



**Board of Directors Meeting  
December 17, 2021  
10:00 AM-12:00 PM**

*This meeting was held via teleconference in an abundance of caution due to COVID-19 concerns*

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Board Members present:** Bob Buesing, Chris Card, Allison Davis, Linda Stoller, Shawna Pointville (new member).

**Staff Present:** Phyllis Kalifeh, Denise Bishop, Kerri Cloud

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**Welcome:**

Chair Bob Buesing began the meeting by welcoming Shawn Pointville to the meeting as a new board member and called the meeting to order at 10:05.

**Reading and Approval of Minutes\*** Motion to approve the minutes recorded from September 24, 2021 board meeting (*L. Stollar motioned to approve/A. Davis second*).

**Mission Minute** (*Opportunities for Board members to be emissaries of the Forum's mission*):  
No comments.

**Chair's Report:** Bob Buesing:

Bob thanked the board for their encouraging words regarding the Op-ed he wrote and indicated he had discussed writing the article with Ready Nation. He shared that the new head of the Ready Nation is a lawyer from Miami and that the organization is paying attention to what is happening in Florida. Bob is confident that active engagement will follow. Bob recommended that we pursue a stronger connection with the Chamber Foundation adding that states with active chamber involvement seem to be making the most progress within the early learning landscape. Bob is also working with the Florida Philanthropic Network to get Birth to 5 added to their education workgroup. Bob has rolled Phyllis into the conversation with the Chamber Foundation, and Matt Mears, Chancellor of the Florida Division of Early Learning, is also connecting with the Foundation. There appear to be some strong opportunities for collaboration moving forward. Bob shared a personal story with the board as it relates to his own experience with the child welfare and early care system. He shared that he has been advocating for his "bonus" grandson,

who is the child of his foster daughter and has experienced obstacles and frustration throughout the process. His greatest concern is that, based on his experience, there is nothing in law that requires a child who is at risk to be enrolled in quality child care. He said that Chris Card has been an important resource for him and thanked him for his support. Chris and Phyllis both added that if a child is officially under child protective services, enrollment in quality child care can be mandated by the courts. Phyllis said that there was also a bill introduced to the legislature that would remove the co-pay for families that are in need to keep their children enrolled in quality care.

**Nominating Committee Report:**

Shawna Pointville was invited to join the Forum Board. Shawna is from Miami Gardens and as she began to share her background with the other Board members, she said she has spent most of her professional career working with children in the situation Bob described. She spent 10 years working in law enforcement and has a great deal of experience working with vulnerable populations. She has also run a full-service comprehensive child care program to serve this population of children and their families. She said she is concerned with the issues of low wages for early care educators and the limited support available to the workforce She looks forward to her participation with the Board and will continue to work the change the trajectory of the early learning pathway and to be a vehicle for change. Bob and Chris both thanked Shawna for her frontline perspective and welcomed her again to the Board.

**Finance Committee:** Kerri Cloud, CFO, Larry Pintacuda, and Chris Card had an opportunity to meet and discuss the financial statements prior to the board meeting.

- **Financial Statements\***

Kerri shared that the Forum is four months into the fiscal year and that the auditors are wrapping up their work. Kerri said it was business as usual. Bob walked Shawna through the financial statements (attached). He emphasized the diversity of the programs the Forum administers emphasizing that with that diversity, we will remain productive should one program lose funding. Shawna asked about the Membership program and Phyllis said that Jenna Brown, Communications Director, would send her the information. Chris asked Kerri if she had seen a draft of the audit and she said there were no issues noted up to this point. Motion to accept the financial statements (*Motion/C.Card; Second/L. Stollar*)

- **CEO Travel and Expense report\***

The board reviewed the CEO travel and expense report (attached). Documents were approved (*Motion/L. Stollar; Second/C. Card*).

- **President's Report: Phyllis Kalifeh**

Phyllis talked about Dr. Wil's virtual celebration of life, which was coordinated by the Forum and offered as a support to Rachel Blechman and her family. Phyllis shared that it was a beautiful celebration, and that the Forum team did an excellent job of running it. The recording of the Celebration is available on the Children's Forum YouTube channel.

