.

- EMBARC requested \$99,000 for FY25; committee recommends \$95,000. Board previously funded program in FY23 at \$78,500. With the recent reorganization, Bremner shared she has no concerns regarding their sustainability or ability to deliver services.
- FosterSQUAD did not request funding this year.
- Recommendation is less than requested for Mary's Helping Hands for essential needs.
- ICOACH is a new request to increase capacity and instructional hours for two preschool classrooms.
- Jai Olive is a new request supporting the training of doulas and community outreach on doula services in communities of color.
- Raising Readers in the Heartland is a new request supporting a franchise of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library targeting three low-income zip codes in Polk County.
- AIRTS is a new request. Recommend a smaller contract to focus on maternal health support and navigation and support of families enrolled at Shalom and at ICOACH.

FY25 budget will be approved by the full board at the June 12th meeting. Bremner reported the deadline to submit budget uploaded was moved up to June 1st. She has submitted a draft budget to the State in order to meet this deadline and will update budget with needed changes after the June 12th meeting.

Rob Barron joined via teleconference at 8:45 a.m.

Executive Director Compensation Committee - Recommendation

Bremner left the room for committee discussion.

Early thanked members who participated in the Executive Director survey; participation was excellent with 17 of 19 members completing. Bremner received very positive feedback in the survey results. She met all goals the board has set for her. She is a very experienced and respected director and works closely with area directors and leaders in the community and across the state to tackle obstacles.

The committee recommends a 7.5% salary increase beginning July 1, 2024, based on her exemplary performance and seniority in this leadership role. This increase is well within statutory limits and recognizes her value to both the board and the community.

Early and Bremner have had conversations regarding statewide changes to ECI work and local areas. Bremner is waiting to see what the path looks like moving forward for this work. This is a very engaged board, and she would like to continue this work together. Members discussed the need to consider succession planning to proactively plan for any leadership change.

A motion to approve the committee's Executive Director Compensation increase of 7.5% was made by Suzanne Cohrs and seconded by Alicia Chilton. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Fiscal Agent Agreement (Policy 4.3)

Members received the SFY25 Fiscal Agent Agreement and "Supplement." The documents detail the responsibilities of United Way of Central Iowa as fiscal agent. Annually the board reviews the fiscal agent and confirms continuation of the agreement.

A motion to approve the United Way of Central Iowa as fiscal agent and the SFY25 Fiscal Agent Agreement and Supplement was made by Suzanne Cohrs and seconded by Eric Tubbs. THE MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board Self Evaluation (Policy 2.12)

Early reported the annual Board Self Evaluation survey link will be emailed to all members.

Administrative Report

Bremner's Administrative Report is included in today's meeting packet.

- Attended state HHS meetings. HHS ECI staff are working to re-organize the Early Childhood Stakeholders Alliance which was eliminated with SF2385. Also mentioned was a new "Thrive Iowa" proposal of the governor and HHS. This will be a centralized intake of at-risk families and individuals. Bremner will share more information on this new proposal as it becomes available.
- Met with Janet Horas, HHS Family Support, to discuss evidence-based family support model. This model, Parents as Teachers (PAT) will be utilized by EveryStep's Healthy Start and Empowerment program.

Early asked Bremner to consider ways the board can be supportive of other areas of her work including during the next year changes at the state level. How can board members be involved with advocacy and with the work of the Association?

Old Business

- None

New Business

- Last board social will be held June 13th at Big Grove Brewery from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Public Comment

- Lora Patton thanked the board for their continued support.

Adjournment

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

Early adjourned the meeting at 9:29 a.m.