



Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Monday, March 27, 2023

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Hybrid: In Person &

Virtual (Teams Information Below)

Attendance:

Board Members Present: Bob Buesing, Chris Card, Larry Pintacuda, Gege Kreischer, Ted Granger, Eddie Gonzalez-Loumiet, Diana Ragbeer Murray, Shawna Pointville, Linda Stoller

Staff Present: Erin Smeltzer, Melissa Clements, Bill Kirchhoff, Lori Stegmeyer, Lauren Wofford, Lili Murphy, Lindsey Smith

Welcome

Chair, Bob Buesing welcomes everyone and introduces Eddie Gonzalez-Loumiet formally.

Reading and Approval of Minutes*

Larry Pintacuda, Board Secretary, read the Minutes from the meeting from January 17, 2023. Bob motioned for the minutes to be approved. Gege seconded. All were in Favor.

Mission Minute

Larry shared his MM by recruiting Eddie and explained how their meeting to recruitment went with Eddie. He explained that he and Erin are still working to find more board members.

Bob shared that the next opportunity for a mission minute will be tonight at the advocacy dinner.

Confirming the board membership for Eddie Gonzalez-Loumiet. Bob motioned to confirm – second by Larry –confirmed by all.

Chair's Report

Building Updates: Shortened version, big picture in 2019 when the lease was signed pre-covid, tight market and different rate structures, the decision was not hard to make. Dealing with the realities of the lease and the landlord being unable to make good on his promises to make building updates. CF staff is struggling to deal with the ramifications of the owner's inability to keep the building up. The owner testified under oath that he was unable to pay for the promised repairs because he needed the money for something else – he also testified that he would bid on the building when it goes up for sale after the foreclosure. CF felt that there was a big breach in the contract and that we should try to get out of our lease. The landlord insisted on a trial in federal bankruptcy court in West Palm Beach, FL. The lender attended the hearing and decided to give up the mortgage so the repairs could be made, Mr. Patel finally agreed to take care of the AC repairs. The judge allowed a cure-effort and a settlement agreement which has been considered an addendum to the lease. Requiring a remeasurement of the space (which determined that we are paying for 2,000 – 3,000 more feet than we have access to), and that everything had to be under contract and funded by 3/31/23. If these conditions were not met, we could file a motion to break our lease. The building will be up for sale by May 7, 2023, with a clear title.

Larry asked about the square footage issue and if we could get reimbursed for the square footage discrepancy for the last 3 years, Erin and Bob explained that it would have to go back to the Forum funders which would create too much confusion.

Ted asked about the security issues and how that is being rectified. Bob explained that all the tenants in the building must agree to a plan. The current security system unlocks the building at a certain time and closes it at a certain time.

Moving to the trial – the owner asked why we were not asking the police to walk us to the car if we were scared. Erin and Bob recount stories of Kim Short’s testimonies.

Erin explained that we are waiting until we see what happens with the settlement agreement before we implement a security plan. Ted suggested a fence or a barrier for the property. Erin and Bob suggested waiting to see where the settlement lands and then see if we need to do a budget amendment.

Confirming Board Membership*

All in favor.

Finance Committee Report

Lauren requested a credit card limit expansion with Synovus bank, it is currently \$60k – when we first applied for the credit card, the Forum budget was smaller. Directors have a \$5k limit, C-Suite who have cards have a limit of \$10K, and Bill has 2 for IT supplies. During heavy travel times, we are running into issues with limits being met. Erin explained that even after the bill has been paid it takes a while to clear from our account so those funds can take a long time to clear.

Our credit cards are from the bank that we use for everything else, but they will not raise our limit even by seeing how much money we have on hand. Bob asked if we are carrying a limit and Lauren confirmed that we pay off our balance each month. Ted asked if there is a per individual limit or if it was calculated as a total credit limit for the organization. Lauren confirmed that it is both. Lauren shared that individual card limits will not be changed, just the overall limit.

Larry moved to increase the limit, Gege seconded the motion. All in favor.

Financial Statements*

Income statement – As of January 31, 2023, our total revenue is \$9.6 million, our expenses are approximately \$9.5 million, which brings our balance to about \$83,000. Lauren explained how the Children’s Week team brought in \$150k for Children’s Week this year. Class assessments will also be lucrative.

FAN (Florida Afterschool Network) – The FAN budget has grown from \$362k to almost \$500k.

Orange and Arkansas revenues will be recorded beginning in March.

Erin explained that some of the new TEACH contracts were not in the original budget. Lauren and Erin will investigate it and may request a budget amendment but will make changes to next fiscal year's reporting. Erin said she expects a \$3 million increase for T.E.A.C.H. in the next 3 years.

Larry praised Lili and all that she is doing for FAN– Erin and Lauren would like FA to keep as much programmatic funding as possible and to that end, the Forum may adjust the current agreement.

Balance Sheet – accounts receivable is around \$3.3 million. Over \$1 million was spent last month on scholarships. Bob confirmed that our FY (Fiscal Year) ends June 30. Lauren would like to have \$7.5 million for fund balance.

Statement of Cash Flows – There is nothing significant to disclose.

Lauren and Erin made everyone aware that they may call a special board meeting about changing banks. Bob asked about FDIC requirements for banking. Ratios are all within the appropriate thresholds.

