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Juvenile Welfare Board Meeting : 2013 : 12 : 12 : Packet

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Board of Directors Meeting
December 12, 2013
Minutes – November 14, 2013

PRESENT: Maria Edmonds, Chair; Dr. James Sewell, Vice-Chair; Brian Aungst, Jr., Secretary; Honorable Bob Dillinger; Dr. Michael Grego; Judge Raymond Gross; Honorable Bernie McCabe; Michael Mikurak; Raymond Neri; Angela Rouson; Commissioner Karen Seel; Attorney Colleen Flynn

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Edmonds called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Neri. Mrs. Edmonds acknowledged Mr. Mike Carroll, Regional Managing Director from the Florida Department of Children and Families, who was in attendance.

II. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Approve Minutes for October 10, 2013
B. Accept Financial Report for October 2013

ACTION: Commissioner Seel moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; seconded by Mr. Aungst. No further discussion; motion carried.

III. ACTION

A. Approve One-e-App Contract Amendments with Social Interest Solutions, Inc.

ACTION: Commissioner Seel moved to approve the One-e-App Contract Amendments with Social Interest Solutions, Inc.; seconded by Dr. Sewell. No further discussion; motion carried.

B. Accept Department of Treasury IRS VITA Grant Award

Mr. Dillinger asked for a clarification on how the money was going to “enhance partnerships”.

Mr. Eddie Burch, VITA Coordinator explained the money will be spent to pay Site Coordinator stipends, marketing expenses, advertising the program, and volunteer recognition incentives.

Mr. Aungst then asked since JWB was receiving reduced funding, what was the plan to supplement the loss.

Mr. Burch explained it was a reduction in funding toward the VITA Program from the Treasury Department and there is a smaller pool of money for which JWB is eligible. A request for $69,000 was made and $48,000 was received. Outside funding was awarded from Wells Fargo and Bank of America which will be brought before the next Pinellas Core Management Services (PCMS) Board Meeting.
ACTION: Dr. Sewell moved to accept the Department of Treasury IRS VITA Grant Award; seconded by Mr. Neri. No discussion; motion carried.

C. Ratify Finance Committee Recommendation

Mr. McCabe summarized the Florida Children’s Council (FCC) presentation at the October 24, 2013 Finance Committee meeting. He explained that the FCC provided a follow-up letter that is included with the Board packet. Mr. McCabe said he is not convinced becoming a member of the FCC is beneficial to JWB.

Mr. Mikurak added that at the Finance Committee meeting the FCC was clearly asked to provide information about what value JWB would receive by becoming a member. He said: “The letter did not touch the questions and concerns we have with the organization”. He does not recommend joining.

Mr. McCabe said he is concerned that the Children’s Services Councils Executive Directors make up the FCC membership and that policy decisions are being made by Executive Directors.

Mr. Neri recommended not proceeding and believes any opportunities the FCC offers can be handled in-house.

Judge Gross said he received a call from the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County asking to share information about JWB’s decision to possibly become members. He asked Dr. Biddleman if she was aware of what the Children’s Board decided to do. Judge Gross added that he agreed with Mr. McCabe’s recommendation not to join.

Dr. Biddleman said that the Children’s Board Executive Committee was meeting today and there is every indication that they will not join.

Commissioner Seel asked how the FCC is paying for Ballard, their lobbyist.

Mr. McCabe responded that the FCC budget shows a $100,000 line item for the lobbyist.

Commissioner Seel responded that she didn’t support joining the FCC.

ACTION: Dr. Sewell moved to continue the current pact with the FCC and not rejoin the membership; seconded by Mr. Dillinger. No further discussion; motion carried.

Mr. McCabe continued to summarize additional discussion items from the Finance Committee meeting, including 3% raises for all JWB staff, except contracted employees. He indicated that salary bands should be adjusted to accommodate staff who are at the top of the band so everyone can receive a 3% raise.

Mr. McCabe indicated this item did not need a motion and asked for a vote from the Board. The Board voted in favor of the 3% raise.

Mr. Dillinger asked about the Child Protection Family Services Specialist position mentioned in the Finance Committee Minutes. Mr. McCabe explained no action was taken and staff will further refine the request.

