Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2014

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, April 22, 2014

Committee Members Present:

Jim Sprott Paulette Hill Ron McPherson Donna Grinder
Hon. Roger Hooper (via telephone)

Committee Members Absent:

None.

Staff Members Present:

Richard T. Atkinson Shirley Richesin Jane Bueg Rebecca Hanlin
Terri Beard Krystal Mayes

Guests Present:

Gloria York.

1. Meeting Called to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Jim Sprott, Board Chairperson at 1:32 p.m. A quorum was established. Mr. Sprott introduced Gloria York, who is a prospective Board Member representing Newton County. Mrs. York is also a Head Start Parent, and member of Head Start Policy Council.

2. Acceptance of prior meeting minutes

- Donna Grinder moved to accept the minutes of the March 25, 2014 Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting as sent. Hon. Roger Hooper seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Executive Director’s Report

OOI Executive & Head Start Director Richard Atkinson reported to the Committee that, overall, the agency is doing well.

- The results of the Triennial Review of OOI’s Head Start Program have been received and the letter forwarded to all Board, HS Staff, and Policy Council members.
  - The report contained one area of Noncompliance (a finding that indicates the agency is out of compliance with Federal requirements; including, but not limited to, the Head Start Act or one or more of the Performance Standards) in an area or areas of program performance; however, it does not constitute a deficiency.
  - Noncompliances require a written timeline of correction and possible technical assistance (TA) or guidance from their program specialist, and if not corrected within the specified timeline, can become a deficiency.) in the area of follow-up and/or further treatment of “observable, known or suspected health problem”.
  - Mr. Atkinson assured the Committee that corrective action began while the review team was here. The remaining portion of the Triennial Review, CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) Observations were conducted the week of April 14-18, 2014; the report is pending.
    - Ryan Clayborn, Education, Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator, has been working with the teachers throughout the year, and is confident all of our classrooms have skilled teachers who understand CLASS.

- Mr. Atkinson recently attended the national in-service training for ROMA (Results-Oriented Management and Accountability) Trainers held in North Little Rock. There were excellent speakers and presenters from the non-profit community nationwide were present. “Theory of Change” is currently a focus in the national dialog on poverty, and even more emphasis is being placed on how dollars are spent and monitoring of the new CSBG Performance Standards will be a reality in the near future.

- The agency strategic planning process has been on break while Community Development Specialist Linda White has been out with an injury and unable to work on the project at this time. Mr. Atkinson plans to get it underway again soon. In the interim, he reviewed the “Strategic Plan Update” provided in the first three pages of the “Agency Report”. He explained that the dark shaded sections would be removed, as they are no longer needed.
Executive Director Report/Strategic Planning Update; continued:

- Mr. Atkinson explained that OOI has moved away from housing initiatives; becoming a CHDO (Community Housing Development Organization) is not a viable initiative for OOI, the board requirements for CHDO do not mesh with those of a CAA (Community Action Agency) in addition to the designation is only good for one project, and there is no longer additional funds attached to the designation. The other potential housing program, HOME, requires a minimum number of applicants, and OOI has not met that threshold. In addition, Harrison Housing Authority has taken the lead on housing-related projects in our Harrison. Since housing needs are addressed by a multitude of partners in our service area, this is an opportunity for OOI to let others lead, and instead focus resources and efforts on other areas.

- Head Start is planning to expand service hours in select areas to accommodate the growing need of parents and schools to reduce the early pick-up of preschoolers that often results in parents pulling their older children from school before dismissal. Ron McPherson asked if adjusted times for schools will be on a case-by-case basis; Mr. Atkinson confirmed that will be the case, as all locations may not need the additional service time.

- In updating the agency’s strategic plan we will be looking to strengthen the agency’s core capacities through technology upgrades, creating a technology plan, and changes in the processing of LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program) applications and payments. Increasing our involvement in advocacy will take on a greater priority, as Mr. Atkinson intends to get out more to meet with legislators and to educate the public on the realities of poverty. The programs that are targeted to the low-income population are always under attack, and showing impact of dollars spent will continue to be a priority. Hon. Hooper recommends that a few board members should be invited to join Mr. Atkinson when legislators visit to show support.

