Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
November 24, 2015

The Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors met at the Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Central Office, Arkansas, at 5:55 p.m. on November 24, 2015.

Board Members Present:

Renee Dunagin, Delegate for Hon. Mickey Pendergrass
Mayor Dan Sherrell
Jim Sprott

Hon. Terry Ott
Mayor Jan Larson
Donna Crain
Judy Schenk
Althea O’Haver

Gloria York
Debra Clemons

Hon. Roger Hooper

Board Members Absent:

Paulette Hill
Hon. Jim Harness
Kristen Smith

Danny Griffin

Board Members Candidates Present:

Vanessa Thomas-Jones

Staff Members Present:

Richard T. Atkinson
Shirley Richesin
Jane Bueg

Rebecca Hanlin
Ryan Clayborn
Tawnya Akins

Terri Beard
Aaron Evans
Krystal Mayes

Patricia Murray
Melissa Riggins
Julie Smith

Guests Present:

Lanna Bullington, Early Childhood Education Consultant
Deidre Mays, Head Start Policy Council Representative

I. Meeting Called to Order:

Chairperson Jim Sprott, declaring a quorum present and with the consent of the body, called to order the quarterly meeting of Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors at 5:55 p.m. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. Sprott read the Mission Statement of Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
II. Acceptance of prior meeting minutes & ratification of actions (minutes provided prior to the meeting)

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to accept the minutes of the August 27, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting, the minutes of the October 27, 2015 Executive Committee Meeting. Hon. Terry Ott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- Mayor Dan Sherrell moved to ratify the actions of the Executive Committee through October 27, 2015. Hon. Terry Ott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Acceptance of New Board Members

Mr. Atkinson introduced Vanessa Thomas-Jones, candidate for private representative for Baxter County. Ms. Thomas-Jones is Principal for Mountain Home Kindergarten and has previously served on the Board.

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to accept Vanessa Thomas-Jones as new member of the Board of Directors. Ron McPherson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Board Committee Appointments

Chairperson Sprott announced the Board Committee appointments.


- Grievance Committee: Hon. Mickey Pendergrass, Mayor Dan Sherrell, Ron McPherson, Mayor Jan Larson, Althea O’Haver, & Kristen Smith.


One member asked if there were many grievances; Mr. Atkinson responded that most complaints were handled at the center/local level and rarely escalated to the formal, written grievance level; however, if it comes to that there are formal policies and procedures to guide the process. There were no further discussion or comments.
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V. Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Atkinson reported that the agency is strong, engaged in our communities and strengthening partnerships. He emphasized that our employees are the “face of OOI”. Current focus is on the two Head Start grant applications: Recompetition and Continuation. At the Community Service front, we are still in need of space for the Baxter County Outreach office; our current location in Cotter is for sale. We would like to move back to Mountain Home and are looking for an affordable location.

Mr. Atkinson informed the Board that the Strategic Plan Matrix was updated in October and sent out with the documents prior to that meeting. Strategic Planning and Theory of Change will be the focus of a future planning meeting.

VI. Training

Richard Atkinson, Executive & Head Start Director, conducted training on OOI’s Head Start grant process, Community Assessment and ERSEA (Enrollment, Recruitment, Selection, and Eligibility & Attendance) Service Area. Mr. Atkinson also provided training on PDM1012 – Policy Groups, Planning, and Shared Decision-Making; PDM1018 – Program Planning; PDM1022 – Impasse Procedures; PDM1023 – Community/Parent Complaint Procedure; Code of Conduct for Policy Councils and Governing Bodies (includes Confidentiality) & Conflict of Interest Policy and Agreement.

Mr. Atkinson also reviewed the 1304.50 Appendix Governance and Management Responsibilities chart which provides a visual description of the shared decision-making requirements of the Head Start Regulations. The Head Start Policy Council Planning Committee met on November 10, 2015 to review the Recompetition Grant Application; follow-up on the planning committee’s recommendations was conducted at the November 23, 2015 meeting of the full Policy Council. Mr. Atkinson also noted that the 5 Year Goals for OOI Head Start are included in this years’ grant application. He stressed that Community Assessment is an on-going process, as things change rapidly; he then showed the Board a copy of the newest “Pre-K Slots in the OOI Service Area” and outlined changes in availability.

Mr. Atkinson reminded the Board that OOI Head Start is in Recompetition due to our CLASS scores on the last Triennial Review; we were .03 under the threshold. There is currently a big push to discontinue CLASS as a deficiency and classify it as a “non-compliance” item.

