Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2015

The Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors met at the Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Central Office, Arkansas, at 6:20 p.m. on August 27, 2015.

Prior to the meeting, Rebecca Hanlin, Community Services Director, reported on highlights and anecdotes that illustrate the impact of OOI's SUCCESS Program and Community Services on the people in our communities.

Board Members Present:
Paulette Hill          Renee Dunagin, Delegate for Hon. Mickey Pendergrass
Ron McPherson         Gloria York
Althea O’Haver        Danny Griffin
Hon. Terry Ott

Board Members Absent:
Julie Tilley          Jim Sprott
Mayor Jan Larson       Hon. Jim Harness
Hon. Roger Hooper      Mayor Dan Sherrell
                      Debra Clemons

Board Member Candidates Present:
Donna Crain           Morgan Sellers

Staff Members Present:
Richard T. Atkinson   Shirley Richesin
Rebecca Hanlin        Terri Beard
                      Jane Bueg

Guests Present:
Lanna Bullington- Early Childhood Ed. Consultant
George Hill
Mark Henke- Welch, Couch & Company

I. Meeting Called to Order:
The quarterly meeting of Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors was called to order by Paulette Hill, Board Vice-Chairperson at 6:20 p.m. A quorum was established.
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II. Acceptance of prior meeting minutes & ratification of actions (minutes provided prior to the meeting)
   ❖ Ron McPherson moved to accept the minutes of the May 21, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting and ratification of actions of the Executive Committee through August 27, 2015. Hon. Terry Ott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

   Vice-Chairperson Hill requested a motion to change the agenda.
   ❖ Hon. Terry Ott moved to accept a change in agenda. Gloria York seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Acceptance of New Board Members

   Mr. Atkinson introduced Donna Crain, candidate for low-income representative for Marion County and Morgan Sellers, candidate for low-income representative for Boone County (each was elected by a “meeting of low income” and have met the requirements to serve.)
   ❖ Ron McPherson moved to accept Donna Crain and Morgan Sellers as new members of the Board of Directors. Hon. Terry Ott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Finance Reports

   Board Treasurer, Ron McPherson, presented the Financial Reports approved earlier by the Executive Committee.
   ❖ Althea O’Haver moved to accept the report. Renee Dunagin seconded. Motion carried.

Shirley Richesin, Finance Director, introduced Mark Henke, a representative of OOI’s auditing firm Welch, Couch & Company, PA. Mr. Henke presented the audit report for agency fiscal year March 1, 2014 – February 28, 2015. Mr. Henke reports the audit was a clean report, it is a “good audit” with no findings. There were no questions from the Board.

• Ms. Richesin reported on the IRS 990 report which was e-mailed to all members with the audit report and offered to make print copies of both documents upon request.

• Mr. Atkinson outlined some changes in the audit presentation including corporate funds being clearly identified. Ms. Richesin added that the audit is not only a financial audit, but also a compliance audit and an audit of the internal controls that are in place to insure that expenses are reasonable, allowable and allocable.
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• Vice-Chairperson Hill shared with the membership the comments Chairperson Sprott made at the Executive Committee meeting earlier in the evening; and conveyed their appreciation for the attention to detail provided to the board by Mr. Atkinson, Ms. Richeson and OOI staff.

• Hon. Terry Ott expressed appreciation to Mr. Atkinson for the continuous flow of information and the accountability of OOI staff, as he understands the importance of the Board to have a good idea of what is going on with the agency.

  ❖ Ron McPherson made a motion to accept the 2015 Audit and corresponding 990 Tax Return as presented, Terry Ott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Program Updates (Reports provided prior to the meeting)

A. COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr. Atkinson thanked Ms. Hanlin for the pre-meeting recap of Community Services programs. He reviewed that the Executive Committee approved application of the 4 mini-grants to OCS for CSBG Discretionary funds, the Rural IMPACT Letter of Interest and the 2015 CSBG 3rd Quarter Report.

B. HEAD START

UPDATE: Mr. Atkinson reported that the Maranatha First Assembly of God in Shirley has received funds from Convoy of Hope and is purchasing every child in the Shirley school district a free pair of shoes, including Head Start students.

Tonya Williams, Arkansas Division Director of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, added 20 expansion slots for 4 year-olds in Marshall with “Race to the Top” funds. These enhancement slots are funded for 4 years, and include a “Family Service Manager” position to assist families with goal-setting and accessing needs services (similar to the Head Start model it was based on.)