- Mr. Atkinson invited the Board to attend the upcoming ACA 40th AAA Annual Conference in North Little Rock, May 22, 22 & 23. The Conference will highlight the 50th Anniversary of Community Action and the 40th Anniversary of ACA AA. Three tracks of conference seminars are offered: A Board Track, Front Line Track and Executive Track. Paulette Hill requested that details of the conference be sent to the board via e-mail. Twenty-seven (27) OOI employees are registered to attend.

- Mr. Atkinson reported the Energy Assistance Program has ended and the very limited staff available did a great job. Hon. Hooper expressed that there is a strong need for energy assistance in his community (Van Buren County).
4. Program Updates

A. Community Services: Community Services Director Rebecca Hanlin provided the Committee with status reports on the Regular Home Energy Assistance Program and the Crisis Intervention Program.

- A summer energy program should start 7/7/14; program materials are expected by June 6, 2014.
- Commodity Food distribution is currently in progress.
- SUCCESS (Succeed at Understanding and Conquering Challenges to Establish Stability and Self-Reliance) case managers are partnering with University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension on a three-part series, Small Steps to Health and Wealth™. Hon. Hooper shared that Van Buren County was part of a pilot program with similar goals, focusing on nutrition, exercise and health monitoring. His county is currently ranked 25th in the state in the physical shape of its citizens.
- Ozark Opportunities, Inc. has applied for $10,000 in funding from Boone County United Way, which will be used to support SUCCESS initiatives. Both Ms. Hanlin and Ms. Wheeler attended the interview with the United Way Board earlier today.
- Trainings and meetings for Community Services Staff are scheduled and all will be attending the ACAAA Conference in May.

B. Head Start

1. Training

Richard Atkinson, Executive & Head Start Director introduced Head Start staff Terri Beard, ERSEA Coordinator and Krystal Mayes, Parent & Volunteer Engagement Specialist.

Mrs. Beard and Mrs. Mayes provided the committee with comprehensive training on the Parent Engagement component of the Head Start Program. Chairperson Sprott commented that the educational accomplishment of the United States is declining in world ranking; where do these engagement activities and goals fit in the improvement of U.S. educational institution's ranking? Mrs. Beard replied that Head Start encourages parents to be advocates for their children’s education; and to create an atmosphere that is inclusive and welcoming of parental involvement.
Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2014

These behaviors of engagement are then carried through to the elementary school experience where the schools are responsible for continuing the momentum of engagement that Head Start has started.

- When asked by Mr. Sprott, Gloria York (Head Start Parent & Policy Council Member and prospective OOI Board Member,) stated that she believed Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Head Start is doing the work to meet the Family Engagement regulations.

- Mr. Atkinson added that approximately half of OOI’s Pre-K eligible population have slots available to attend ABC (Arkansas Better Chance) or Head Start.

- Mrs. Mayes shared that additional involvement activities are in process: a Track and Field Day, Legal Aide information and a series of classes on Conscious Discipline, which “defines discipline not as something you do to children, but something you develop within them.” The process “teaches new skills to the adult first and the children second, empowering you to become the mindful parent you want to be.” These classes are being taught by Lanna Bullington, Early Childhood Special Education Supervisor for OUR Educational Cooperative and Early Childhood Education Consultant for Ozark Opportunities, Inc. OOI is partnering with OUR to provide this training at two locations: Harrison and Mountain Home; we hope to add a third location to the south.

2. **Head Start Report**: Mr. Atkinson directed the committee to the Agency Report and reviewed the component reports; including Head Start enrollment and attendance data.