IV. DISCUSSION
A. Early Learning Coalition (ELC)

Mr. McCabe asked what JWB’s role was in this matter.

Dr. Biddleman explained that she received a letter from ELC’s Interim Director, Ms. Lindsey Carson, an email from Ms. Julie Daniels, Chair of the ELC and a phone call from Mr. Paul Runyon, Executive Director of Coordinated Child Care (CCC) concerning recent changes at ELC.

Dr. Biddleman presented that information to the Board in the Board packet and invited Ms. Daniels and Mr. Runyon to address any questions the Board might have. Dr. Biddleman emphasized that JWB’s interest is in what is happening to Pinellas children, recent changes in ELC activities, and ELC as an organization. She said JWB’s request is to find out what is happening at ELC now and what will happen in the future. She then asked if Ms. Carson or Ms. Daniels wished to speak.

Ms. Carson emphasized that ELC’s priority remains to provide high quality services to children and families. She acknowledged recent staff changes and assured the Board that the employees are working as a cohesive group. Management is being transparent with staff to keep them informed. She commented that the staff is doing a “great job”. Ms. Carson said ELC’s second priority is rebuilding community partnerships and meeting with all ELC’s community partners. She offered to share a copy of the ELC Executive Director’s Report with the Board.

Mr. Dillinger asked what age range ELC is currently serving.

Ms. Carson responded birth to age 13 and explained that a local coalition priorities can be based on available funds. A few years ago a decision was made to only serve children from birth to age nine. She further explained that ELC is not enrolling off the wait list because there is no funding at this time, but children are remaining in care as they continue to age.

Mr. Dillinger asked if the age group was reduced to nine.

Ms. Carson said a local decision was made a few years ago to do that but it was reviewed when the legislative changes occurred last year and now based on state rules they are required to broaden it. In the past, children were automatically terminated from services at age nine, but based on a local decision the coalitions can now prioritize and there is flexibility to serve children up to age 13.

Mr. McCabe asked Ms. Carson if she was talking with Mr. Runyon.

She explained that the ELC Board is meeting today and Mr. Runyon will be presenting his ideas.

Ms. Daniels said the ELC Board has not received any information about a possible merger with CCC. She said no formal discussions have taken place. She considers CCC’s proposal a suggestion. Ms. Daniels said ELC has to stabilize and find a permanent CEO and that there is a lot of discussion ahead.
Mr. Runyon explained CCC is working on completing its own mission and process to make sure children are ready for school and achieving school success. JWB is one of the largest funders of CCC. He plans to speak with ELC about opportunities to fold CCC into ELC.

Mrs. Edmonds asked if there were any questions

Mr. Neri asked how ELC and CCC’s services overlap.

Mr. Runyon explained CCC does Out of School Time (OST) programs which offer a nice tie-in to early childhood services. He said CCC has a child care food program for unaffiliated centers and two child care preschools. The preschools may present a conflict of interest if CCC folds into ELC.

Mr. Neri said JWB buys child care slots with the same results: there is a lot of failure in the school system. He asked if Ms. Daniels could provide an accountability report. He said: “If the school report is not better, what is JWB buying?”

Ms. Carson explained ELC does not share data with Pinellas County Schools, but recently with JWB, ELC was able to get some information.

Mr. Neri said: “Unless we see end results with the schools, we are not accomplishing all that we wanted to accomplish.”

Ms. Daniels mentioned that Governor Scott and President Obama both have placed an emphasis on early learning. She indicated there is more work to be done and more data to gather.

Mr. Mikurak emphasized Mr. Neri’s concern about end results. He commented that the state and federal efforts are important, but JWB is most concerned with Pinellas County.

Mr. Dillinger said his recollection is that when ELC lowered their age of service, JWB had to provide more funding. He asked now that that children from birth to age 13 are being served, is there is a need to re-evaluate ELC’s funding?

Dr. Biddleman said staff will review ELC’s contracts and funding.

Mr. Runyon added that CCC just received a new 21st Century Learning Centers grant for middle school OST programs that will provide a cost savings to JWB. He said he agrees with Mr. Neri that there needs to be outcome measures to see if programs are sufficient.

