The *Ozark Opportunities, Inc.*, Board of Directors Executive Committee met at the Boone County Outreach office on March 29, 2012, at 5:30 pm.

**Committee Members Present:**

- Amy Adams  
- Paulette Hill  
- Judge Roger Hooper  
- Kim Hunley  
- James Sprott

**Guest(s):**

- Carlos Parker for Judge Pete Giles

**Staff Members Present:**

- Richard T. “Toby” Atkinson  
- Jane Bueg  
- Rebecca Hanlin  
- Shirley Richesin  
- Linda White

**Meeting Called to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Amy Adams at 5:32 pm. A quorum was present.

1. **Welcome**
   - Carlos Parker, attending for Judge Pete Giles, was introduced.
   - *Ozark Opportunities, Inc.*, Boone County office staff were introduced.

2. **Boone County Outreach Building Tour:** Mr. Atkinson gave a quick tour of the building, which was opened in December after the building next to the central office was closed due to structural damage.

3. **Planning Time – Discussion of Future Direction**
   - Mr. Atkinson reviewed the *Strategic Commitment Chart* of OOI activities, describing the agency as a “strange mix” of programs that has over time filled many “gaps” in communities. The agency continues to have a mission to support low income individuals and families with Housing, Education/Learning, and Basic Needs (Services & Empowerment.)
   - Community Action Agencies have historically been anonymous, and have not taken credit for successes—our goal is to remedy that for our agency by showing the communities how we are engaged and supporting communities and low income individuals and families to meet their goals and improve.
   - Mr. Atkinson explained that the with the addition of the Family Development and Community Development staff in the Community Services department, the agency is now more well-rounded, and is not stuck in a “services only” mode.
• Board Members asked about Head Start, and whether more funding had been sought for additional slots. There was explanation of the program having to compete with the ABC (state funded program) on occasion, and constant funding concerns. Additional funding has been requested; however, all efforts so far have been in vain.

• In regard to Weatherization, there will not be Department of Energy Funding for (next year,) but hopefully other projects/funding will fill in some of the gaps as we search for programs are similar in nature.

• OOI really needs to have a Strategic Planning Retreat in April/May with an outside facilitator to create a new, ongoing Strategic Direction and Plan that will be a fluid document and process to insure that the agency can change direction with changes in need and funding.

• OOI is also working on a Community Assessment process that is proactive— for example identifying potential threats to services/supports in the area, and insuring that there is discussion and action when needed to insure needs are met. An example is the recent concern of losing GED programs (assessed and found to be stable for now,) and changes to educational opportunities such as Advanced Placement (AP) Tests, which will now cost students more due to a lack of funding to pay the fees (per a recent newspaper article.) Judge Hooper inquired as to whether we work with Planning and Development districts- we do on a limited basis; the future of our work will require more partnership, coordination, and ultimately- collaboration.

4. Program Updates

a. Community Services Update

• Rebecca Hanlin discussed the Governing Board Report information for Community Services (handout.)

• CNCS Senior Corp Grant— handout reviewed; Shirley Richesin added that we would either meet the 30% match or obtain a waiver,
  ❖ Motion to approve plan and budget made by Mr. Jim Sprott, seconded by Judge Hooper. Motion passed unanimously.

• United Way of Boone County grant— Handout reviewed; Interview with United Way is April 24, 2012. Agency has asked for $10,000 to be applied to the SUCCESS Program for support of employment and education initiatives i.e. the Individual Development Accounts (IDA.) Per discussion, staff will check on availability of United Way funding in our other four counties.*
  ❖ Judge Hooper moved to approve the application as submitted, for the amount of $10,000. Mrs. Paulette Hill seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
b. **Head Start Program**

- Mr. Atkinson reviewed the Head Start portion of the Governing Board Report. Judge Hooper inquired about the $1.80 per meal United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reimbursement, and Shirley Richesin explained that the $1.80 covers the entire cost of food for students. She then reviewed the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA,) opportunity. OOI plans to award the funds across the board to all Head Start staff. There was discussion about how much the Federal COLA is; but the .72% is what is offered to the program this year. Currently, approximately 82% of OOI’s Head Start budget goes to staff, and the COLA is the only way we are able to provide an increase to staff.

  ✤ **Judge Hooper moved to accept the 2013 Head Start COLA increase, Jim Sprott seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

- Mr. Atkinson discussed page 7 of the Governing Board Report, and pointed out that the Average Daily Attendance (A.D.A.) number is lower than he would like to see; however, the program is in compliance, as the misses are excused. He mentioned that there is a need to keep an eye on centers where A.D.A. enrollment has dropped. He will have Terri Beard, ERSEA Specialist attend the next meeting to give a better idea of how the report affects the program.

c. **Weatherization Program Update**

- Revised ARRA Budget – Mr. Atkinson explained page 8 of handout; OOI deliberately left funds from last year in the budget to “carry over” to use this year, which begins in April. He expects one or two employees will remain in the Weatherization Program. Currently, the program is expected to complete 40 – 50 units next year. A corrective action report is not available from the state at this time. According to the State Monitors, we are meeting all requirements at this time.

- Revised DOE/LIHEAP budget – Ms. Richesin provided a handout for review, and explained the new budget.

  ✤ **Jim Sprott made a motion to approve the ARRA & DOE/LIHEAP budgets. Judge Hooper seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

d. **Finance** – Shirley Richesin reviewed the Expenditure Reports and Credit Card Statement Re-Cap handouts. There is a bid out which is advertised in this weekend’s Harrison Daily Times for the 2011 Agency Audit. Judge Hooper moved to accept both reports. Jim Sprott seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

e. **Retirement Plan Information** – Ms. Richesin explained that she has had several discussions with Consultants and thinks we need an updated Retirement Committee to make recommendations on changes to the plan and vendor requirements. Judge Hooper and Jim Sprott both offered to meet with the group; a meeting is planned for 3 pm. April 26, 2012.
f. **Corporate Services Update** – Approval of New Hires. Per Jane Bueg, the new Mental Health Coordinator is Cheryl Jenkins Akers. There were two new hires last month, Barbara Johnson and Linda White. There have been two resignations in Bruno-Pyatt in Head Start, which created two openings, and there is also an opening for a Volunteer Coordinator, which is a new position, and budgeted in the Senior Corp program.

- A motion was made to accept new hires by Judge Hooper. Motion seconded by Jim Sprott. Motion passed unanimously.

g. **Executive Director’s Report**

OOI is proceeding with preparations to apply for HOME funds through HUD, which would be used for homeowner-occupied home renovations. Renovation work would be contracted out. The program is similar to the current Weatherization program. Training and documents required by HUD were reviewed.

h. **Wrap up and discussion of dates for future Board meetings**

- The previous meeting’s minutes were read (and emailed to members prior to the meeting.)
  - A motion was made by Judge Hooper to approve the minutes as sent and distributed. Motion seconded by Paulette Hill. Motion passed unanimously.

- The **next meeting date of April 26, 2012, 5:00 pm was announced**.

i. **Adjourn.**

- Jim Sprott moved to adjourn, Judge Hooper seconded, passed unanimously.

*Note: Per discussion in the meeting, staff researched United Way organizations in the other four counties and found that Van Buren County has its own branch of United Way - www.vbcuw.org, and Baxter County is served by Heart of Arkansas United Way – www.heartaruw.org, which is located in Little Rock. Marion County and Searcy County do not currently have United Way affiliations.*

Amy Adams, Chairperson of the Board

Date