

**Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway, Inc.**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Coalition Resource Center, Suite 140**  
**Lake City, Florida**  
**June 8, 2005**

**Members Present:**

Chris Bond, John Burns, Tracy Hickman for Charles Carroll, Hugh Giebeig, John Hewett, Ray Logan, , Sandy Looney, Carol Milton, Jennifer Roberts, Nancy Roberts, David Rountree, Sheryll Walker, John Wheeler and Paula Williams.

**Others in Attendance:**

Maria Ellis (Wee Care), Kim Stearns (LCCC), Cathy Sams (Union County Schools), Sam Sweazy (AWI-OEL), Marge Company (DOE Regional VPK), Mildred Pinkston (Richardson Daycare), Thomas F. Logan, Ph.D. (Executive Director), LaShone T. Surrency (Deputy Director), Shannon Bryant (Finance Director), Jamie Witzman (Enrollment Manager), Jessie Tampoc (IT Manager) and Heidi Moore (Executive Assistant), Dottie Stone (Inclusion Specialist).

**Members Absent:**

Mike Deming, Jeanne Duffy, Anita Franklin, Richard Mitchell, Prudence Pate and John Pierce.

**Welcome and Call to Order**

John Wheeler called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Mr. Wheeler explained that there are quite a few changes and quite a few new faces. He explained that since the Board has always worked as an integral team, a few members of the Executive Committee have switched seats, and we are going to move forward. Mr. Wheeler welcomed everyone and introduced our visitors. John Hewett is from Mayo (Lafayette Co.) and has been appointed to the Board by the Governor for a 2 year term. Mr. Hewett is in the propane gas service. He built and operates an assisted living facility in Mayo called Oak Ridge. Tracy Hickman represented Charles Carroll in his absence and brought along Kim Stearns from the college. Dr. Logan interjected that Lake City Community College will be offering an A.S. in Early Childhood Education this fall. Dr. Logan suggested that the members introduce themselves for the benefit of the new member. He stated that the Governor was empowered to appoint three members to each Coalition and as a result John Wheeler was appointed as Chair for a four year term; Ray Logan was appointed for a three year term and John Hewett for a two year term.

**Minutes**

John Wheeler started the meeting with a review of 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.

**Financial Report**

- John Wheeler explained that this will be the last time he will be presenting the Finance Report.

- John Wheeler directed the members to the far right column of the report for the month of May. John explained for the benefit of the new members that there is a deficit of \$44,000 in the Revenues column. This figure does not concern us because we do not get our revenues before we spend the money.
- John highlighted key elements of the financial report but encouraged questions as they arise.
- The professional fees have decreased since we have not had the need for any legal services or accounting audits lately.
- The office supplies increased this month due to the purchase of color cartridges for the color printers. This actually saves money in the long run since color printing is done in-house. Signage and marketing has increased due to the new logo and the signage having to be replaced to reflect the change.
- Cell phones have been purchased by authorization of the Finance Committee. The main objective for the purchase is safety. Numerous staff members travel to rural locations in our outlying counties.
- The renewal of IACET – this is the agency that allows us to offer CEU's to our providers for trainings to maintain their credentials.
- Travel and expenses are due to sending staff for ongoing trainings. Dr. Logan explained some of the conferences the staff has attended as well as providers to attend.

### **Recommendations for Board Actions**

- Dr. Logan explained that the Nominating Committee met last week and made verbal recommendation as to the structure of the Executive Committee given the Governor's appointments.
- The Committee then looked at the Standing Committee structure and made recommendations for the forthcoming year. Carol Milton is the Chair of the Nominating Committee. She informed the Board that since there is voting and non-voting members it gets complicated. This was taken into consideration when deciding the committee structure.
- In order to maintain continuity in the Executive Committee, the recommendation of the Nominating Committee was for John Wheeler to serve as Chair by the Governors appointment and John Burns to accept the position of Treasurer. Raymond Logan will remain Vice Chair and Richard Mitchell will remain Secretary. John Wheeler called for discussion on the recommendation. There were no objections to the recommendations. The recommendation passed.
- John Wheeler explained that they also looked at the Committee structure. In the past there have been several standing committee and several Ad Hoc committees. Some of those special committees are not necessary anymore since we have very capable staff.
- The Nominating Committee presented a motion to maintain the Executive Committee, Finance Committee and Program/Quality Committees. John Wheeler called for any objections from the floor. Without objection, the motion passed.
- John Wheeler has the authority to appoint an Ad Hoc committee for a specific issue if necessary. The members would like to maintain the involvement of all Board members. So, as those Ad Hoc committees come up, Mr. Wheeler could appoint different people so that everyone has an opportunity to be involved and participate.
- The Nominating Committee made a recommendation for the membership of the Executive Committee as follows; John Wheeler, Ray Logan, John Burns and Richard Mitchell.

