

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2020 at 6:00 PM
Virtual Meeting, Hosted Over Conference Call

Board Members Attending by Phone: Adnan Assad, Rolando Acosta, Ronit Barrett, Stacey Blasko, Rob Buono, Jessica Cardoni, Dee Dee Chesley, JoAnne Cicchelli, Verenise Franco, Roberto Interiano, Jeff Kemerley, Kenneth Langston, Lauren Long, Joel Lozada, Dan Lynch, Thomas O'Neill, Stephen Raquet, David Rodin, Gregory Spitzer, Lizzy Whitehorn, Thomas Woodrow

Board Members Absent: Stu Reed, Homero Tristan

Christopher House Staff Attending by Phone: Lori Baas, Meaghan Jennings, Gloria Kuechenberg, Krissy Novy, Karen Ross-Williams, Libby Shortenhaus, Becky Seibel, Traci Stanley, Katheryn Steward

Minutes Recorder: Christina Henneuse

Proceedings: Meeting called to order at 6:04 PM

Welcome, Presented by Dee Dee Chesley

Dee Dee begins by welcoming new parent representatives from our Infant and Pre-School and Elementary School, Verenise Franco and Joel Lozado, respectively, to the meeting.

Since the last board meeting, Becky Seibel, Associate Director of Social Services at Christopher House has accepted her new role as Director of Operations. The Board congratulates Becky and welcomes her to the meeting.

Minutes, Motion was made by Adnan Assad, seconded by Kenny Langston, and carried unanimously to approve the March Board Meeting Minutes.

Consent Agenda, Presented by Katheryn Steward

There are four items in the consent agenda that require approval:

- 1.) Early Head Start federal base grant application
- 2.) COLA Supplemental application
- 3.) Quality Improvement Supplemental Application
- 4.) Approve Becky Seibel as Early/Head Start Director

Motion was made by Ronit Barrett, seconded by Rob Buono, and carried unanimously to approve the four items on the consent agenda.

President's Report, Presented by Dee Dee Chesley

The first virtual All Staff Fireside Chat was held on May 5th. Nearly 200 staff members participated in the meeting, in addition to a few Board members. During the Fireside Chat, each member of Christopher House's Leadership Team shared an update on the virtual work being completed by each school or department.

There are two deadlines approaching that must be met in order maintain Charter School governance compliance requirements: Conflict of Interest Statements (5/22) and New Charter School Governance Training (12/31). Christopher House is working with INCS to offer these trainings for Board members and Dee Dee encourages members to complete their individual training by the end of the fiscal year. Further questions on these requirements should be directed to Libby.

EHS virtual Federal review was conducted in early April and provided Christopher House with the opportunity to showcase our program design to OHS. OHS will share an official report from the review in 6-8 weeks.

Board Development Report, Presented by Ronit Barrett

Ronit requests that each Board member considers at least one person from their contacts as a candidate for the Board. Ronit also shares that she is reviewing the bylaws and considering provisions for board governance during times of crisis such as the current pandemic.

CEO Report, Presented by Lori Baas, Traci Stanley, Becky Seibel and Gloria Kuechenberg

Lori thanks the Leadership Team for their work and guidance during her leave of absence.

Despite challenges of COVID-19, Christopher House has been able to adapt to the restrictions of the shelter in place order. We have quickly transitioned to online learning. The Infant and Pre-School is building an online curriculum and using ReadyRosie for at-home lessons and activities. In mid-March, the Elementary School distributed more than 300 Chromebooks and scholars are using Google Classroom for daily assignments with regular office hours hosted by teachers. After School is using Zoom and YouTube to stay connected.

Family Advocates are checking-in with families to understand family needs during this time and all social workers are conducting wellness checks. In order to provide rental and emergency assistance for those families affected by COVID-19, the Thrive Family Fund was established to increase our emergency financial assistance program.

The decision to re-open Christopher House will be guided by federal, state and city policies. There is currently no set re-opening date. Our early childhood and after school programs are currently authorized to open in phase four of the Governor's re-opening plan.

Christopher House will adhere to best practices set-forth by the CDC and government agencies when creating our re-opening plans. This could include staggering pick-up and drop-off times, planning for a combination of in-class and virtual learning and health screenings to keep scholars,

families and staff safe. Christopher House is currently surveying families to get a better understanding of their re-opening concerns.

External Affairs Committee, Presented by Lori Baas, Meaghan Jennings and Libby Shortenhaus

We are currently 85% of budget for foundation and corporate contributions and our individual giving is up as a result of the launch of the Thrive Family Fund. Due to an uncertain economy and the cancelation of our Annual Benefit, which was scheduled for late April, we have a significant fundraising gap to raise by fiscal year end, totalling nearly \$700,000.

Meaghan has put together an online fundraising toolkit for the Board to use when reaching out to their contacts. The board is encouraged to review their contact lists and schedule a time to discuss next steps with Meaghan.

Libby shared media coverage received during COVID-19, including Lori's interview with WTTW and Gloria's interview with Univision. Other wins includes a Block Club Chicago interview, WICU interview and a national conference speaking opportunity.

Finance Committee, Presented by Stephen Raquet and Adnan Assad

Christopher House is in a secure financial position, projecting a deficit of under \$200,000 at the end of FY20. Due to COVID-19 and its implications on funding, the Finance Committee will be presenting the FY21 budget during a special July meeting.

Adnan shares that Christopher House applied for the PPP loan through First Midwest and was awarded the loan on April 20th. We project the SBA forgiveness with current regulations totals just over \$500,000.

The discussion about Christopher House's cash reserve policy will be moved to the July board meeting.

Strategic Task Force, Presented by Kenny Langston

The original plan of the Strategic Task Force was to have the Board vote on a growth plan, but because of the uncertain times and changes, Kenny shares that the Task Force is reassessing the timeline. We will revisit this at the July meeting.

Public Comment

No public comments were made at this meeting.

Motion made by Dave Rodin and seconded by Stephen Raquet to adjourn into Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM.