



# Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County

14155 58<sup>th</sup> Street North, Clearwater, FL 33760  
727-453-5600 • FAX 727-453-5610 • [www.jwbpinellas.org](http://www.jwbpinellas.org)  
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Item III.C.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 24, 2013

1:30 PM

Juvenile Welfare Board

Conference Room 185

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Honorable Bernie McCabe, Chair; Michael Mikurak; Raymond Neri

**ABSENT:** Honorable Bob Dillinger; Maria Edmonds

**GUEST(S):** Dr. Jim Sewell; Dr. Birttany Birken, Executive Director, Florida Children's Council, Sean Boyle, Executive Director, St. Lucie County Children's Services Council and Chair of the Florida Children's Council.

**JWB STAFF PRESENT:** Dr. Marcie Biddleman; Lynn De La Torre; Dr. Mary Grace Duffy; Joseph Gallina; Debra Prewitt; April Putzulu; Joyce Sparrow; Matthew Spence; Sue Walterick; Judith Warren; Karen Woods

**MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY MR. MCCABE AT 1: 25 PM.**

Mr. McCabe opened the meeting by requesting a moment of silence in memory of U.S. Representative C. W. Bill Young.

He then asked for approval of the Minutes.

### **I. Approval of August 12, 2013 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**ACTION:** Mr. Neri moved approval to accept Minutes as written; seconded by Mr. Mikurak; no further discussion; motion carried.

### **II. Discussion**

#### **A. Florida Children's Council Membership**

Mr. McCabe asked Dr. Biddleman to lead the discussion. Dr. Biddleman explained that Mr. Sean Boyle and Dr. Birttany Birken were at JWB three months ago to discuss membership in the Florida Children's Council with Elise Minkoff, Past JWB Chair, because JWB is not a Coalition member at this time.

Mr. Boyle and Dr. Birken were asked to present their information to the committee. Mr. Boyle is the Executive Director of the Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County and the Chair of the Florida Children's Coalition. The association re-evaluated themselves and set up an equitable formula for dues for the member organizations. They surveyed the CSCs to find out what they wanted from this association. The components of the organization are: policy, legislation, and the trade association. Mr. Boyle explained the policy information is good, but the St. Lucie CSC is more interested in the trade association component because they are the first CSC up for referendum in 2014. Also, as part of the evaluation, the Florida Children's Council wants outcomes and results for anything the council funds. There is a two year plan with outputs that they are expecting. Mr. Boyle asked Dr. Birken to explain the plan.

Mr. McCabe explained why JWB has chosen not to participate in the Council. He said: "In my view it has to do with the makeup. The Council is composed of the Executive Directors from the seven Children's Services Councils. At the time the referendum was being discussed, policy decisions were being made by those Executive Directors. In my opinion, Executive Directors execute policy, they don't make it. JWB thought it found a way to exempt itself from the referendum requirement, but the Council made a policy contrary to what the JWB Board wanted to do, and without consultation with the JWB Board. The FCC's stated the reason for not following up on JWB's request not to be included in the referendum was that the lobbyist threatened to quit if that happened. So keeping the lobbyist happy was more important than keeping JWB off the referendum. I firmly believe the statutory scheme that set up JWB, and the statutory scheme that set up the Children's Services Council meant that the JWB Board and Boards of those Councils make policy and hire people to carry out the policies. That is not what was happening. The makeup of the state-wide group suggests that if policies are made, they'll be made by Executive Directors, not by the Children's Services Council or JWB."

Discussion continued among Dr. Birken, Mr. Boyle and Committee members.

Dr. Birken then reviewed the FCC packet with the Committee. She explained the FCC has two employees, herself who as CEO oversees the policy development and another person who focuses on the trade association. She said: "We work to connect the dots at the state level since decisions at the state level impact local decisions. We work with 35 formal boards and organizations covering a broad range of children's issues." She cited the Governor's new task force on children with special needs. The FCC serve on the task force to help them make informed decisions. A lot of work is done on state and local advocacy which is a year-round priority. On the policy side is legislative priorities, and on the trade association side the major point is shared resources and information. Moving toward the referendum a lot of group thinking is being done to support that work.

Dr. Birken reviewed the FCC's 24 month plan with expressed deliverables and outcomes. She emphasized the deliverables and a quarterly action report on the plan. She said: "We want to make sure that the boards feel connected to the association work." She mentioned the Council Quarter has been created which is a monthly report and another needs assessment will be completed in the spring.

