



Children's Opportunity Alliance Board of Directors Meeting

September 20, 2023, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

The following Directors were present: Jennifer Arnaiz, Kevin Beverly (Chair), Amy Cropp, Chandra Curtis, William Hegwood (Treasurer), Tiffany Jones (Secretary), Deborah Lambert, Myrna Peralta, BB Otero, Nichelle Owens, Sonia Pruneda-Hernandez, Sobia Qureshi, Theresa Ramsaroop, Pat Ruppert (Vice Chair), Wayne (Chris) Saxton, Dira Treadvance, Vivian Yao.

The following Directors were absent: Vernessa Broddie, Hannah Hahn, Taniesha Woods Myles.

Members of the public in attendance: none

COA Interim Staff in attendance: Brittany Anuszkiewicz, Giralaine Duff, Laura Jahromi, Desmirra Quinonez, Kimberly Rusnak.

Board Chair Beverly called the meeting to order at 6:07pm. A quorum of the Directors was present.

Review and Vote of Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the Minutes from the June 13, 2023 meeting.

Motion to accept the May minutes as written: Nichelle Owens. Second: Amy Cropp.

No objections or abstentions.

Board Chair Update

- The Alliance was very active over the summer. There is still much work ahead of us.
- We completed the county budgeting and contracting process for the first time; ultimately, after several months of negotiation, we have a signed contract.
- Two members of the Board have stepped down at the end of their first term. Applications are open for these open seats and are due by October 4, 2023.

Conversation about the Early Childhood Coordinating Council

In order to address the duplication of duties between the ECCC and the Alliance, the Alliance has a duty to seek advice from members of the ECCC and develop recommendations for realigning existing County committees and advisory groups. Laura Jahromi updated the Board on the due



diligence conducted by Alliance staff in partnership with leaders at DHHS to seek ECCC stakeholder feedback and consider recommendations. After a surveying process, facilitated large group conversation, and small group decision-making meeting, the final recommendation is to refresh the ECCC. Board members discussed this recommendation and raised several questions about the implications for the Alliance. A question was also raised as to whether or not the Board would need to vote on this recommendation. The decision was deferred to the Governance Committee and will be brought back to the Board at a later date.

Executive Director Update

- We are working in partnership with MCPS to draft our scope of work for this year.
- The Alliance is required to submit a report to the County by October 1 of every year. Kimberly Rusnak previewed the narrative of activities conducted in alignment with the duties and required data and financials compiled.
- All members of the Board have joined one of four committees. The committees will begin to meet in the coming months; the first task will be to write the committee charter.

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Review

- We have raised \$100,000 thus far this year which is more than halfway to our fundraising goal for this year.
- The goal is for the finance committee to remove board financials in advance of board meetings.

Strategic Planning Update

School Readiness Consulting has facilitated two mini-retreats focused on the components of our foundational strategic plan: mission, vision, values, racial equity and social justice statement, and goals. We have two community conversations planned for early October.

The Board then discussed potential options for the definition of early care and education as it pertains to the work and focus of the Alliance as well as the age parameters included in early childhood work.

New Business

No new business items were discussed.

Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:53pm.