Dr. Biddleman said JWB will take a new look at the whole situation because of ELC’s realignment.

Mrs. Edmonds added that the merger is an important discussion.

Dr. Grego asked Ms. Carson what Florida department oversees ELC.

She responded: The Florida Department of Education (FDOE).
Dr. Grego reminded Ms. Carson that ELC has full access to all the kindergarten readiness information available through the FDOE. He commented: “We need to stop our fragmented approach. We need a community approach and that is a challenge. ELC needs to develop a community plan. This community needs an early learning plan and then the community will win.” He encouraged ELC to create the plan in partnership with other providers. He said there was a reason why the ELC was moved to FDOE and we need to take a look at that.

Ms. Daniels said ELC is reaching out to community partners.

Dr. Grego commented: “When relationships are not fostered, the children suffer.”

Ms. Daniels responded they are working on those relationships and that is why they are here to make sure JWB is aware of what they are doing.

Attorney Colleen Flynn said she received a public comment card from Art O’Hara, Executive Director of R’Club and asked the Board if they wanted Mr. O’Hara to speak now.

Mr. McCabe responded affirmatively.

Mr. O’Hara commented on school success. He said: “It isn’t all on early learning. It is also on before and after school care, youth development, and keeping children safe while their parents are working.” He suggested United Way should be brought into the picture as well as Head Start as a way to get children off the ELC wait list.

Mr. Dillinger commented that Judge Gross recommended that JWB host community forums around the County.

Mr. Aungst suggested that JWB take the lead and organize and host a meeting with all the Pinellas community partners involved in early learning.

Dr. Biddleman responded: “We can do that.” It can be discussed at the Joint meeting in December as a policy discussion.

Mr. McCabe added that at the recent Health and Human Services Coordinating Council (HHSCC) Policy Board meeting there was a discussion that the Homeless Leadership Board was able to do some things with only some success because of the funding silos. He said: “We have early learning funding silos with no way to put it all together.”

Commissioner Seel agreed with Mr. McCabe and said the problem is coordination. She said there is overlap and duplication, but serving children is the ultimate goal.

Mrs. Edmonds asked for any discussion or questions.

B. Florida Children’s Council

Was discussed under Item IV.C.
V. PRESENTATIONS

A. Research Update: Carrera Summer and After School Program

Starr Silver, Ph.D., a member of the JWB Research and Analytics Division, presented a summary of the key results for the Carrera Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program funded by a five-year grant from the Department of Health and Human Services. It is an evidence-based program that uses a holistic approach to prevent teen pregnancy. The students are from John Hopkins Middle School and program activities occur at the Enoch Davis Center. The program is run by the Pinellas County Health Department.

Mr. McCabe questioned the cost to serve the 42 students, which he estimated at $10,000 per student, and he also questioned the main focus of the program.

Dr. Silver explained that sex education and responsibility is the outcome most focused on by outside evaluators. They have been able to prove that children involved in the Carrera Program are not as sexually active as their peers and they use contraception.

Mr. McCabe asked if abstinence is a focus.

Dr. Silver said abstinence education is part of the life learning and counseling with the intent to raise the self-esteem of the participants.

Mrs. Edmonds asked how many of the 42 students became pregnant.

Dr. Silver responded: None. She continued that there are actually 61 students in the program but she is focusing on the 42 on whom they have longitudinal data.

Dr. Grego questioned if the survey responses are self-reported.

Dr. Silver responded that it was self-reported.

A discussion ensued on the bias of self-reporting by middle school students and the comparison data from state and national sources.

Dr. Silver continued to explain how the Carrera students were making gains in reading, discipline and risk behaviors. She emphasized that no JWB funding is being spent on the program and they are currently researching other teen pregnancy prevention programs to identify the best use of JWB dollars.

Mr. Aungst asked how much JWB staff time is spent on the program.

Dr. Silver explained that this is the fourth year of a five-year grant. She did not have the figures but estimates only a small amount of staff time is charged to the grant. She said the Pinellas County Health Department has taken over most of the grant functions. Dr. Silver continued to outline how they are looking at the scalability of the project and will return to the Board with recommendations on how to continue the program once the funding period is completed.

