



Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting
September 4, 2018; 8:00 a.m.
David Lawrence Jr. Community Meeting Room

Board Attendees: Adrian Alfonso; Theresa Axford; Rick Beasley (via conference call); Maurice Kemp; Matthew Bruno; Heather Carruthers; Loreen Chant; Bob Eadie; Alan Eckstein; Jenni Roig; Gilda Ferradaz; Philip Gassman (via conference call); Gladys Montes; Abilio Rodriguez; Judy Schaechter (via conference call); Aaron Slavens; Marisol Diaz

Board Absentees: James Haj; Gerald Schwartz; Alex Soto (excused); Iris Strachan; David Lawrence

Staff Attendees: Evelio Torres; Angelo Parrino; Milton Silvera; Pamela Hollingsworth; Fiorella Altare; Michelle Meilan; Mercy Castiglione; Jackye Russell; Ana Sejeck; Laurie Dunn; Jose Hernandez; Anabel Espinosa; Sandra Gonzalez; Ileana Vallejo; Fred Hicks; Lidia Clarke; Vanessa Aguilera; Lisney Badillo; Tammy Garcia; Alex Sanchez; Juan Castillo

General Attendees: Bob de la Fuente (Board Counsel); Carol Wick

I. Welcome and Introductions

Adrian Alfonso

- A. Alfonso called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
- L. Sanabria called roll and a quorum was established with sixteen (16) voting members.
- A. Alfonso stated that the Board meeting has light agenda so we can begin the Strategic Planning Retreat as quickly as possible.
- A. Alfonso stated that as discussed in the last board meeting a letter was sent to Rodney MacKinnon, Executive Director of OEL on September 18.
- A. Alfonso stated that on September 25th David Lawrence had his book launch for A Dedicated Life. The event was held at Temple Judea and moderated by Channel 10's Michael Putney. A. Alfonso thanked all the board members who attended the event.
- A. Alfonso stated that on behalf of the board he would like to thank Loreen Chant, who chaired the Strategic Planning Committee, Shaleen Fagundo, Bob Eadie and Gilda Ferradaz.

II. Approval of Minutes

Adrian Alfonso

- A. Alfonso called for the approval of the meeting minutes from March, 2018.



- A. Eckstein moved to approve the minutes.
- H. Carruther seconded the motion.
- Motion was passed unanimously.

III. Provider Services Committee Report

Rick Beasley

- J. Roig stated that the Provider Services Committee met on September 27th and reviewed the following cases:
 - The Rising Star Academy - The Provider is currently on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), and has received a class 2 Violation in the same standards for ratio. After reviewing all documents and hearing the providers' testimony the committee decided to extend the Corrective Action Plan. During this CAP the provider cannot receive any class 1 or 2 violation or they will be terminated without a chance to appeal.
 - Babyville Preschool Learning Center - Provider received 3 class 1 violations in different standards, Discipline method Used was Cruel, Harsh, or Unusual, Toxins/Chemicals/Cleaning Supplies-Child Interacted and Licensed Capacity Exceeded. After reviewing all documents and hearing the providers' testimony the committee decided to place the provider on a Corrective Action Plan. This CAP requires that there must be teacher training for prevention of abuse and neglect and for educating children with disabilities.

IV. Finance Committee Report

Bob Eadie

- A. Alfonso stated that on September 26th the Finance Committee met and were still unable to review the financials or slot utilization reports due to the ongoing problems with the EFS Modernization.
- F. Hicks gave a brief update on the progress of the EFS Modernization.
- The EHS Credit Card Report, which has been added to your packet for review.

I. Monroe County Advisory Committee Report

Alan Eckstein

- A. Eckstein stated that the Monroe County Advisory Committee met on September 20th and the following items were discussed:
 - Outreach Activities
 - All centers affected by the hurricane are up and running; the last one being Barbara Demming's Home Child Care. She has had her inspection at the new facility and the contract completed this week. She is ready to go and is just waiting on the playground materials.
 - Supports and Trainings
 - Recently three Monroe staff attended the FLAAYC conference in Orlando.
 - Participated in the Goodwill Ambassador Program in June. Michele Morgan was our representative visiting providers in the Florida Keys.
 - Attended the 22nd Annual Kids Show at HOB and handed out VPK flyers, gave out information on our services, handed out books and book bags. Brought kinetic sand for the children to play with.
 - The ELC Conference will be held on Friday, September 21, follow resiliency Summit on Saturday the 22nd. Conference theme is "Building A Strong Foundation". At this time, we are about 80% filled.
 - We will once again participate in Wesley House Holiday Helpers Program. The program helps school readiness families during the holidays. They set up stores at different locations around the keys. Families can use the vouchers to buy toys at these locations. We have put together a flyer



with information on our upcoming toy drive taking place on October 5th. All new unwrapped toys and cash donations will go those designated stores.