Dr. Birken continued by explaining the dues structure is .013% of ad valorem rates. JWB's dues would be reduced from \$75,000 to \$56,000.

Mr. McCabe asked for a clearer explanation of the dues structure and further discussion continued among Dr. Birken, Mr. Boyle and Committee members regarding value of membership and the FCC lobbying firm Ballard Partners.

Given no further questions, Mr. McCabe thanked Dr. Birken and Mr. Boyle for their time and the thorough report. He said they aren't prepared to make a decision and asked Dr. Biddleman to place the item on the November Board meeting agenda.

Mr. Mikurak requested more detailed FCC information for the November meeting. He wants to see what impacts FCC has had for others and what impacts the FCC will have for JWB, rather than us just going out on our own. He understands Pinellas is a little different than the other CSCs. We feel more powerful in some places and less powerful in others. He said: "Show us why this membership is important to us."

Dr. Biddleman asked Dr. Birken to give the JWB Board information for the November meeting. She said she will meet the timeline for that meeting.

## **B. Finance Department Structure Evaluation**

Dr. Biddleman explained she wants to hire a consultant to evaluate the Finance Department, given the upcoming retirement of Mrs. Walterick and the recent departure of the CFO. Dr. Biddleman wants to take a look at the finance ASO that is thought to be operating as a full ASO for the Neighborhood Family Centers (NFC).

She said: "We recently found out we don't have an HR Department for the NFCs. We pulled together a consulting group that will handle limited HR for a period of time. We have to decide what to do with that high-risk part of the ASO." Dr. Biddleman said she will meet with the NFCs Executive Directors on the first Wednesday in November to talk about what we are going to do.

Dr. Biddleman prefers a good, strong Finance Department with a separate ASO. She said: "The fact that we are split into what looks like an ASO and a Finance Department doesn't utilize the resources well and doesn't give us any depth, especially for accounting. I want to add depth and decide how the billing will be done and take a look at the whole process."

Discussion continued and Mr. Mikurak asked if someone has been selected. Dr. Biddleman responded that she would like to bring in Stephanie Judd who has a background with JWB and a nonprofit background and knows this forum. Mr. Mikurak asked to see if they the auditors had staff who could do the process.

The discussion continued. Mr. Mikurak suggested a review of the JWB financial area first with a discussion of the centers as a separate issue.

Dr. Biddleman said she will keep the Board informed.

## **C. Budget Planning Update**

### **Prior Commitment Updates**

Mrs. Walterick explained that there is now an internal, monthly financial meeting to review the budget. She announced plans to meet with every Board member to make sure they are comfortable with the balance sheet. Dr. Biddleman said some individual members have asked for meetings to review the financial documents included in the monthly Board packets.

Mrs. Walterick said they are looking at the prior commitments in the FY 2013/2014 budget. They did a review of commitments: the Lew Williams Center, St. Pete College, Midtown Child Care Center, and Bayside Health Clinic. She asked Mr. Matthew Spence to give an update on the Lew Williams Center. Mr. Spence said there are funds set aside without specific understanding of how they were going to be spent. The project is set to open in January and the school system is working with Head Start, JWB and the Early Learning Coalition to develop a budget. Then, we should know exactly what JWB is getting for their money.

Mr. McCabe asked what the issue is right now. Mr. Spence said the governance of the Lew Williams Center. Attorney Colleen Flynn has advised JWB that a check can't be written to the school district so they have to find some other governance structure to run the early childhood center. It can't be under the operation of the school system. It could be Lutheran Services or R'Club as Head Start designees and there have been some preliminary discussions with the Pinellas Education Foundation about setting up a restricted fund there.

Mr. Spence added there is not a specific line item, but there is a \$2M program development line in the FY 2013/2014 budget. The understanding of the Finance Committee was that there wasn't a specific line item for Lew Williams, but the money was there. He said we will have to come back before the Board with a request, whether it is an enhancement of a current contract or a new allocation.

Dr. Biddleman explained that the details on the St. Petersburg College Midtown Child Care Center have not been figured out yet.

Concerning the Bayside Health Clinic partnership for a facility near the Bayside Bridge, Dr. Biddleman explained JWB is committed to provide funding for a safe room to serve as a play area for the children while their parents are being treated by the medical staff. She said: "We will be signing a MOU with All Children's Hospital. The IGT transfer money will cover the cost. This is a new partnership that is being formed." Dr. Biddleman has been named to the organization's Board and it is run by the County.

Discussion continued with committee members and staff regarding how the clinic will operate.