Mr. Neri asked if there is a program that is more economically feasible that produces the same results.
Mr. Dillinger commented that PACE should have been considered for the program.

Dr. Silver responded that the Carrera model requires the participation by males and females. A needs assessment based on ZIP Code data and birth rates was conducted for the grant application and it was determined to develop the program in south St. Petersburg.

Mrs. Rouson asked for clarification on the structure of the program.

Dr. Silver reported the program is operated five days a week over 12 months. The Health Department transports students from the middle school to the center. The students rotate through various components of the program including personal finance, health, sports, and arts. There are licensed social workers to assist the students. There is a family coordinator who works with the parents to help them learn how to discuss sexual responsibility with their children. The students also receive annual health, vision and dental check-ups.

Dr. Biddleman interjected that fidelity to the model requires that the program run for seven years and JWB needs to make a funding decision. It is estimated that the program will cost $1.2M for years six and seven. JWB is looking at other programs that are more cost efficient and serve more children and that information will be shared with the Board.

Mr. Aungst asked if JWB is obligated by the grant contract to carry out the program for seven years.

Mr. McCabe says he understands that this is a demonstration project with no obligation for year six and seven.

Attorney Flynn said she will review the contract.

Mr. Mikurak asked when the parent training began.

Dr. Silver explained the parent training is taking place now and the parents signed a consent form agreeing to participate.

Mr. Mikurak asked about the status of the children in fifth and sixth grade.

Dr. Sewell asked if over half the participants have dropped out of the program.

Dr. Silver said they originally over-recruited for the program because they were told by John Hopkins Middle School staff to expect a lot of turn over due to mobility. When parents move students to different schools, transportation to the Enoch Davis Center can be a barrier to service.

Dr. Silver asked Ms. Susan Jenkins who managed the program to explain why students drop out.

Ms. Jenkins said housing movement caused by economic issues is a main reason students leave the program and the area.

Dr. Sewell asked for a data analysis of the program, including a comparison of the Carrera students with another group at John Hopkins.

Ms. Jenkins emphasized that the Carrera Program is breaking the cycle of poverty and providing health and juvenile justice cost savings.
Mrs. Edmonds asked if new students can be recruited to join the group.

Ms. Jenkins said no. She reminded the Board that the Carrera students are growing in multiple areas. The program promotes abstinence and HIV/STI prevention.

Mr. Neri commented that JWB can’t afford to fund this program, but the children cannot just be dropped.

Dr. Silver said she is researching options and will provide more information to the Board.

Mr. Neri asked Dr. Silver for her input on how she would create a similar program that is broader and less expensive.

Dr. Silver said she would look to the experts who have studied this for a long time.

Dr. Biddleman said staff is researching options and talking with experts.

Ms. Ronalda Hobson, Carrera Consultant and Fidelity Manager onsite in Florida gave an overview of the evidence-based program model. She explained that the program is 30 years old. She added: “Only children can prevent teen pregnancy.” The Carrera model teaches the students to delay pregnancy until their third decade.

B. Fairmount Park Annual Update

Dr. Biddleman said this is an annual report on Fairmount Park and she introduced Dr. Barbara Morrison-Rodriguez, a JWB consultant and Dr. Valerie Brimm, Director of Strategic Partnerships from Pinellas County Schools to present the report on the Fairmount Park Elementary School project.

Dr. Grego began the update by thanking the Board for their support of this project. He talked about the strong leadership at the school, the cost-effective, coordinated efforts, and the improvements.

Dr. Morrison-Rodriguez provided an overview of the success of the 133 students in the pre-K to grade 4 programs.

Mr. McCabe asked who picks the students.

Dr. Brimm explained that the students are zoned for Fairmount Park and the first priority is for the siblings of the children who are already enrolled in the program. The initial class was selected by the principal. Dr. Brimm said: “A huge piece of the success is the family engagement component. Families are required to attend a monthly meeting where financial literacy and home learning environments are discussed. The parents are taught how to interact with the teacher and the parents and the children know the expectations. The parents have taken on the leadership to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Student Advisory Council (SAC).” She said each social worker made over 350 visits to the students’ homes. Financial stability for these families is a “roller coaster” so through the JWB Family Services Pool the families are able to receive assistance.

