



ELC of Northwest Florida
May 2015 Board Meeting Minutes

Date: May 13, 2015

Location: CareerSource Gulf Coast, Panama City, FL

Minutes Taken By: Suzan Gage

Time: Meeting Called to order at 11:10 am by Jon McFatter (chair)

Full Board: Yes No Quorum: YES in attendance

Executive Comm. Yes No Quorum #:

Roll Call to Include Board Members on Telephone:

I. Roll Call:

Exec. Committee	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ATTENDANCE		
●	Rita	Acoba	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Tony	Bennett	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Phil	Edwards	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Wendy	Fletcher-Altman	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Kim	Gillis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Linda	Hood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Jackie	House	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Joe	Jernigan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Doug	Kent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Frank	Martin	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Jeannie	Martin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Brandie	McCabe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Al	McCambry	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Jon	McFatter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Mary	McKenzie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Juliana	Melara	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Johanna	Plumber	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Neal	Reeves	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Jerry	Sowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
	Guy	Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Darrin	Wall	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
●	Richard	Williams	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Present via conference call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
<i>Total</i>			10 Present	3 Present via conf. call	9 Absent

12 members = simple majority, 6 for Executive Committee

● Denotes Executive Committee Member

13 out of 22 members present. Quorum was was not established.

Coalition Staff Present: Lynne Eldridge, Joe Seabrook, Ken Whittaker, Suzan Gage, Adrienne Jenkins

Visitors Present: Elizabeth Caesar from DCF sitting in for Wendy Fletcher-Altman. Ami Whittington from Imagination Station in Washington County. Derrick Bennett, Coalition Legal Counsel via Conference Call.

II. Action Items:

1. *Adoption of Consent Agenda*

Motion: To adopt consent agenda items as presented.	
Motion By: Doug Kent	Motion Seconded By: Jerry Sowell
Member/s Recusing from Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
The motion carried.	

2. *Approval of Agenda*

Motion: To approve agenda as presented.	
Motion By: Doug Kent	Motion Seconded By: Jerry Sowell
Member/s Recusing from Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
The motion carried.	

3. *Personnel & Policy Committee/Full Board*

a. *By-Law Change*

The last By-Law changes did not include changes related to ex-officio members and timeframes for Board responsibilities. These changes are NOT presented at the request of the *Persannel and Policy Committee* but rather to align with current Office of Early Learning Guidance or statute.

b. *Anti-Fraud Plan*

As a result of reviewing the Coalition's approved Anti-Fraud Plan, the Coalition's legal counsel, Derrick Bennett, expressed concern about the length and the complicated elements of the Anti-Fraud Plan that has been approved by Office of Early Learning. As presented by Mr. Bennett, the more complicated a plan the more opportunity for inconsistencies to occur, resulting in legal loopholes.

Mr. Bennett has amended the Coalition's Anti-Fraud Plan to:

1. Address required statute, rule, and/or guidance
2. Remove reference to "Provider" due to the new Statewide School readiness Contract. The contract specifically addresses "Provider Fraud" thereby eliminating the need to address "Provider Fraud" in the Coalition's plan.
3. Remove reference to training and definitions that are found in rule, statute, and/or guidance.

Approval of the amended Anti-Fraud Plan is needed prior to submitting it to the Office of Early Learning. Mr. Bennett joined the meeting via conference call to answer questions, as needed, and to make recommendation that Coalition staff meet with Office of Early Learning to clarify what specifically constitutes fraud and the statutes on termination, suspension, and refusal to contract.

Motion: To approve amended By-Laws and Anti-Fraud Plan as presented	
Motion By: Jerry Sowell	Motion Seconded By: Mary McKenzie
Member/s Recusing from Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
The motion carried.	

4. Finance Committee/Full Board

a. Related Party Contracts

The Coalition shall follow statute and provide Office of Early Learning (OEL) contract documentation for any contract with ELC employees, governing Board members or relatives of either group as s. 112.3143(1) (b), FS., as defined. Coalition's must comply with requirement in state statute and OEL instructions (s. 1002.84(20), F.S.

ELC contracts must disclose, in advance, the Conflict of Interest and must abstain from voting. Board members abstaining from voting complete *Form 8B, Memorandum of Voting Conflict for County Municipal, and Other Local Public Officers.*

Richard Williams and Wendy Altman Fletcher were not in attendance at the Board meeting. Lynne Eldridge declared what the conflict of interest was in each Board members case (i.e. Richard Williams- Executive Director CareerSource, Wendy Fletcher- Altman – sits on CareerSource Board representing DCF. Neither Richard nor Wendy participated in the voting process.

1. Contract in Excess of \$25,000.00

WHO: Chipola CareerSource /Workforce

WHAT: Fully Equipped Office Space, IT Support, IT Equipment, Receptionist, Customer Flow Reporting, Maintenance & Cleaning in Jackson and Washington Counties

COST: \$63,546.00

ABSTAINING: The following Coalition Board Members declared *Conflict of Interest, Abstained from Vote, and completed Form 8B.* (Coalition staff will meet with Richard Williams to ensure documentation complete.)

- Richard Williams, ED CareerSource (absent)
- Mary McKenzie, CareerSource Board
- Darrin Wall, CareerSource Board
- Wendy Fletcher Altman, DCF- CareerSource Board (absent)

Motion: To approve Related Party Contract with Chipola CareerSource, as presented

Motion By: Jerry Sowell

Motion Seconded By: Doug Kent

Member/s Recusing from Vote: YES NO; Mary McKenzie, Darrin Wall, Richard Williams (absent)

The motion carried.

2. Contract Below \$25,000.00

WHO: Trinity Pentecostal Tabernacle

WHAT: Training/Meeting Space Rental

COST: Range \$5,000.00 - \$10,000.00

ABSTAINING: The following Coalition Board Members and/or employees declared *Conflict of Interest, Abstained from Vote, and completed Form 8 B, Memorandum of Voting Conflict*

- Jon McFatter, Coalition Board Chair-Governor Appointee (Abstained from vote AND abstained from presiding over vote. Brother is current pastor of TPT.
- Vice Chair, Mary McKenzie called for a motion/vote in place of Chairman Jon McFatter.
- Lynne Eldridge, declared Conflict of Interest – attends TPT. However, the Executive Director does not vote.

Motion: To approve Trinity Pentecostal Tabernacle, Related Party contract, as presented

Motion By: Jerry Sowell

Motion Seconded By: Joe Jernigan

Member/s Recusing from Vote: YES NO; Jon McFatter

The motion carried.

b. *RFP for Coalition Auditing Services 2015-16*

The Coalition must complete the Request for Proposal (RFP) to secure Single Audit services for a three-year timeframe. The RFP process requires that all proposals received be opened and reviewed for Fatal Criteria requirements.

Jerry Sowell, Finance Committee Chair and Coalition Treasurer, Ken Whittaker, Accountability Officer, and Joe Seabrook, Performance and Operations Officer opened and reviewed the submitted proposals for Fatal Criteria requirements, during Board meeting.

Jerry Sowell reported that all proposals submitted met Fatal Criteria requirements.

The following agencies submitted a proposal:

1. Moss, Krusick, and Associates
2. Tipton, Marler, Garner, and Chastain
3. Salt Marsh, Cleaveland, and Gund
4. Warren Averett, LLC

Coalition staff were tasked with the evaluation and ranking of the submitted proposals. Once completed, the results are submitted to Finance Committee Chair and brought before the Board for a vote at June 2015 Board meeting.

5. Legislative Session Update

The House adjourned on Tuesday without coordination for the close of session with Senate. As a result, the early learning bill was a casualty. While the Senate President has called for a special session to commence on June 1st and end by June 20th, it is expected that the special session will only focus on budgetary issues and not early learning concerns.

6. Executive Director Report

a. *OEL School Readiness Program Plan*

The Office of Early Learning has developed a very different "Work" Plan that appears to drastically reduce the Coalition's flexibility and focuses on a much stronger element of compliance. As part of this new Work Plan, the Coalition must submit its Administrative AND Personnel Policies with a strong emphasis on compliance, in addition to the already required Board Documents. In order for the Coalition's Plan to be approved, the Office of Early Learning must approve each of the Coalition's policies, auditing each of the for a high level of alignment with a Department of Education structure and an emphasis on statute, rule, and OEL guidance that has not been required in the past.

In addition, the Coalition's By-Laws and Articles of Corporation must also be approved. The ED has requested that is OEL knows that they will not approve Coalition policy as it currently stands and has been accepted in the past, to simply provide the policy, they require the Coalition to follow.

The implementation of the School Readiness Program Plan will cause the Coalition to make substantial internal and external changes. The Office of Early Learning's focus is clearly on a very different level of compliance for the Coalition and the Providers. The Executive Director will send the new School Readiness

Program Plan to the Board to demonstrate the heightened focus OEL is placing on issues unrelated to child outcomes or the child's readiness for formal education.

b. *Internal Controls*

The Coalition is in the process of strengthening and gaining a better understanding of our fixed assets, consumables, and tangible personal property. These items will be brought before the Board, as they are assessed. The Executive Director continues to work on the Internal Questionnaire Self-Assessment.

c. *Wait List and Priority Placement*

The Executive Director reminded Board that due to overutilization of School Readiness funding, the Coalition implemented the approved Spending Plan requiring all children, except for Priority One and Two, to be placed on the Unified Wait List. The Coalition has completed monthly analyses of funding availability in order to determine whether or not we could begin to place new families (Priority 3) off the Wait List. Wait List data is presented to the Board each month.

It appears that funding may be available to begin placing a designated number of children off the Wait List. Jeannie Martin questioned if this placement would potentially include those from Priority 3, the working poor.

The Executive Director responded that Priority 3 would be the category that children would be placed from, as we are already placing all Priority One and Two.

Children will be placed into School Readiness services following the basic guidelines listed below:

STEP ONE:

Determine amount of available funding

STEP TWO:

Divide the Infant (highest) rate into the designated funding to determine a possible number of children to be served- based on Spending Plan projections

STEP THREE:

Determine the maximum number of service days left in the fiscal year

STEP FOUR:

Multiply the number of children by the maximum number of service days to determine Cost of care

STEP FIVE:

Arrange Possible Service List by "Date of Application"

STEP SIX:

Contact parents for appointment and ensure they understand that if they fail to bring required documentation, the Coalition will move to the next family on the Wait List

STEP SEVEN:

Update *Possible Service List* based on efforts to contact. Families will be placed within a 7 day window unless extenuating circumstances exist

STEP EIGHT:

Coalition Executive Director will report results of first Wait List Placement at June 2015 Board Meeting.

d. *Fraud Prevention Update*

1. *Provider Fraud Case Update*

The Coalition has been following the direction of the Department of Fiscal Services (DFS) as it relates to a fraud case against a provider in Calhoun County. The Coalition did not terminate the provider's contract while the provider was under investigation, as requested by DFS. The fraud case has been resolved and while the case did not come to trial, the plea agreement executed by the provider states that he was charged with Grand Theft over \$20,000.00, which is a second degree felony and the agreement also states that Adjudication is withheld. The new statewide provider contract has specific language related to fraud, Coalition legal counsel recommends allowing the current provider contract

to expire. Board Members question where children currently placed with this provider will receive care if the contract expires. The Executive Director reports that there are other providers in Calhoun County that are within a short distance of the provider that would be legitimate options for children currently being served. The Board also questions if the Coalition is receiving restitution for the funds and if there is a plan in place to prevent this type of fraud. The Executive Director reports that the provider is making restitution payments for the funds received fraudulently and that there are checks in place to determine that children served are in attendance and legitimately eligible.

2. **Fraud Report**

The Coalition continues to pursue and refer suspected fraudulent actions as directed by the Office of Early Learning. The Board was provided with a chart summary of the financial impacts of restitutions. To support the increased concern with the perception of fraud, the Coalition has changed how it represents Fraud to parents and to Providers. During the month of May, the Coalition's Accountability Officer conducted three separate trainings for Providers aligning the new Statewide Provider Contract and the Contract Monitoring Tool with the Perception of Fraud.

e. *School Readiness Priority Placement and Spending Plan*

The Coalition implemented the Spending Plan to reduce deficits in direct service funding. An element of the Spending Plan included a small increase to the Parent portion or co-pay for the cost of child care services. The increase to the Parent Co-Pay was approved by the Office of Early Learning in April 2015 and will go into effect for those parents recertifying for services, effective June 1, 2015. The increase is \$0.20 per week.

7. **DCF Report**

Elizabeth Caesar has information to share from Wendy Fletcher-Altman regarding children and summer safety. Their agency has been visiting child care centers to read and teach young children about water safety. If there are any centers that would like DCF to visit, email Wendy Fletcher-Altman to request. National Water Safety Day is 05/15/2015.

8. **Public Comment**

While there was no "public Comment, the Board recognized the efforts of Amy Whittington, Director of two early learning facilities in Washington County, on her efforts to reach out to legislatures to educate them about what School Readiness is and the need for more funding to serve those families who are eligible.

9. **Meeting Adjourned**

This meeting of the Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida, Inc. Board of Directors was adjourned at 12:11 pm CST.

Submitted by:
Darrin Wall, Secretary
DW:sg