Mr. Atkinson reviewed the new model, #41b and the new “Service Area Map” of locations for OOI Head Start Classrooms, and Early Head Start Classrooms targeted in the Recompetition Grant Application (OOI outreach offices also on the map). The locations were selected based on data from reliable sources including: SAIPE (Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates), local school lunch programs, ABC (Arkansas Better Chance) classroom locations and Arkansas Childcare Licensing.
Looking to the future, OOI plans to explore expansion options for both Pre-K and Infant/Toddler classrooms through ABC, CCDBG (Child Care Development Block Grant) and Early Head Start expansion opportunities. Mr. Atkinson invited the members to explore the ECLKC (Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center) https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc website for more information, including videos and training materials.

OOI Head Start management team each provided a brief overview of their area(s) of responsibility:

- Wanda Nelson (absent- responsibilities explained by Ryan Clayborn): Licensing & Facilities Coordinator- handles childcare licensing, Facilities, Nutrition, on-site monitoring, safety drills, emergency evacuation plans, CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) and nutrition.

- Ryan Clayborn: Program Manager- Education / Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator- handles Team Leader responsibilities for the program, CLASS observations of teaching staff, professional development for teaching staff & management team and on-going training of staff utilizing Google Classroom.
  - Gloria York testified that the HS curriculum has been very effective with her son who has Asperger’s Syndrome.

- Tawnya Akins: Health/Mental Health Coordinator- responsible for ensuring required physical, dental and lead screenings — including follow-up — are conducted and documented, she works with mental health service providers to conduct mental health observations of each classroom, assists classroom staff with student behaviors; recruits professional nurses to the procedures associated with lead testing of students. Hon. Roger Hooper inquired if any cases of elevated blood levels have been detected— there was at least 1 (one) requiring treatment in the past few years.

- Krystal Mayes: Parent Involvement & Volunteer Coordinator- responsible for Policy Council, In-kind (non-federal share), parent engagement and volunteers.

- Tricia Murray: Disabilities Coordinator & Classroom Staff Supervisor- responsible for ensuring vision, hearing and developmental screenings are complete on all students within 45 days of enrollment; works with 3 Educational Co-op’s and 3 Pre-schools for disability services to our students. 10% of OOI enrollment is reserved for disabled students, OOI currently has 13%; she also supervises 50 classroom staff – handles substitutes, conflicts and evaluations. Classroom hours are 7:15 – 3:30 p.m.; she fields calls from staff from before 6 am. until about 9 pm.
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- Melissa Riggins: Operations Coordinator- responsible for mail, e-mail, fax and telephone communications at the central office and all purchasing for classrooms and central office.

- Terri Beard: ERSEA Coordinator & FSW Supervisor- responsible for all aspects of Enrollment, Recruitment, Selection, Eligibility and Attendance for OOI Head Start; reviews all income eligibility calculations of each enrollee; supervises Family Service (Support) Workers and serves as a Technology problem-solver for Head Start.

VII. Program Updates (Reports provided prior to the meeting):

HEAD START

Deidre Mays, OOI Head Start Policy Council Representative, informed the Board that the Policy Council received a detailed explanation of the process used to create the new Head Start model and discussed the changes. The Policy Council voted unanimously to approve the new Head Start model, the Head Start Grant Application and Budget, Community Assessment, and T & TA Plan and the Continuation Grant with all the backup documentation.

Mr. Atkinson informed the Board that the Continuation Grant for Head Start is “business as usual” until the end of the school term; Region VI will give us what they think we need to finish the school year— we will run out of money & grant time on February 29, 2016; the Continuation Grant approval is necessary to complete the school year.

Mr. Atkinson explained that the entire Recompetition grant application is 250 pages, with 100 pages of narrative, with the balance as finance narrative and the Appendices. The website to upload the grant documents (www.grants.gov) is experiencing issues with the application template, so the deadline has been extended from November 30 to December 15, 2015 (or after). Mr. Atkinson asked for Board action to approve the Continuation Grant Application and Budget, the Recompetition Grant Application and Budget including new model OOI Organizational Chart, Community Assessment & Agency Service Area, and Philosophy & Short and Long Term Goals & Objectives per the recommendation of the Policy Council.

❖ Hon. Terry Ott moved to approve the Continuation Grant Application and Budget, the Recompetition Grant Application and Budget including new model OOI Organizational Chart, Community Assessment & Agency Service Area, and Philosophy & Short and Long Term Goals & Objectives. Ron McPherson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
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Mr. Atkinson presented for review and approval Head Start Consent Agenda (sent prior to meeting, and covered earlier in today’s meeting): 2015 Policy Council By-Laws, 2015 PDM Policies and Procedures (including Community Complaint Procedures 1304.50(d)(2)(v), Internal Dispute Resolution (Impasse) 1304.50(h) and Policy Council & Board Code of Conduct/Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Statements.