Dr. Biddleman explained how this program is modeled on some aspects of the Harlem Children’s Zone.
Dr. Brimm said they applied for federal Race to the Top funding to expand the program throughout the entire elementary school.

Mrs. Edmonds asked to consider how this program can be brought to a predominantly Hispanic school.

Dr. Brimm said they are considering starting a similar program at Eisenhower Elementary School.

Dr. Morrison-Rodriguez said there is an 86% retention rate for the Fairmount Program.

Judge Gross asked how this program compares to a fundamental school.

Dr. Brimm explained that fundamental schools use a lottery to select students. She said the Fairmount Program is “transforming the mindset to a fundamental mindset”.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Homeless Leadership Board Memorandum of Understanding (HLB)

Dr. Biddleman explained the Homeless Leadership Board Memorandum of Understanding was included in the Board packet and has been reviewed by Attorney Flynn. A timeline was added that includes the release of information to 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares, Inc., and JWB. JWB has been successful in asking the University of South Florida (USF) Survey Department to become involved in the Point-In-Time Survey this year, with the plan to ask USF to take over the survey. Only 25 survey volunteers are committed; ideally 400-500 are needed. JWB’s role is outlined on the timeline.

Mr. McCabe asked if the HLB clearly understands JWB will not be participating in the survey next year.

Dr. Biddleman responded yes they have been told that our last year is this year but JWB has still committed $20,000. There will be discussions in the FY 2014/2015 budget preparations about any financial obligations.

Mr. McCabe asked who else is funding the project.

Dr. Biddleman says the county and cities are providing funding. She reiterated that there will be discussion during next year’s budget preparation.

Make a Difference Day

Dr. Biddleman complimented April Putzulu and Joseph Gallina for their involvement in Make a Difference Day.

April Putzulu detailed the success of the Make a Difference Day Event on Saturday, October 26, 2013. This event involved over 200 JWB staff and community volunteers who completed beautification projects at the neighborhood family centers and surrounding areas. Staff also participated in the Largo Spooktacular by giving out candy and information to 4,000 children and families.
KaBOOM!

The Union Academy Neighborhood Family Center is beginning to build its KaBOOM! Playground and Saturday, November 16, 2013 is the final work day. The event is sponsored by the Tampa Bay Rays.

Farm Share

In collaboration with Senator Jack Latvala, JWB will participate in Farm Share events which distributes free produce to families, on Friday, November 22, 2013 at the Union Academy Neighborhood Family Center and the High Point Neighborhood Family Center.

Mr. Neri complimented Ms. Putzulu and Joseph Gallina on their work in the Communications Department.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

Mrs. Edmonds asked if anyone wanted to discuss any information items. None were pulled.

VIII. OPEN AGENDA

Attorney Flynn said she had a public comment card from Linda Osmundson, Executive Director of CASA. Ms. Osmundson spoke about the new domestic violence shelter with community office space that CASA is building in the Lealman. She thanked Mr. Neri for his help with acquiring code variances. CASA has a $2M grant to build the shelter by July 2015. They are in the process of raising another $12M and she thanked JWB for their support.

Mr. Neri said Neil Brickfield, CEO of the Police Athletic League (PAL) is offering to provide transportation to a PAL recreational site for children staying in the shelter.

Mrs. Edmonds reminded the Board about the Joint Community Council Meeting at 5:30 PM at JWB.

Judge Gross asked for clarification on the meeting setup.

Ms. Putzulu explained there will be a networking session at 5:30 PM. The program will begin at 6:00 PM and conclude by 7:30 PM.

A copy of the Joint Community Council Meeting Agenda was provided to the Board.

IX. ADJOURN

Judge Gross moved for adjournment at 11:06 AM; seconded by Mr. Neri. No further discussion; motion carried.

Minutes Submitted by:

Brian Aungst
Board Secretary
12/12/13