Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2015

The Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors Executive Committee met at the Ozark
Opportunities, Inc. Central office in Harrison, Arkansas, at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Committee Members Present:

Jim Sprott          Hon. Roger Hooper          Ron McPherson
Donna Grinder       Paulette Hill
Via telephone       Via telephone

Committee Members Absent: Gloria York

Staff Members Present:

Richard T. Atkinson       Shirley Richesin          Jane Bueg          Ryan Clayborn
Patricia Murray

Guests Present: None.

1. Meeting Called to Order:

After reading Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Mission Statement, the meeting was called to order by Jim
Sprott, Board Chairperson at 1:30 p.m. A quorum was established. Chairperson Sprott requested a
change in agenda to add Appointment of Board Committees after agenda item #8. Corporate
Services.

❖ Hon. Roger Hooper moved to amend the agenda as requested. Ron McPherson seconded.
Motion carried unanimously.

2. Prior Meeting Minutes

Hon. Roger Hooper requested his name be corrected in the November 25, 2014 minutes of the Board
of Directors.

❖ Hon. Roger Hooper moved to approve the November 24, 2014 minutes of the OOI Executive
Committee. Paulette Hill seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Executive Director’s Report/ Emerging Issues and Strategic Plan Update

Mr. Atkinson briefed the Committee on **IM 138– Final CSBG Standards**. In April 2015, Arkansas Office of Community Services (OCS) will do a baseline assessment of **Ozark Opportunities, Inc.** to determine the agency’s compliance with the new standards. OCS will look closely at the level of Board involvement in Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment processes at **OOI**. Another planning session is needed to review National Performance Indicators (NPI’s) reported for 2014 and to assess 2015 reporting priorities.

Mr. Atkinson requested authorization to re-allocate $4,000 of the current “CSBG Special Funds” budget from to fund Keyhole Gardening projects in Baxter County. **OOI** will partner with Food Bank of North Central Arkansas on the project. By general consensus, authorization was granted.

Due to the unavailability of VISTA volunteers, EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) outreach activities will not happen this year. The agency hopes to engage with the community through a new position; a “Strategic Coordinator”. Applications for the position are currently being accepted.

Head Start recompetition for **Ozark Opportunities, Inc.** is an official reality (further discussion later in the meeting.)

Overall, the agency is sound. Getting the word out about **OOI** is an ongoing challenge. Mr. Atkinson will be reaching out to the community through personal visits one day a week.

**Mr. Sprott:** How are we going to fund the Strategic Coordinator position?

A: There are 9 months of funding currently available. We are hoping to obtain grants when we get the position filled. We are continuing our efforts to obtain a VISTA for VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance). The process for securing VISTA volunteers is time consuming and opportunities come in complicated cycles. Additional funds for salary is also available from the unfilled Family Development Worker position (in the short term). The agency is trying to pay enough to attract qualified candidates. The LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistant Program) continues to require a significant portion of Community Service staff time and does not pay its way completely, as the program only provides approximately $75,000 to administer & distribute $1,000,000 in assistance.

Ron McPherson suggested contacting the local schools as a resource in the gardening project. All Marion County Schools have gardens.

**Hon. Hooper:** Is Head Start moving along?

A: At this point, engagement with Legislators is very important. The program is solid, and we are preparing for the upcoming Recompetition.
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Mr. Sprott: How will Strategic Planning be scheduled?

A: Through the Committee. We will also need an assigned Planning Committee for Head Start Recompetition. OOI must decide what we are going to do and where we are going to do it. OOI must include Early Head Start (EHS). Feedback from the Regional Office indicates that grant applications that do not include EHS will not be funded.

Mr. Sprott listed the Planning Committee members: Ron McPherson, Roger Hooper, Julie Tilley, Jim Sprott, Gloria York and Laurel Orr. After discussion, it was tentatively established that the Planning Committee will meet Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in Yellville.

