

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
April 25, 2013 BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES

**Board Members in Attendance:** Mr. Stockton Whitten, Board Chair, Judge Kelly McKibben, Board Vice Chair, Mr. Samuel Gutierrez, Board Treasurer, Mr. William Ryder, Ms. Brooke Deratany-Goldfarb, Mr. Eric Smith, Mr. Mel Broom and, Ms. Christa Bailey.

**Board Members Absent:** Officer Michael Cadore and Ms. Kathleen Rich New.

**Others in Attendance:** Dr. Patricia Nellius, Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Valerie M. Randall, Chief Personnel & Administrative Officer, Ms. Debbie Davidson-Cook, Chief Compliance & Utilization Officer, Ms. Gloria Hensler, Finance Director, Mr. Jim Carlson, COO, Mr. Geo Ropert, Director of Communications, Ms. Kelly Swartz, Staff Attorney and Ms. Laurie-Anna Blackburn, Executive Assistant. Also in attendance were, Ms. Valerie Holmes, Executive Director, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., Ms. LaChrista Jones, Child & Family Program Manager, BFP, Ms. Rita Elkins, Director of Development, BFP, Mr. & Mrs. Mark Pearah, Carol DeLoach, Devereux, Mr. Bill Bucher, Devereux, Ms. Diane Arnold, Devereux, Ms. Laura Higginbotham, Devereux, Ms. Janet Thompson, DCF and Ms. Michelle Scott, CHS.

Mr. Whitten called the meeting to order and welcomed the members and guests to the April meeting. He then asked both guests and members to state their names for the record.

**Motion:** Judge McKibben moved to approve the agenda. This was seconded by Mr. Gutierrez and the motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Whitten then reminded members that if they had a conflict with any agenda item or had any business relationship with other board members to please complete the Conflict of Interest form (available at meeting) and provide to Ms. Randall.

**Motion:** Judge McKibben moved to approve the March 28, 2013 board meeting minutes. This was seconded by Mr. Gutierrez and the motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Whitten then requested Mr. Carlson to introduce the guests. Mr. Carlson indicated that our guests included a foster parent family and BFP's Child Placing Agency, Devereux. He indicated that Devereux had contracted with BFP during transition in 2005 and in addition to serving as one of the case management agencies that Devereux had also been one of the original CPA's for the agency and that over time due to funding cuts it now serves as the sole CPA for Brevard Family Partnership. He indicated they manage 115 foster homes in Brevard and due to state mandates were issued a challenge to increase that number by 24 by July 1, 2013. He shared that 22 new homes have been licensed and that four (4) more are in process. He commented that Devereux is the only CPA in the state expected to meet/exceed the state target. He then asked Ms. LaChrista Jones to introduce our foster parent guests.

Ms. Jones introduced Mark and Damaris Pearah who had become foster parents in October 2012. She shared they had attended the celebration in Tallahassee and attended the advocacy day for foster and adoptive parents. She then asked the Pearah's to address the board. Mr. Pearah spoke and shared that he and his wife belong to a homeless ministry and serve on the board. He shared that two specific incidents took place regarding young children in dangerous situations that caused he and his wife to realize that there were children in need and that they specifically wanted to become foster parents in order to provide a safe, nurturing environment for children in need. He commended Devereux for their support and assistance in helping them to achieve this goal. Mrs. Pearah then shared that it had been an honor and privilege to attend Children's Week and that she is so thankful for the opportunity to provide an environment for these children. She commented that she is working within the ministry and elsewhere to solicit others who can make room for one child so they too can be safe, fed and nurtured. She also shared her excitement when she was able to see the Normalcy Bill signed into law.

Mr. Gutierrez indicated he had known Mark Pearah for many years and thanked him and his wife for sharing their story with the board. He shared that he and his wife were similarly engaged in the foster parent process which ultimately led to his family adopting his son. He thanked them for their wonderful work. The board thanked the Pearah's and applauded them.

Mr. Carlson then introduced Ms. Carol Deloach, Assistant Executive Director and Mr. Bill Bucher, Regional Manager with Devereux. Mr. Bucher addressed the board and indicated that the first year of the transition to one CPA had been a bit slow but that during the second year great improvements had been made and that the agency is on a very good track in terms of foster home recruitment and licensing. He commended Laura Higginbotham and her team for their great work.

#### Consent Agenda:

Mr. Whitten asked if there were questions or concerns on the Board Data Report. None were expressed and the next agenda item was discussed.

#### CEO Board Report:

Dr. Nellius then reviewed her report with the members. She remarked that April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and that many activities had taken place to bring awareness in the community. She shared how excited she was with the CAPTF banquet this year and how inspired she was with the keynote speaker, David Lawrence. She also noted that Ms. Kelly Swartz had been awarded the Child Abuse Prevention Leader award, Ms. Amy Coggins with Brevard C.A.R.E.S. Head Start Program had been awarded the Social Service Individual award, Ms. Carol Roberts, volunteer with Brevard C.A.R.E.S. received the volunteer award and that the Brevard C.A.R.E.S. Head Start team had won the social service group award. She then indicated that the month of May is National Foster Parent Month and she acknowledged Devereux for their wonderful work. Dr. Nellius continued and spoke about the on going efforts and initiatives with the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) and the passing of the Normalcy Bill. She shared that there is an increased expectation on foster parents to really treat foster youth as their own and to allow them to do what other youth consider "normal."

