

**Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway, Inc.**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Coalition Resource Center, Suite 140**  
**Lake City, Florida**  
**July 13, 2005**

**Members Present:**

Chris Bond, John Burns, Charles Carroll, Jennifer for Anita Franklin, John Hewett, Ray Logan, , Carol Milton, Jennifer Roberts, Nancy Roberts, David Rountree, Sheryll Walker, John Wheeler.

**Others in Attendance:**

Maria Ellis (Wee Care), Bobbie Morgan (Union County Schools), Sam Sweazy (AWI-OEL), Marge Campany (DOE Regional VPK), Thomas F. Logan, Ph.D. (Executive Director), LaShone T. Surrency (Deputy Director), Shannon Bryant (Finance Director), Jamie Witzman (Enrollment Manager) and Heidi Moore (Executive Assistant).

**Members Absent:**

Mike Deming, Jeanne Duffy, Hugh Giebeig, Sandy Looney, Richard Mitchell, John Pierce and Paula Williams.

**Welcome and Call to Order**

John Wheeler called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. John Wheeler introduced visitors and guests. Bobbie Morgan represented Union County Schools. She explained that the Union County School Board had approved another position at the district level. That person, when hired, will take on the Preschool responsibilities.

**Housekeeping**

- John Wheeler explained that since we are required by the new law to count voting members only when counting a quorum, we need to make the meeting dates and times conducive to the attendance of the private sector members. We will also try to hold committee meetings immediately following Board meetings to expedite meeting time. Ray Logan expressed that he would prefer the meetings be in the afternoon but he would be flexible. The rest of the members agreed to keep the dates and time as is.
- John Wheeler informed the Board that we are participating with the other Coalitions to produce a CD-ROM and training material for new board members by this fall. Dr. Logan stated we would like to spend some time possibly during the next Board meeting on Board orientation. The idea is to inform all members, past and present, about the functions of the Coalition. These functions are; Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), School Readiness and VPK. We would like to explain some of the terminology used in conversation at the meetings. Dr. Logan will give a 30 minute PowerPoint presentation and the managers will give a brief description of their department functions after the Board business at the next meeting.
- Dr. Logan informed the Board of Prudence Pate's resignation from the Board. We now lack private sector members in Union and Suwannee counties and would like to have those

counties represented on our Board. Dr. Logan would like suggestions for potential members for him to contact.

## **Minutes**

- Board Meeting - John Wheeler asked the members to review the minutes from the previous board meeting. David Rountree made a motion to accept the minutes as written. John Burns seconded the motion. The minutes were approved without objection.
- Executive Committee meeting – John Wheeler explained that this was an extensive meeting.
  - Carrie had presented a modification to the organizational chart for a special situation. The solution created more issues and after more consideration, it was decided to leave it the way it was originally.
  - In the beginning of the Coalition there was a policy not to reimburse employee travel within Columbia County. Now there are considerable miles in-county and the committee agreed to reimburse mileage within Columbia County.
  - The 2005-2006 VPK and School Readiness budgets were discussed at this meeting and will be presented in detail at this Board meeting.
  - Market rates will also be discussed at this Board meeting.
  - The dates and times for the Board meetings were discussed. Dr. Logan took this opportunity to inform the Board that suite 140 will now be the permanent headquarters of the entire Program Quality department as well as the Resource Center. The Board meeting will move back to a room in the Columbia County School Board. Heidi will contact Chris Bond for availability.
  - John Wheeler had brought before the Committee the possibility of the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation at the opening of Board meetings. The committee felt the Pledge was a good idea however the invocation may need further discussion.
- David Rountree wanted to know about the procedure for advertising the meeting. Heidi explained that it is a weeks notice but some of the smaller counties only publish certain days of the week. Since we do not pay for these publications, it is at the discretion of the paper to place it as they see fit. Our obligation is to request the publication under the Sunshine Law. The fax confirmations from the individual newspapers are kept on file.

## **Financial Report**

- John Burns explained the out-of-the-ordinary expenses from the income statement from last month. The Coalition bought learning center materials from Kaplan as a grant to all contracted centers and homes. The learning centers focus on literacy and science. There is a payment to Lake City Community College for the CDA scholarship program. The phone system that has been previously discussed was purchased and was installed yesterday.
- An explanation of the start-up funds for VPK was provided to the Board. Dr. Logan explained that most of the funding was utilized for changing the name on all the signage and stationary and for some training for the staff and providers.
- Mr. Burns directed the Board to the 2004-2005 final report. He wanted the Board to be aware that the Coalition expended 99.69% of the state funds. Shannon hit the mark as precisely as it could be and Mr. Burns and the Board applauded the excellent effort of the Finance Director, Shannon Bryant.