- Next outreach activity will be Children’s Day at Bay View Park in Key West on October 28. We will once again have the water table and insta-snow for the kids to play.
- We had the Florida Core Competency and Creative Curriculum Training in July.
- Competency testing is offered every two months in order for providers to complete their training in a timely manner
- PDI staff is currently cooperating with the Monroe staff to develop a monthly training plan to meet the needs of all our providers in the county. Training will be provided in English and Spanish.
- Monroe staff is also taking part in class observer training. Christine just attended the infant training and Michele the toddler training, which Amber and Christine will be attending as well.
- Teen Parent
 - We currently have two teen parent in Key West and 2 in Key Largo.
- Grants/Conferences/Meetings
 - Working on developing a quarterly director’s meetings where we can all get together and see who needs what. This group is also trying to form a substitute pool due the many providers running short on staff.
- New Monroe Staff
 - Wilhelmina Martin just came on board and will be working at the Marathon office 2 days a week. We are fully staffed at this point.
 - Child Care Provider Update – Sue Ellen Bennett, Provider Representative
 - Providers are reporting mostly that things are going good. It has been a busy and fast passed year. Enrollments are increasing and things are getting back to normal. There has been some frustration with the new portal and getting things up and running. Providers still have to go into both new and old portal to get things done. They do see things are getting better and appreciate all the hard work to get the new portal running and have confidence that it will be completed soon.
 - Several providers have signed up to the PFP funding.
 - Providers were sad to see the Quality Improvement Program go because everyone was happy with this program.
 - Several concerns voiced by providers is that teachers are already taking classes through Teach, which, has wonderful training but limits their time, now have extra requirements from the new professional development program. It is something that they have all wanted for a long time and they are glad to see happening but it is a struggle to put it all into place. The MMCI classes are five, 4 hour face-to-face classes, they do not see how that happening at this point. Providers prefer to do as much online classes as possible, which, work well with their time frames, and classes they are already taking. It is a challenge trying to meet all benchmarks and requirements of the new funding program.
 - Directors are happy that Laurie is working on putting together the quarterly directors meeting and thank her for working on this. This has been something that many directors have wanted to put together.
 - There is a new center opening up in Islamorada called Islamorada Childcare. They are working on getting all inspections completed but have come across a few hurtles due to the building needing to be retrofitted and made suitable for a childcare site. Everyone is hopping to have this completed as soon as possible since this will be the only center in this area.
 - Sue Ellen’s teachers attended the FLAEYC Conference as well. They were only able to attend by raising money since there are no allocated funds for these type of trainings due to budget constraints. Any time providers are able to send their teacher to these types of conferences, it does not only allow them educational growth, it also allows them to meet others in their profession from different places. It allows them to come together and build solidarity.
 - Provider Debriefing- Share Status, Needs & Challenges of Providers
 - No needs or challenges given other than what the Provider Representative reported.