Judge McKibben interjected by sharing that when the Governor signed the bill, he indicated it was the "let kids be kids" bill. Dr. Nellius continued by sharing that the Brevard Public Schools has agreed to partially fund the Guidance Counselor position and also indicated they offered to assign another Guidance Counselor to assist elementary aged children. She also stated that the National Center for Innovation and Excellence and Brevard C.A.R.E.S. have been awarded the SAM-H grant and that Ms. Holmes and Mr. Tracy Little will be conducting training at three (3) sites during May. She then indicated that the "save the date" for the upcoming National Wraparound Conference had been sent out and that we are very excited about this signature event. Dr. Nellius shared that the National Center will officially be unveiled at this event.

Dr. Nellius announced that Brevard C.A.R.E.S. had been awarded an Emergency Solutions Grant to support children and families for rapid re-housing and that this grant will begin July 1, 2013. She indicated that work continues on the Trauma Informed Care initiative and she has been meeting with members of the Alliance to educate them on this initiative and to encourage their participation and attendance at the upcoming summit. The summit will be held on June 20, 2013 and she encouraged board members to attend. Dr. Nellius then spoke about the full day she and the executive team spent on a budget workshop for the upcoming fiscal year in order to address budget cuts and the new mandate regarding administrative overhead expense. She reminded the members that while as of today, the cuts look to be in the \$600k - \$650k range, this remains in flux until the legislative session has concluded. She indicated there was news just today regarding a potential amount of funds that may be made available to the CBC's but that this is not final.

Dr. Nellius then shared her thoughts about Children's Week and thanked Ms. Christa Bailey and our foster parents for their involvement. Dr. Nellius then referred to the new DCF scorecard and the fact that the new mandate for administrative overhead is 3.5% for the new fiscal year. She commented that while our funding over the past two years has continued to reduce, the administrative overhead obviously increased which has put the agency in a difficult position in order to meet the new mandate. Dr. Nellius spoke about the focus on enhanced compliance from DCF and her approach to engage BFP and partner staff to team up to be responsible for one (1) of the metrics on the scorecard which will be reported on a monthly basis as a system. She also reported that our contract has been postponed again pending the approval of the agency's corrective action plan which had been submitted on April 22, 2013. She then referred the members to the draft strategic goals for year one (1) from the 5-year strategic work plan. She indicated this would be finalized by July.

#### Legislative Report:

Mr. Ropert thanked Ms. Christa Bailey and her children for attending Children's Week and commented how her children and those of our foster family had bonded during their time together. He shared that they had created such a positive impact on the visit and thanked them for their time, commitment and involvement. He reported that the MAS bill is still in flux with different versions in the House and Senate. He stated there would be a conference meeting later in the day to address this activity. Mr. Ropert then spoke about the Kayak for Kids event held in support of Brevard C.A.R.E.S. He indicated it was a great event with participation from our partners and that there was great community support including the Knights of Columbus which provided lunch for all participants.

Dr. Nellius then asked Ms. Debbie Davidson Cook to comment on the upcoming COA visit. Ms. Davidson Cook reminded the members that the COA site visit is set for May 20 and 21 and that on May 20 an opening session will be held and that all board members are welcomed to attend.

#### Financial Report:

Ms. Hensler referred to the materials in the binders which included the March Statement of Activities and Statement of Financial Position. Ms. Hensler reported that the agency continued to incur legal expenses on the on-going situation. She spoke about the in-home supports which are service dollars for children and families and that based on the needs, each case management agency has been provided with an additional \$25,000 to help them through the end of the fiscal year. She then spoke about the 100/800 funds and that the projections are in line to spend all these funds by the end of the fiscal year which is the intent. Ms. Hensler spoke about the adoption subsidy (MAS) and indicated we are running close but with the anticipated adoptions scheduled for June the agency will need to fund this expense. In terms of the whole budget, Ms. Hensler reported the agency had 25.1% remaining which puts the agency on target for the fiscal year. The board had no further questions.

#### New Business

Mr. Whitten then requested Ms. Randall to present the proposed PTO program. Ms. Randall thanked Mr. Whitten and addressed the board. She indicated the proposed plan was in their binders and she had tracked changes so the members could easily see the current plan as well as that being proposed. She indicated the revised plan was developed in response to the CEO request to create a new accrual rate for staff that would be approaching 10 years with the agency. It was shared that the current plan was put in place in 2004 when the agency initially began and it only included 2 levels of accrual; the first 3 years of employment and year 4 and after. As the plan is intended to reward tenure and had to be cost-neutral based on continuing budget cuts, a four-tier plan was created in order to allow for the 4<sup>th</sup> tier proposed at 10+ years. Ms. Randall reviewed the tiers, accruals and difference with the members. Mr. Gutierrez inquired about the cost savings and the number of staff impacted. Ms. Hensler reported on the number of BFP and C.A.R.E.S. staff impacted by the new tier structure.

Further discussion took place regarding costs and liability based on accrued hours of PTO. Ms. Randall also indicated that the proposed plan would not become effective until January 1, 2014 to allow time for staff to plan for the upcoming changes.

**Motion:** Ms. Goldfarb moved to approve the proposed PTO procedure, HR 2601. This was seconded by Ms. Bailey and the motion was passed unanimously. Ms. Randall stated this would become effective January 1, 2014.

Having no further business Mr. Whitten adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie M. Randall  
Recording Secretary

Approved at the May 23, 2013 Board of Directors meeting