- The Nominating Committee made a recommendation for the membership of the Finance Committee as follows; John Wheeler, Ray Logan, John Burns, Richard Mitchell and Hugh Giebeig.
- The Nominating Committee made a recommendation for the membership of the Program/Quality Committee as follows; Sheryll Walker as private provider, Nancy Roberts as public school provider, Carol Milton as voting member, Charles Carroll as Community College, John Hewett as private sector, and Jennifer Roberts as faith based provider and John Wheeler as ex-officio. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Logan explained that the non-voting members are there for their program and policy input but cannot ultimately vote on any of the resolutions or the recommendations. In order for that committee to conduct business it has to have enough private sector members on it to vote on recommendations.

## **Staff and Committee Reports**

### Executive Director's Report

- Personnel changes – Dr. Logan reported that Tangela Bell will be returning to the Enrollment Department as Analyst from the Program Department. The Program Department has two openings. One position has been filled by Brandy Geering who will be joining the Program Department on Monday, June 20, 2005. The other position is in process.
- Early Learning Service Delivery Survey – Dr. Logan was contacted by a private contractor who has worked with AWI-OEL as a research and support specialist. She has been hired by the Palm Beach County Coalition who is looking into the possibility of doing their own services. As part of that, they have asked her to survey who are doing their own services to get some feedback regarding the transition. Dr. Logan did not feel he was knowledgeable enough since he was not here during the actual transition. He asked if there were any Board members who would like to offer their input. John Burns suggested that she telephone Prudence Pate with regard to this issue.
- VPK – Dr. Logan explained that the Governor approved \$2500 per child. That is what the \$2.6 for the Gateway allocation is based on. (1100 children x \$2500) It isn't really \$2500 because it based on each school boards allocation formula. All of our five county school boards have slightly less than 100% allocation. Dr. Logan provided the Board with a chart reflecting the actual figures.
  - Funding – We were allocated 2.6 million dollars for VPK in our five counties based upon the possibility that we would serve two thirds of the 4 year olds which is about 1100 children in the 5 counties. We will be funded at 100%. Dr. Logan was told verbally that we will get 25% of our budget as an advance. We may not serve 1100 children. They will reconcile future advances against our actual enrollment. If we happen to serve more than 1100 children, then the legislature will have to fund our allocation at a higher level because VPK is an entitlement program, and the legislature will find additional funds to pay for it. There will never be a waiting list.
  - Administrative budget – According to a verbal statement from AWI, the admin dollars would not be available until the end of the fiscal year because no one would know how much of the \$2.6 we were going to spend. John Burns asked Sam Sweazy if we would be allowed to use part of our quarterly allotment for

admin. The official answer is no. We are also not allowed to use school readiness funds. John Burns asked where the money would come from. Sam Sweazy explained that they understand the issues. They expect to send out advances after July 15, 2005.