The re-competition grant is progressing, the RFP is not expected to come out until mid-October; staffs are working with the consultant on various portions of the grant. The grant application is limited to 100 pages, double spaced. Our goal is to have the rough draft ready when the grant application period opens.
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Enrollment for the current school year has not yet hit 440; we are currently at 406 students and expect to have 440 by the end of next month. Mr. Atkinson invited comments from Lanna Bullington, consultant to the Board on Early Childhood Education.

- Ms. Bullington spoke of the collaboration that has been built through the years between her organization, Ozarks Unlimited Resources Cooperative (or O.U.R.) and Ozark Opportunities, Inc. The classrooms are different; however our relationship is very strong, which helps the children a great deal. OUR serves 13 school districts in our service area.

- Gloria York asked if we still have Head Start openings, as she knew of people on the waiting list at Western Grove and Harrison. Mr. Atkinson explained we are accepting low-income children first. This year we are prioritizing across the six counties, not by just by centers, in preparation for the next grant when available slots will be reduced from 440 to 263.

- Mountain Home has a large number of ABC slots in private day care. The projections and data used for closing classrooms presented to the board in May have proven to be accurate; with each location that projected lower enrollment having struggles to meet enrollment this year.

Mr. Atkinson presented the P.I.R. (Program Information Report) for the period covering June 1, 2014 – May 31, 2015 (as sent earlier to all Board Members.)
  - Althea O’Haver moved to have the Executive Committee review the P.I.R. Report at their next meeting. Renee Dunagin seconded.

VI. Acceptance of Program Reports and Head Start Program Information Report (P.I.R.)
  - Hon. Ott moved to withdrawal the last motion and accept the P.I.R. and Agency Program Report, as he had received them and expected others had as well. Ron McPherson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
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VII. Training:

A. ERSEA 1305 Final Rule Training

Terri Beard, ERSEA Coordinator, conducted training on ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance) Final Rule 1305 for the Head Start Program. Ms. Beard provided background on use of the priority list this year with OOI accepting over-income students by need and not by site/location. A question and answer period followed Ms. Beard’s training. Training resource materials were shared via e-mail to all Board members for future reference.


Richard Atkinson, Executive & Head Start Director, conducted training on the Head Start Act & Performance Standards and Triennial Federal Review & Protocol. He discussed how the agency has many procedures in place to insure that all standards are followed for each component, and invited all Board members to visit the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) at https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc. Training resource materials were shared via e-mail to all Board members for future reference.

C. Human Resources at OOI

Jane Bueg, Corporate Service Director, conducted training on Human Resources process at OOI and in the Head Start Program with Head Start Policy Council. She explained the requirements for Head Start teaching staff, the process used to hire and terminate employees and limitations on Policy Council members working for the agency.

VIII. Executive Director’s Report

A. Strategic Plan Update: Mr. Atkinson presented a Strategic Plan Update (included in the Agency Progress Report) which emphasizes stabilizing families and empowering them to develop. OOI’s core stabilization program is LIHEAP; summer program average regular benefit amount is $130 and average crisis benefit is $170; winter crisis benefits are higher due to the cost of propane. OOI distributes about $1 million in benefits each year through LIHEAP.

B. New Projects Update: we still haven’t gotten a VISTA volunteer (perhaps this next round); we are still looking at providing dental assistance in some way, and are faced with the question of “how do we raise money to help families with stabilization services”? Mr. Atkinson discussed with the Board that with the $20,000 one-time funds received recently the agency assisted 56 families to overcome a major barrier; even more money could help even more people. He would like to discuss this issue at future Board meetings to see if members can assist with the development planning process, as outside funds are necessary.
IX. Corporate Services Update:

Jane Bueg, Corporate Services Director, reported that Mike Hutter, representative of Mutual of America, presented an educational session on the OOI Retirement Plan and services to all staff on August 18, 2015. All employees were afforded an opportunity to visit privately with Mr. Hutter to discuss their retirement plans and make any desired changes in their investment choices. About 40 employees met with Mr. Hutter throughout the day.

X. Adjournment:

- Ron McPherson moved to adjourn. Hon. Ott seconded. Adjournment was declared by Vice-Chairperson Hill at 7:58 p.m.