## **New Commitments**

### **1. Child Protection Family Service Specialist**

Ms. Judith Warren discussed the new Child Protection Family Service Specialist position to address the need for parents to be connected to services. The position will be located at 2-1-1 and dedicated to families to keep them out of the child protection system. The estimated cost for the position is approximately \$50,000.

Mr. McCabe asked why Eckerd or Child Protective Investigative Services (CPI) aren't authorizing this position.

Ms. Warren said the abuse hotline is taking calls that really should be directed to 2-1-1. She said "If we can get with these families, we can prevent them from touching the child welfare system."

Mr. McCabe said the job description indicates the families are in the system, so why wouldn't the system take care of them. This is something outside what the other two are doing.

Dr. Biddleman said the intent is to provide services to prevent them from going into the system. She said she will revise the description and return to the committee.

## **2. Family Find Program – Family Find**

Ms. Warren moved on to the Family Find Program. She explained it is a support to families without relatives in the area because they have relocated from other parts of the country.

There was further discussion of the program operations. Mr. McCabe asked that Ms. Rickus present more information.

On an additional note, Mr. Neri said he attended the R’Club Lights Out Afterschool event. He spoke with Art O’Hara, Executive Director, about what services are provided.

Mr. McCabe said afterschool programs are supposed to include recreation and education.

Mr. Spence said the average cost per child in an afterschool program is \$4,000. JWB funds before and after school care for 9-14 year olds. There are eight providers that follow a curriculum along with access to a resource library and online information and there are educational overlays which is a wide variety of different programs.

Mr. Mikurak also attended an event and he explained the Lights Out is a celebration day. He spoke with a teacher to learn more details about the academic functions of the program. The teacher explained what the students’ regular schedule is.

## **D. Administrative Cost Rate**

Mrs. Walterick explained that in response to a speaker’s public comments at one of the TRIM hearings about a possible 14% administrative cost rate, she revisited the three options that can be used to calculate the rate. Mrs. Walterick reviewed the details of the memo and she recommended Cherry, Bekaert, & Holland, LLP review the administrative cost rate.

Mr. McCabe discussed various possibilities if the ASO is eliminated. He believes a 10% administrative cost rate is a good round number and doesn’t see a reason to change the method of calculation. It should include the fund balance, but not the ASO. He said he is comfortable with calculation option number two.

Dr. Sewell asked if there was any follow up with the speaker who made the public comments at the TRIM Hearing and Dr. Biddleman said the speaker did not respond to requests for further discussions.

## **E. Staff Salary Adjustments**

Dr. Duffy explained that included in the FY 2013/2014 budget there is a 3% raise for the staff. She presented the methodology for distributing the raises, as outlined in the memo. The raises will be effective October 1, 2013. Per the Personnel Policies, Staff must complete provisional status by October 1, 2013 and not meet the maximum pay in their salary grade. Dr. Biddleman is not eligible because she is a contracted employee.

Mr. McCabe said he disagreed with limits to people who are at the top of their grade.

Dr. Duffy explained that if people are allowed to exceed their pay grades, there is essentially no compensation system. She said three people are at or above their pay grade and four people need to be brought up to the top of the pay grade, but it is not 3%. This will maintain the integrity of the compensation system. She said a new salary study will be completed in June 2014.

Mr. Mikurak asked how far people will be over the maximum.

Dr. Duffy said it ranges from less than a percent to maybe 3% over.

Mr. Mikurak recommends not “dinging” someone because they negotiated their salary well when they came in and you have some leeway. He said: “If these people deserve something, I suggest you do that. Don’t hit them with a negative impact.”

Dr. Sewell said he supports immediately adjusting the bands. Dr. Duffy said JWB doesn’t lower the pay of people who are paid over standard.

Mr. McCabe said JWB has had a lot of lean years. If someone made it through the lean years, and they are close to the top of their salary range, that isn’t their fault.

**ACTION: Mr. Neri moved to increase the salary ranges and give the 3% raise, excluding provisional staff and the Executive Director who is under contract; seconded by Mr. Mikurak; no further discussion; motion carried.**

Mr. McCabe asked if there was any other business.

Ms. Prewitt asked about the schedule for future Finance Committee meetings. The Committee decided on quarterly meetings, unless a special meeting is required. The next meeting will be Thursday, January 23, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. **(Please Note: On October 29, 2013 the time of the January 23, 2014 Finance Committee Meeting was changed to 1:30 PM)**

**Mr. McCabe moved to adjourn at 3:05 p.m.**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Joan Chamo, Executive Assistant**