- Provisional Providers – Jamie stated that there are 35 providers from whom we have received applications from and who are keyed into our system. Some applications are still outstanding. All of the providers are considered provisional until their instructor credentials have been verified.
- School Board participation - The providers under VPK can be school boards, faith based, for profit, non profit and FCCH. Suwannee, Lafayette and Columbia have committed to VPK participation and Paula G. Williams and Dr. Logan will be meeting with the superintendent of Hamilton County next week. Union County missed its class reduction goals for last year and cannot offer a school year program but will be eligible to offer a summer program in the summer of 2006.
- VPK Child Enrollment – 38 children have already been enrolled. Tuesday and Thursdays will be walk in enrollment days for VPK. We have sent post cards out to every family with a four year old in the five counties. We have sent out letters to every family that pre-applied. We are enrolling children at the school board sites. The parents are given a certificate of eligibility generated by our computer with an identification number on it for the child. Those certificates permit them to go out to the provisional providers and say they are qualified for VPK reimbursement and want to enroll their child with that provider.
- Dr. Logan included the three Program Instructions (PI) from AW-OEI.
  - The first one is a corrected version from a previous one. It was related to Coalition Board membership. Dr. Logan reminded the Board that since we are a multi-county Coalition, we could have more members than just the mandatory positions.
  - The second was regarding child eligibility. It is a good reference guide for the allowable documentation for VPK children's proof of age and residence. Parents' Drivers Licenses are permissible documentation for Florida residence.
  - The last one is on VPK enrollment. It talks about the process to enroll children in VPK.
  - We have been told by AWI that we will be receiving PI's this week regarding numerous unanswered questions.
- Cross County Attendance (VPK) – The County where the child attends the VPK program is the county that pays for that child's attendance. VPK will pay by the County of service.
- School Readiness – To date, our school readiness budget, which has been about \$7.6 million dollars was based on a set formula. That formula has been discontinued with the new Early Learning legislation. AWI is establishing a formula to assign allocations to each county. Once they establish that formula, we will know what our allocation is for 2005-2006. Normally the budget would have been brought to this meeting for approval; however, we don't have the figures as yet. No one will get less than 80% of their current funding.

- Merger Update - Dr. Logan has talked to both Taylor and Madison Counties. They are currently in an appeals process for a waiver request. If their appeal gets denied, they may be contacting us about merging.

#### Deputy Director's Report

LaShone submitted her report to the Board to read at their leisure.

#### Finance Director's Report

Shannon reported that 2392 children have been enrolled which is an increase from May. John Burns asked about the surplus. Shannon replied that it looks a little bigger after those numbers. The Program Quality Committee will be meeting after the Board meeting to discuss these figures.

#### Program Manager's Report

Carrie Sapp was not in attendance due to her attending training in Miami. Dr. Logan reminded everyone about the Summer Conference which is in collaboration with LCCC on Saturday, June 18, 2005. All the Board members and friends are invited to attend the conference and volunteer to participate. Sheryll Walker asked for Board members who would be planning to attend. The list included Chris Bond, Carol Milton, Sandy Looney, Jennifer Roberts, Nancy Roberts, Sheryll Walker, Tracy Hickman for Charles Carroll and John Pierce (he was not present at the time but always attends).

#### Enrollment Manager's Report

- Jamie Witzman reported that enrollment dropped by 200 because of the School Board pre K programs ending. This is a normal occurrence for this time of year. The unduplicated enrollment count was 2225.
- The VPK Parent Application count is at 637. 38 VPK certificates have been issued. The VPK Provider Application count is at 35.
- The protective services count is 190.

#### IT Manager Report

Jessie supplied the Board with his report and mentioned that the week of May 23-27 we had some email issues. He stated that we were upgrading our server and that these issues have since been corrected. The phone system will be installed this month and each staff member will have a dedicated phone line in addition to the main number which remains the same.

#### Inclusion

Dottie Stone related that as of today we had fewer than 120 children who do not have a screening of any kind. She has been working with FDLRS and Early Steps to refine even further the process for referring children who appear to be at risk.

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

Sheryll Walker commented that LaShone T. Surrency did an excellent job while Dr. Logan was on vacation. She also wanted to thank John Burns for all the time he put in as Chair.

Marge Campany, (DOE-OEL) stated that she was so impressed with the atmosphere at the Coalition. That the staff does not panic with all the changes and takes each day one at a time and are so well prepared. She and Sam Sweazy had come to train the staff on VPK. Jamie helped her with the EFS system. She explained that Gateway has great staff, and she enjoyed working with them.

Hugh Giebeig made a motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.