- 2005-2006 Draft Budget –
  - The first page shows the minimum and maximum pay ranges for positions. Current payroll is at \$823,614.27 which is within the ranges. Actual payroll and actual expenses were also supplied to the Board.
  - The next spreadsheet addressed cost centers and included a column for VPK. Mr. Burns explained that VPK does not work the same as School Readiness dollars. The VPK budget only funds VPK slots and admin costs. They do not allow for quality expenditures or specialized programs. VPK will provide 5% of the funds expended on the actual number of children for admin purposes.
  - The current Readiness budget was supplied in draft form and when approved will be submitted to AWI.
  - 81.25% of this drafted budget is slotted for the children. It is the intention of the Coalition to always spend over 80% of the total funding directly on the children. The state standard is only 74%.
  - There are specific earmarks for certain allocations. These percentages were provided to the Board. School readiness allows 5% for admin and we are currently at 4.68%. The Board has always held the admin cost to well below the 5% cap.
  - Since there are more qualified staff, they are mostly at 2/3rds the way through their pay range. Dr. Logan added that since the staff will have dual roles in this fiscal year, their salaries will be offset with VPK dollars as they become available.
  - John Wheeler advised the Board that this spreadsheet is what brings clarity to the codes for the allocations. He stated that we are spending less where it is good to spend less such as admin and more when it comes to slots and program. Mr. Wheeler stated that we are really maximizing our budget.

The Finance Committee recommends to the Board in the form of a motion that this budget be submitted to AWI. John Wheeler asked for any discussion. The Budget passed unanimously by a show of hands.

### **Board Actions**

- 2005-011 Change in Provider Payment Rate Schedule for 2005-2006  
 John Burns explained that the Market Rate is set by the State of Florida and they say what the area is getting on average for the different classifications of children. The Finance Committee is proposing that we increase the market rate from the current amount of \$95 a week for infants (birth to 12 months) to \$100 a week. In addition, the average licensed home weekly rate is \$95 in Columbia County and we are only paying \$90. The Finance Committee is also recommending that the licensed home rate be increased from \$90 to \$95.  
 John Wheeler asked for discussion with regard to these increases. There was none. John Wheeler asked if there was any objection to the increase in the market rate for the 2 categories. There were none; therefore the motion passed unanimously.  
 Sheryll Walker asked if this would be effective today. LaShone suggested it would be a smoother transition if it took effect on August 1, 2005.

## **Staff and Committee Reports**

Dr. Logan explained that in the past all of the managers have prepared a report and presented it in person to the Board. John Wheeler has proposed, for the sake of expediting the meeting, that the reports will be included in the packet but the managers will not be present to report them orally. If any Board members needs clarification from any staff member they are free to contact the staff at any time.

### Executive Director's Report

- Personnel changes – Carrie introduced the newest members of her Program staff; Brandy Pieczarka and Regina Kimbrough. Dr. Logan reported that the Program Department is completely staffed at the present time. Dottie Stone has been hired on a permanent basis for the Child Development and Inclusion Coordinator as of July 1, 2005.
- VPK – ELC-FG is doing quite well by state standards. There are about 500 children that have been issued VPK certificates so far. Dr. Logan expects to have about 600 children by the time the program begins in August. The Program Department has been working really hard and has 43 providers in the 5 counties. We should have sufficient slots for the children and all of the providers who wanted to participate will have children. Dr. Logan stated that LaShone's two department managers, Carrie and Jamie, should be very proud of what they have accomplished with regard to VPK.
- 2005-2006 Budget was discussed as a Board Action.
- AWI Program Instructions – Dr. Logan provided the six new program instructions from AWI for informational purposes.
- Merger update - AMC's four counties and Taylor County have opted to merge with Leon-Gadsden to form a seven county coalition.
- IT Back-up – Jessie is on vacation this week. We have a local person from Lake City Community College contracted on an hourly basis if the need arises in Jessie's absence.

John Wheeler called for any new business. There was no response. John Wheeler asked if there were any items for the August agenda.

David Rountree was concerned about how the back up tapes for the Coalition's data are stored. Heidi Moore stated that the tapes are kept in a fire safe and transported with the IT Manager. John Wheeler stated that the EFS information is backed up by the state mainframe. John Wheeler would like to walk through the process with David Rountree and Jessie Tampoc to verify procedure.

David Rountree made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.