3. **H.S. Sequestration Restoration/COLA Grant**: Shirley Richesin, Financial Officer, presented for Board Action the Head Start Sequestration Restoration Grant & Budget, including COLA. The Sequestration Restoration grant amount is $136,303, and the COLA is an additional $33,623. The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) requires either an across-the-board increase of at least 1.3% or extensive justification if funds are to be spent on other allowable actions. OOI proposes to budget additional program funds with the COLA award for an across-the-board increase, effective March 1, 2014. This will be an additional increase for all staff (Teachers, Teacher Assistants and Cooks received a 2% pay increase in December 2013.)
Mr. Atkinson reviewed the Narrative that will accompany the budget and highlighted what staff reductions that occurred due to Sequestration will be restored: the program will hire a program Enhancement Coordinator, a Finance Coordinator, expansion of the Parent & Volunteer Engagement Specialist position to a full time Coordinator (instead of 10 month position), expansion of the Family Service Workers to a full-time, full year schedule (equivalent to restoring the FSW that was not replaced due to Sequestration), Extended Day at select locations, Al's Pal's Training for teaching staff,

Technology Upgrades at the central office and select classrooms, Classroom Enhancements; Books for students, Classroom Enhancements; Learning Materials to support the Literacy Math & Science, and Lending Libraries that will have materials for both parents and children to check out and take home.

The entire process of applying for Sequestration Restoration Grant funds has been a challenge; guidance from the national office was not forthcoming in a timely manner, the template for the narrative was difficult to follow, and feedback from the regional office was not timely.

- Ron McPherson moved to approve the 2014 Sequestration Restoration Budget, including COLA. Hon. Roger Hooper seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to approve the 2014 Sequestration Restoration Narrative. Donna Grinder seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Acceptance of Program Reports

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to approve the Program Reports. Ron McPherson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2014

6. Finance Report:

   a. Shirley Richesin, Financial Officer, presented to the Board for their review, consideration and approval Expenditure Reports and Credit Card Statement Re-Cap and review (documents sent prior to meeting). Credit card purchase documentation is present for inspection.

      ❖ Hon. Roger Hooper moved to accept the Finance Reports. Donna Grinder seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

   b. Ms. Richesin presented for Board Action the revised CSBG Budget for FY 2014, which reflects $23,324 in Sequestration Restoration awarded to the agency. No staff reduction in salaries occurred when the Sequestration cuts were made. The revised budget reflects a 2% across the board COLA for CSBG staff; the agency strives to award COLA equally to all employees.

      The revised CSBG Budget also includes the added expense of $515 per month for Baxter County office space; an expense that previously did not exist, as Baxter County government had provided in-kind space for OOI operations in Baxter County for many years. The new monthly rent includes utilities.

      ❖ Ron McPherson moved to accept the Financial Reports and the revised CSBG budget. Hon. Roger Hooper seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

   c. Ms. Richesin presented to the Board for approval her recommendation for Auditor to conduct the single agency audit for year ending February 28, 2014. In response to the Request for Proposals published in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, audit specifications and questions and answers were sent to several firms; four (4) formal proposals were received: WIPFLI (Madison, Wisconsin), Hughes, Welch & Milligan (Batesville, AR), Beall Barclay & Co. (Rogers, AR) and Miller & Company (Little Rock, AR). In the specifications, OOI requested details of experience with Community Action Agencies, results of most recent Peer Review, References and other services the firm would provide.

      The fees ranged from $20,950 to $33,800. Each proposal was reviewed by Mr. Atkinson, Ms. Richesin and Ms. Bueg. Mr. Atkinson and Ms. Richesin conducted independent reference checks on the firm of Hughes, Welch & Milligan. Hughes, Welch & Milligan has been the auditor of choice for NADC, the community action agency serving the Batesville area, and White River Development Corporation.
Hon. Roger Hooper noted that he is on the Board of Directors for White River Development Corporation and is familiar with the firm.

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to approve the selection of Hughes, Welch & Milligan as Auditor for the single agency audit. Donna Grinder seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Corporate Services Update: Corporate Services Director Jane Bueg presented to the Committee for acceptance the Employment Actions as approved on April 17, 2014 by Head Start Policy Council; including:
   a. Revised agency salary schedule that reflects the 2% across-the-board COLA
   b. Revised Parent Involvement & Volunteer Coordinator job description
   c. Addition of 4.6 Schedule of Employee Benefits Eligibility to Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Personnel Policy.

- Hon. Roger Hooper moved to accept the actions. Ron McPherson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- Donna Grinder moved to adjourn. Hon. Roger Hooper seconded the motion.

8. Adjourn: There being no other business, Chairperson Sprott adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

[Signature]

Board Officer

[Signature] 5/27/14

Date