Phyllis met with Senator Ausley to discuss a local potential pilot project targeting the needs of the ECE workforce. *Early Learning Works* was developed as a concept paper and shared with Senator Ausley and others. Phyllis will keep the board informed of any developments.

Phyllis was invited by key stakeholders in the early learning field to visit Sheltering Arms in Atlanta, GA. The organization operates 13 early care and education programs designed to meet the needs of vulnerable children; Educare oversees the programs. The team that went followed up with a visit to a Purpose-built community in Georgia. This is being used as a template for the development of a full-service community in south Tallahassee.

Phyllis gave an update on the Build Back Better plan that President Biden is pushing forward. There are some exciting and positive programs and initiatives included in the proposal, but it is not clear where it will end up. Some key points include:

- Cap of 7% of family income for child care
- Universal prekindergarten for 3 and 4-year-old children
- Phase in strategy for ECE teachers to have Bachelor's degrees
- Improved compensation for ECE
- Expanded child care tax credit

Phyllis shared a link to the BBB plan that provides a good summary.

A request has been made for HMG to be implemented statewide at a cost of \$2.6M above our current allocation of \$1.8M. She will keep the board posted on any information about that proposal. Currently, there are 11 state-funded affiliates and 3 locally funded affiliates. The HMG State Coordinating Office at the Forum still provides technical and outreach support to the locally funded affiliates.

The INCENTIVE\$ program in Miami is ending on September 30, 2022, but T.E.A.C.H. and the ELCC scholarship and coaching programs will continue to operate in Miami-Dade. It is still unclear how (and with what program) they will replace INCENTIVE\$. We continue to emphasize that INCENTIVE\$ is an evidence-based program with strong supporting data. Palm Beach has a program that is somewhat like INCENTIVE\$, but there is little evidence base to confirm its' short- and long-term impact on reducing turnover, improving sustained compensation, and increasing educational attainment. Bob asked if there was an opportunity for us to conduct a research analysis on what happens with their change in programming. Phyllis said that we would like to do a program evaluation, but we need to know what their conceptual framework (theory of change) is, and we have not seen that yet. The Forum is responsible for a statewide Workforce study that is being launched in January 2022. The final report is due in August and it will provide some important data on salaries, turnover, educational levels, workplace satisfaction, etc.

Bob asked what the plan was for spending the \$2B that has come into Florida for early learning initiatives. Shawna weighed in and said that it is her understanding the funds will be distributed in phases and will be used primarily for infrastructure.

Phyllis reminded everyone of Children's Week at the Capitol from January 31-Feb 4. She invited all Board members to the Advocacy dinner and awards ceremony on January 31, 2022. Bob is once again going to serve as MC for that event.

Phyllis ended her President's report by sharing that, after 15 years with the Forum, this is Kerri's last board meeting. Lauren Wofford is taking on the position of CFO and will be a good fit for the Forum. Given this, Phyllis will need to revise and update her succession plan.

*Please refer to the summary attached for more specific details.*

- **Strategic Plan:** No changes to the strategic plan.

**New Business:** Bob provided an update on the building (1211 Governors Square Blvd). One concern is that there are issues with the AC system and the owner suggested it was our responsibility to repair it. That is not the case, and the owner is responsible. The repair of the windows is underway, and people have been through the building noting where replacement windows are required. Any repairs we end up paying for can be deducted from our rent. Phyllis thanked Bob for his legal help throughout this process with the owner. He has been incredibly valuable.

**Closed Executive Session (N/A)**


**Next meeting:** April 1, 2022 10:00 am-12:00 pm


Respectfully submitted,

Larry Pintacuda  
Secretary

Denise Bishop  
Recording

Minutes Approved on: April 1, 2022 <<to be submitted for approval at the Dec meeting>>  
[Date]

Signature of Secretary:  April 1, 2022  
[Date]

Signature of Chair:  April 1, 2022  
[Date]