Board members said they were all happy about how financially sound the Children's Forum is.

Motion to accept financial report, Gege motioned; Ted seconded—all in favor.

CEO Travel & Expense Approval*

Erin explained her travel – DC trip recap.

Motion to approve – Bob moved to approve, Gege seconded. All in favor.

Presidents Report

Strategic Plan

Erin asked if she could change the title of this section to “The Forum Update.” This was approved.

The Bainum grant is wrapping up with the first class of fellows who graduate on Wednesday. We have heard that Bainum plans to fund another cycle. AELC (Association of Early Learning Coalitions), Florida Early Childhood Advocacy Fellowship, will be a partnership between the two of us. The Forum will be coaching on the legislative side. Their CEO's will be the first class for AELC Bainum.

There will be a follow-up call with the new fellows in April. There are three paths: broad, general, and ELC. Evelyn Thomas and Bridget Mooney will manage this project. When Children's Week ends, AELC will meet in May in TLH, and June in Miami. Ted complimented the partnership between the Forum and the ELCs. He likes that the AELC ED (Molly Grant) has agreed to collaborate on this fellowship. They have a great understanding of how everything works, and he hopes that it leads to a more cohesive role in advocacy.

Erin discussed the AELC conference and the successes of the presentations by the Forum. There will be another one in October that a few of our people will participate in again.

Strategic Planning Activity:

Two requests – 1. Increase funding to Help Me Grow and 2. T.E.A.C.H. non-recurring to become recurring.

On the House side, T.E.A.C.H. was moved to recurring, and HMG (Help Me Grow) has not had an increase yet. The Senate increased HMG but did not change T.E.A.C.H.. Erin is hopeful that it will work out because it is in the Governor's budget. Erin is confident that the \$2.6 million will come in.

Relationship highlights – AEYC in Arkansas – Iowa and Texas heard about this and now they are interested. We are looking into details for an attorney that can advise on how to handle intellectual property. Chris asked that we get T.E.A.C.H. national permission to work with other states and we were granted permission in writing.

Bob asked for details about the IT project. Bill explained that we created an online application process for T.E.A.C.H. T.E.A.C.H. National has recommended to other programs that they talk to us. Arkansas signed a contract and Iowa and Texas are interested. The National T.E.A.C.H. conference is next month, and the goal is to spur interest and acquire more contracts.

Bob asked if it would make sense to license what we have and to let them use it, and we get a fee for each app used. Bill explained that it is customized to each state, and that we are the content experts for it. Bill explained that we are using the Arkansas contract to pay two employees.

The TEACH national office did CQI and the conversation went wonderfully. They were excited about the workforce unit. The brainstorming went well, and they sent a follow-up email about how wonderful the conversation was and how excited they are for what is coming up. There is a follow-up meeting scheduled to discuss the goals that were set.

INCENTIVE\$ - Lori explained that Broward has so many new applicants that we suggested they needed to start a waitlist, Broward did not want to implement a waitlist, so Lori requested a \$402K increase and their board agreed. This was enough additional funding to accommodate the applications and avoid a waitlist.

Over 400 new applications came in from Orange County. Lori reported that the teams were very busy, yet they were able to expand all of the stipend funding for INCENTIVE\$ in Osceola.

Erin explained that we are considering expanding our phone hours so teachers can call when they have more free time. Considering an early/late shift or a four-day work week at ten hours per day so the staffing can be adjusted to help teachers speak with someone when they call and get the information they need. Bill is pulling data to determine if adjustments need to be made.

Bob asked why we only have INCENTIVE\$ in 6 out of 30 ELC's. Erin explained that we are looking at different options to address the barriers to implementation in those ELCs that have not elected to partner on INCENTIVE\$.

CLASS: We have been doing a lot of infrastructure building. Melissa's team has grown and is operating on their own budget and has brought in new members. Melissa added that we have hired a research director, Tia Walton-Walker, Ph.D., who is also helping with fund development initiatives.

Bob asked for clarification on the budget, Lauren said we are not sure about Miami-Dade INCENTIVE\$ yet.

Upcoming events: 480 people registered to attend this year's Child Advocacy dinner, with a substantial waitlist. We will shift the event to a larger location next year. Over 100 volunteers at Hanging of the Hands and 8 legislators were standing with us for the dedication. We have many legislators who want to read to children during Children's Day. Some additional events coming up are the launch of AELC fellowship, the HMG annual meeting in April, and the T.E.A.C.H. national convention in NC in late April.

Ted shared his excitement for the staff and their dedication and asked about the merger for FAN. Lili gave an update about the merger and shared that the official announcement will be at the summer symposium next month.

Erin requested a separate meeting for strategic planning to discuss metrics for measuring progress.

Next Meeting: July 18, 2023 – Hybrid: Remote via Teams or in person in Tampa, Florida at the One Goal Meeting

Closed Executive Session: (N/A)

Adjournment

**Items marked with an asterisk require board action*

Respectfully submitted,
Larry Pintacuda
Secretary

Lindsey Smith
Recording

Minutes Approved on: _____ << to be submitted for approval at the next meeting>>

[Date]

Signature of Secretary: _____

[Date]

Signature of Chair: _____

[Date]

Microsoft Teams Meeting Information:
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting?rtc=1>
Meeting ID: 270 494 197 89