4. Head Start Trainings:

A. Disabilities Component & Plan

Tricia Murray, Disabilities Coordinator/Classroom Staff Supervisor for OOI Head Start, provided training for the members on the Disabilities Component & Plan. Ms. Murray highlighted several aspects of the Disabilities Component, including screening tools, IEP (Individual Education Plan), program enrollment requirements (10% of funded slots), and the use of one-on-one Disability Aides and screening timelines. The informational packet distributed to the members also including information that is shared with parents from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) on child development. OOI has purchased wheelchairs, walkers and crutches for student use.

OOI currently has 17% of funded enrollment with children with disabilities. Generally the disabilities are speech or developmental; however, OOI does have several students with autism.

Hon. Hooper: What is the follow-up on students after leaving Head Start?
A: Follow-up usually ends at Kindergarten. There is a lot of informal tracking and follow-up. Ryan Clayborn, Program Manager, added that a goal is to continue tracking at least until 3rd grade.

Mr. Sprott: Is there someone around that refurbishes wheelchairs?
A: Drew’s Services in Harrison and maybe the hospital auxiliary.
Hon Hooper: What are studies showing to be the greatest benefit of Head Start?
A: Mr. Atkinson: It varies, depending on the study. Some only track through 3rd grade and show no impact, other studies show less negative behavior as teens. The Parent Engagement component has a big impact. Basically, Head Start gets children on a level playing field for entering school. Mr. Clayborn added that the main things are the gaining of socialization skills by the children, teaching them self-regulation and managing their feelings.

Ms. Murray: working with the parents to get them the resources they need. Mr. Clayborn stressed that it takes repeated efforts of staff to guide parents to the resources they need to help their child.

B. Agency Audit Requirements:

Shirley Richesin, Finance Director, conducted Board Training on Audit Requirements, including training on the “Super Circular”, which merged eight circulars (including A-102, A-110, A-87, A-122 & A-133) into one uniform set of cost principles, audit and administrative requirements for all types of entities that receive federal financial assistance. The “Super Circular” will go into effect for OOI beginning the next fiscal year, March 1, 2015.

One change in the regulation is the audit re-bidding requirement. Previously it was every two years, now it is every 3 years.

Mr. Sprott: Where you satisfied with the new auditors? Where there any findings?
A: Ms. Richesin was satisfied with the new auditors and the agency had no findings.

- One finding in the past was related to the cost of space in the OOI-owned building in Harrison.
- There had not been a finding prior to that one, nor since.

Mr. McPherson: How long does the audit take?
A: We submitted the report in September. Last year the audit took a little longer due to the new audit firm and the fact that the audit is not just financial anymore. Compliance Audit requirements take a great deal of time.

Mr. Sprott recognized that the Board of Directors is responsible for the finances and compliance of the agency, and expressed appreciation to Ms. Richesin for doing a very good job.
5. Program Updates:

A. Head Start Update:

Mr. Atkinson requested the Head Start Policy Council By-Laws review and acceptance be tabled due to the unavailability of the final draft approved by Head Start Policy Council on January 26, 2015.

Mr. Atkinson discussed Head Start Recompetition: $2,662,318 million in funds for 6 counties to provide services for children 0-5 years of age. He has had conversations with many Head Start programs that have re-competed; and all have hired a consultant to assist with the recompetition grant process. Mr. Atkinson stated that in his assessment, OOI’s chances of getting the program back are very good. OOI’s Head Start Region VI Program Specialist, Deborah Daniels, recommends asking for the funding per child at the national average. She also recommends OOI request Training & Technical Assistance on Early Head Start. Mr. Atkinson presented to the committee price quotes obtained from several consulting firms: Heartland Strategies; Essential Elements; Kaleidoscope; and Johnston & Bitner Consulting, LLC.

Mr. Atkinson explained that all of the firms seemed to be high quality providers. He further explained that he had received positive reviews on Johnston & Bitner Consulting, LLC., and that Susan Johnston was the head of Region VI for several years and knows how they view programs and applications for funding.