- Mayor Dan Sherrell moved to approve the Head Start Consent Agenda as presented. Gloria York seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Atkinson reported to the Board on his recent conversation with Head Start Region VI regarding enrollment. OOI funded enrollment is 440, we are currently at 418, and not meeting funded enrollment levels triggers a formal Risk Assessment Meeting (RAM) with Region VI. Our current level of enrollment supports our new model’s reduced Pre-K slots.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Rebecca Hanlin, Community Services Director, presented an overview of the services, demographics and statistical analysis of Community Services programs including: HEAP (Home Energy Assistance), Stability Programs, Family Development and SUCCESS (Succeed at Understanding and Conquering Challenges to Establish Stability and Self-Reliance). In 2015 OOI served over 23,000 individuals in our six county service area. After a question and answer period, Ms. Hanlin introduced Family Development Workers Julie Smith and Aaron Evans, who provided an inspiring, enlightening and heart-warming presentation on SUCCESS, highlighting the Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting’-By World curriculum “that enables participants, called “investigators”, to examine their own experience of poverty as well as explore issues in that community that impact poverty” (www.ahaprocess.com).

VIII. Acceptance of Agency (Governing Board) Report (report provided prior to the meeting)
- Debra Clemons moved to accept the Agency (Governing Board) Report as submitted. Morgan Sellers seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
IX. Finance Reports

Shirley Richesin, Finance Director, reported that there is nothing out of range or out of the norm on this month’s finance reports. She presented to the Committee for their review, consideration and approval the Agency Budget for 3/1/15 – 2/29/16, Grant Period Expenditures as of 10/31/15 for Community Service Block Grant and Head Start, Credit Card Statement Re-Cap and review (documents sent prior to meeting) for October 2015. Credit card purchase documentation was present for inspection. Also included in the Finance Reports were verification of Payroll Taxes Report and Retirement Plan Recap.

Ms. Richesin presented a thorough review of the Balance Sheet as of 11/13/15 distributed to the members. Mr. Sprott asked, “Will the balance sheet ultimately be set up in the usual and customary manner with assets, liabilities and net worth?” Ms. Richesin replied affirmatively stating the numbers are correct, the format is a work in progress due to the way the software is reporting the numbers; creating a proper report for the future is high priority.

Ms. Richesin referred to the vesting schedule for OOI’s Retirement Plan, explaining how forfeited funds from non-vested ex-employees are held in a “reserve trust fund” in the event of re-hire within a five year period. Analysis of the fund by our auditor indicates that $37,000 is adequate to cover our potential liability for any return to employment events. The auditor made recommendation to return $39,269.48 (less allowable plan expenditures) to the programs (Head Start and Community Services). These returned funds enabled OOI to provide a $0.25 per hour increase to staff in Head Start and Community Services. Administrative staff and finance staff were not included. No budget revisions were required. Mr. Atkinson stated that the rationale for the increase was the raise in minimum wage and no COLA from funding sources in many years. He asked the Board to consider development of policy and procedure for future use of these funds; including use for educational development for staff. Morgan Sellers voiced support of the education development support plan.

Ms. Richesin also reported that the State of Arkansas Audit Division reviewed and accepted our audit report, a letter is on file. Ms. Richesin stated that results of the National Review are pending and will take longer to receive.

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to accept the Finance Reports. Morgan Sellers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
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X. Corporate Services Update:

a. Jane Bueg, Corporate Services Director, reported that Head Start Policy Council approved the hire of Deanna Griffin, Teacher for Clinton Head Start. She also reported the resignation of Crystal Samsel, Enhancement Coordinator.

b. Ms. Bueg updated the members on the status of health insurance premiums for 2016: OOI will see a premium increase of 3%, negotiated down from a proposed 9% increase with the help of our agent, Collins Insurance. The agency and staff will share equally in the increase, per Executive Committee action.

c. Ms. Bueg asked members who shop on www.Amazon.com to register through www.smile.amazon.com and select Ozark Opportunities, Inc. as their charity to receive a small donation from Amazon.com each time they shop.

XI. Offer for Clinton Head Start Property: Mr. Atkinson updated the Board on the Hwy 65 building in Clinton. Project Surge made an offer today of $65,000; the board had set a $75,000 price. Region VI requires fair market price.

❖ Hon. Roger Hooper moved to reject the offer from Project Surge. Morgan Sellers seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

XII. Executive Director Evaluation

Chairperson Sprott declared an Executive Session to conduct the annual performance evaluation of Richard Atkinson, Executive and Head Start Director for Ozark Opportunities, Inc. All staff was directed to leave the meeting.

XIII. Adjournment was declared by Chairperson Sprott at 8:33 p.m.

[Signature]
Board Officer

2/25/16
Date