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- District Head Start/VPK Update – Marla Russell, Early Childhood Coordinator/Supervisor
- Head Start enrollment numbers are the same as in January 2018.
- The average child enrolled in Head Start is 3 years' old
- VPK enrollment is at 59% capacity.
- ESE VPK is at 70%
- They also participated in the 22nd Annual Kids Show
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- DCF Licensing Update – Mitzi Cater, Family Services Counselor
- Mitzi said she has been offering technical assistance with the new DCF rules.
- There must be 6" of mulch and/or sand around all swings and slides in the playground area to prevent or minimize trauma when a child falls.
- All childcare provider's staff needs to be CPR/First Aide Certified by 2019
- A Food Permission Form now needs to be filled out by parents for special occasions like Birthdays and other events that involve food. They will elect if their child takes part or not and list any food allergies.
- There is a Rilya Wilson Act form that parents need to fill out if they have children that are being affected by this law.
- There is a new training coming out on distracted adults that leave children in hot cars. Have parents sign a form and have training twice a year.
- Working on some school readiness inspections but not able to complete them all until she is given permission from Tallahassee. Completed about 7 or 8, which include both centers and childcare homes.
- Evelio Torres cited that he has spoken with Samantha Wass at DCF, who stated that, they are waiting for all information to be uploaded in order to give Mitzi the authority to go out and inspect them.
- Miami Dade College Childcare testing in Marathon. At this time only half of those who register are showing up to take the test. The majority of those who do not are not calling to cancel the testing. Due to this ongoing issue, MDC wants to cut back on the days they are offering the test for the Keys. Providers need to speak with their teachers and reiterate the importance of keeping their scheduled dates and/or making sure that they call to cancel the appointment. This allows the college the option to schedule another person in their place. If MDC pulls the testing from Marathon, teacher will have to travel 1 to 3 hours to Miami and take the test there. It took great effort to bring the testing down to Monroe.
- Mark Porter – Superintendent / Monroe County Schools
 - Wanted to share some of the things they are observing and seeing this early in the school year. We are certainly far from done from the impacts of the storm. In terms of the employees, the county saw more employees leave the area on July 1 than traditionally. School enrollment is down anywhere from 132 to 135 students across the county. Most of that drop was in the Island of Key West at its entirety. The other keys are mostly at the numbers projected. The schools around the area impacted by the hurricane have not had great enrollment impact.
 - VPK enrollment was also mostly impacted at the Key West schools with, Poinciana, Gerald Adams and HOB Elementary being down 50 students. In the case of Gerald Adams Elementary, it is believed the impact is from the mobile home parks that were closed which led to loss of housing in Stock Island.
 - Mr. Porter would like to see if the Early Learning Program had same loss of enrollment impact in that area as well.
 - Mr. Porter reiterated that the Island of Key West was where they saw the most significant loss of enrollment impact.
 - The county will try to run reports that will help them see if student moved out of the county or moved within the county.
 - Enrollment shifts within the county were seen after the hurricane and some of the enrollment impacts might be attributed to that.



- This information is more anecdotal and the county has not dug deep to gather more data.
- Evelio Torres – President and CEO, Early Learning Coalition
 - Housing continues to be a major issue in the area
 - The county should be seeing some governmental funding to help this area.
 - There will be a program opening in the Marathon area for all Florida Keys area homeowners to apply for grants to renovate their hurricane-damaged homes. About 460 homeowners have filled out applications for these grants and are ready to move ahead.
 - There is also the tiny homes experiment going on which will bring housing to the keys.
- Stephanie L. Gehres - Deputy Director of Operations, Florida Office of Early Learning
 - Wanted to thank the providers for their patience with the portal. They should have the portal fully working soon.
- Sue Ellen Bennett - Director, St. James Children’s Center
 - Hiring new staff is also an issue for the providers whose hiring pool is very limited and sometimes have to select from applicants with no credentials. It makes it hard to replace the staff and leaves those positions open for a prolonged time.
 - At a recent county meeting Sue Ellen attended, it was mentioned to be the same with other positions for the county of Monroe. Due to the lack of workforce, the County jail in Marathon has to send those arrested to either Key West or Islamorada.
 - We also seem to have a shortage of police and sheriffs around the county.
- Heather Carruthers - ELC Monroe Board Member, Commissioner Monroe County District Three
 - The county has approved a budget increase in wages of 9% to police and sheriff staff.
- Beth A. Barrett - Wesley House Chief Operations Officer
 - They had the encountered the same within their organization. Employees tried to make the best of it and fought hard to stay but they saw loss in workforce in May and June due to cost of living and housing.
- Mark Porter – Superintendent / Monroe County Schools
 - The county has had to hire paraprofessionals with no degree or certification and invest in getting them certified and advancing their education. They have the same obstacles where there is no available training to help grow the employees they have.
 - It has been difficult to hire out of the area and relocate them to the county.
 - They have to find ways to retrain and retain their employees.
 - At this time, they have been able to fill their positions but not all are quality teachers. Principals have had to work hard to fill the positions. It was a struggle to fill the high demand areas like math, science and ESE classes.
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II. Public Comments

Adrian Alfonso

III. Adjourn

Adrian Alfonso