Mr. McPherson: What are we shooting for? A lot more Early Head Start?
A: Mr. Atkinson stressed that we need a planning meeting and a lot of study of data and conditions will need to be done to make a strategic decision of where to place EHS slots. The planning meeting should be here at the central office, so we can utilize the white boards, internet, and other resources. A time/date estimate of actual provision of Early Head Start services would not be until Spring of 2017.

Mr. Sprott: Do we want to request Training & Technical Assistance?
A: Yes. Our Region 6 Specialist, Deborah Daniels asked that we send a formal request letter to that effect.

- Chairperson Sprott signed the request to Region VI for T&TA and asked for a motion to hire a consultant for Head Start Recompetition grant submission.
- Ron McPherson moved to approve spending of corporate funds of $7,500 to contract with the consulting firm of Johnston & Bitner Consulting, LLC. Hon. Roger Hooper seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
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Ryan Clayborn closed the Head Start Program Update by informing the Committee that the program was going smooth, improvements to playgrounds are wrapping up, and Crystal Samsel, Engagement Coordinator is traveling to all classrooms and providing mentoring, and coaching on Instructional Support.

B. Community Services Report

Rebecca Hanlin, Community Services Director, could not be present due to prior commitment to the Boone County Leadership Program (which does not excuse any absences).

Mr. Atkinson noted that the 2014 Annual Agency Outcomes Report was sent via e-mail to all Board members, as were 2015 1st quarter preliminary outcomes numbers.


6. Agency Progress Report

The Agency Progress Report for January 2015 was sent via e-mail to all Board members.

❖ Ron McPherson moved to accept the Agency Progress Report. Paulette Hill seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Finance Report

Shirley Richesin, Finance Director, presented to the Committee for their review, consideration and approval Expenditure Reports for Community Service Block Grant and Head Start and Credit Card Statement Re-Cap and review (documents sent prior to meeting) for November and December 2014. Credit card purchase documentation was present for inspection. Also included in the Finance Reports were Payroll and Payroll Taxes Report and Retirement Plan Recap. Ms. Richesin expanded on the Head Start Budget Report – we are on track to spend all funds by program end (2/28/2015). The Head Start Budget has a lot of flexibility; some categories are over budget (i.e. playground equipment). The program purchased a 2015 Toyota Corolla for $19,177.95 (taxes included), most of which was paid for by the sale of the Bus, Van and Truck. The extra money in the budget includes the $64,000+ the program saved during sequestration last year that was approved for spending this year by Region 6.

❖ Hon. Roger Hooper moved to accept the Finance Reports. Paulette Hill seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
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OOI Board Committees- January 2015

**EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE**

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<td>Jim Sprott</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td>Paulette Hill</td>
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**GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE**

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**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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Ms. Richesin requested Committee action to exercise the option to contract with the same audit firm - Welch, Couch & Co., PA (formerly Hughes, Welch & Milligan, LTD) for fiscal year ending 2/28/15.


Ms. Richesin reported that the OOI Audit has been accepted by Federal DHHS Office of Inspector General. Evidence is on file that the audit has been uploaded. The final letter from DHHS Office of Inspector General is pending, and will be sent to the Board upon receipt.

8. Corporate Services Update

Jane Bueg, Corporate Services Director presented to the Committee employment actions approved 1/27/2015 by Head Start Policy Council: hire Alison Parks for Teacher Assistant at Clinton and Susan Richards for Family Service Worker for Cotter/Mountain Home; OOI Personnel Policy and Job Descriptions for 2015, (including revised Family Development Worker job description and new Strategic Coordinator job description).


Ms. Bueg also provided a brief Update of Agency Benefits enrollments; including: Health, Dental and family AirEvac membership.

9. Appointment of Board Committees

Chairperson Sprott announced appointment of members to Board Committees (attached). There being no further business, Chairperson Sprott declared the meeting adjourned at 3: 23 p.m.

[Signature]
Board Officer

2/24/15
Date: