

**Connections for Independent Living  
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 8, 2020 @ 11:00 a.m.**

Attendance in the ZOOM Meeting:

President-Mary Jo Brockshus, Treasurer-Josh Fulenwider, Board Member-Kate Howell, Interim Executive Director (IED)- Rochelle Miller, Finance Director-Anne Yanez, Assistant Executive Director (AED)-Colin Morey and Executive and Finance Associate (EFA)- Carol Cochrane

Absent: Secretary-Elizabeth Mahoney

President Brockshus called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

Director Howell moved and Treasurer Fulenwider seconded the approval of the March Board Meeting Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Fulenwider moved and Director Howell seconded the reading into the minutes the results of the digital vote taken on March 12, 2020. Motion passed unanimously. On March 12, 2020 all four members of the board voted to hire Rochelle Miller as the new Executive Director for Connections for Independent Living. Her anticipated start date is April 13, 2020.

Finance Director Yanez and IED Miller presented the Financial Report:

- For the first time in a long time, Connections is in compliance with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Independent Living Services (CDLE) financial reporting requirements. All invoices submitted to CDLE for payment are now paid. The revised budget was submitted to CDLE and is shown on two pages side by side. The indirect cost rate is now established for submitting indirect costs for reimbursement to the state. The unbilled indirect costs and non-labor direct costs will be submitted to the state for reimbursement in revised invoices later this quarter. The indirect piece of the budget is \$125,000 billed at the percentage of 43.3% of indirect costs. Additionally, James and his team are working on submitting for reimbursement of Part B funds.
- Following the logic of the updated budget submittal, there is approximately \$55,000 available to spend which IED Miller suggests that may be used to purchase a handicapped accessible van. The procedure to purchase such a van is currently being investigated.
- The reconfigured salary piece resulted in Kevin Thompson accepting an outreach supervisor position over two to be named Independent Living Specialists (ILS) to function in the counties other than Weld.
- Not in the CDLE budget are the departments of Housing and Interpreting. They will have their own separate presentations in the overall Connections budget.
- The Anton, Collins Mitchell (ACM) audit is underway. The engagement letter was late in coming as ACM was revising their engagement letters to account for audits during the COVID-19 outbreak. The first items on the Prepared by Client (PBC) list were due on Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. Unfortunately ACM did not provide instruction and access to their portal until after 6:00 pm on April 6, 2020 so the uploading of information due on the 6<sup>th</sup> began on the 7<sup>th</sup> and is now over half completed.
- Additional items discussed included the presentation of the Quick Books Balance Sheet to 3/31/20; Profit & Loss by Month October -March; and Accounts Receivable Aging Summary.
- Currently there is \$202,257 outstanding and \$75,591 received in interpreting receivables. UNC DRC is the largest receivable, but they will probably pay as soon as the contract is signed. It is also possible that some funds could come from the CARES Act economic injury and disaster loan fund if necessary.

- The Balance Sheet Payroll Liability section is overstated by the placeholder for ADP payroll. The detail downloading and resolution of the placeholder will happen this month.
- We are accounting for all the work from home (WFH) expenses in order to provide an accurate amount for possible reimbursement from CDLE. Treasurer Fulenwider motioned and Director Howell seconded the acceptance of the Financial Report. Motion passed unanimously.
- Discussion ensued regarding the payback of the repaid amount to the state CDLE for the \$70,000+ amount. A paper trail must be established that the funds used to pay this back were not received from the CDLE.

Interim Executive Director Miller (IED) presented her report:

- Very little regular business is occurring as COVID-19 related issues are dominating. We are making sure the entire staff is set up to work from home (WFH) during this time period. AED Morey has been brilliant in performing this task. We are conducting a welfare survey for our participants, former participants and other identified individuals. We are also concerned about our staff's wellbeing and are taking steps to provide information on resources for support if needed.
- There is a learning curve in WFH. The security of each home setup is important. Computers should be shut off each night and if not in use for a long period during the day. A backup should be performed each night. Passwords should be strong, separate for all different programs and changed often. The need for encryption has also been brought to the forefront. ZOOM meeting updates should be run when prompted. AED Morey is investigating the services of a company which helps nonprofits in computer related matters.
- EFA Cochrane presented the findings of the Formerly Known as Bonus Committee (FKBC). The committee entertained all suggestions from the six members and condensed them down to three possibilities for presentation to staff at the all hands meeting. The three choices were 1) a \$0.50 per hour increase in wages; 2) an increase to PTO of 6 days to replace some of the of the lost paid time off that all employees incurred both through the reduction of paid holidays and the reduction in the combination of vacation and sick time that occurred in 2020 and 3) a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) - A formal plan which could cover dependent care assistance, adoption assistance and medical care reimbursement for items such as dentist and eye care. The 17 staff members, via survey monkey, chose with 8 votes an increase to PTO time. In second place with 5 votes was a \$.50 increase in wages. In third place was the FSA with 3 votes. There was one staff member who did not vote.

IED Miller then stated that the financial implication of this time off choice needs to be established to ensure the fairness of the value of the time off for each employee. This computation will be performed before the next board meeting. Additionally Treasurer Fulenwider suggested a possibility of doing a smaller time off amount with a \$0.25 per hour increase.

- Roxanne Fry is now contracted to provide the communications function for Connections. She has much experience in the non-profit arena and most recently was a VP with the North Colorado Community Foundation. Among the first tasks she is assigned is the communication of the COVID-19 welfare survey results to the proper entities in order to promote Connections value and importance to the community; releasing the information of our new Executive Director when formal approval by the government is achieved; and providing and utilizing Sales Force to better improve our processes and procedures.
- We are obtaining bids for the painting of the interior of the Connections building while staff is WFH. It is an optimal time to perform this much needed task. Other capital improvements including the windows and flooding concerns are being investigated as to cost and feasibility. Hopefully, we will not flood this year as the city of Greeley has installed a larger drainage system and flooding did not occur last spring. There is a difficulty in finding three bids as Moffitt Glass is the only known

company able to take on a task such as this. A different possibility is to contact a construction company such as Growling Bear to provide an option for reconstruction of the front walls.

- We hired or contracted with three new people last week – Communications Specialist and two to assist on making COVID-19 welfare survey phone calls.
- Hopefully the long term aspects of working from home will result in a more equitable, diverse and unique way of viewing the workplace and nullify the previous stigma of working from home.
- If any member of our staff contracts the COVID-19 virus we have increased PTO for ten days full time and 5 days half time per the COVID-19 guidelines. This will be tracked separately on the ADP payroll system. COVID-19 is now recognized as a disability, covered by the ADA. This allows for the extended leave benefits, accommodations and guarantees.
- Currently Connections is providing a \$100.00 per month Work From Home (WFH) reimbursement. We are hoping to increase this \$250.00 a month. We were the first Independent Living Center to enact this, and are proud to see that five other Independent Living Centers in the State of Colorado have followed suit. \*Follow up, there are now guidelines that were released by the State department Division of Rehab Services.
- Additionally we are seeking to offer Compassion Fatigue Assistance of \$2.00 to \$5.00 per hour to our front line survey takers. Currently we cannot do this, but we are working on it.
- The Connections Bereavement Policy is also under review. It needs an expanded look to ensure that it conforms to the times.
- Connections has established a “COVID BUDDY” program. This ensures that if a staff member or members is affected by the virus that another person is aware of what is going on with their buddy’s workload and can step in and handle the important matters and distribute the workload as needed.
- Treasurer Fulenwider asked if the extended leave followed the family FMLA guidelines and IED Miller responded yes. A discussion ensued about the WFH reimbursement and other COVID-19 policy enactments. IED Miller stated that the average WFH reimbursement is \$250.00 a month. During the discussion IED Miller stated that Connections is the Colorado trailblazer for assisting the community through phone calls and surveying participants. She has been closely monitoring the New York City (NYC) Independent Living Center (ILC) discussions and implementations as they are unfortunately at the forefront of the COVID-19 breakout in the nation. NYC ILCs are reviewing many of their staff support, bereavement leave, sick policies, and other assistance policies and procedures to come up with best practices. NYC ILCs have stated that nothing has prepared them for this situation, not even the horrific events on 9-11. IED miller has applied for the maximum State COVID-19 Funds for non-profits as well as Weld County funding. Connections for Independent Living is currently into the first round of the Weld County Funding which is in the amount of \$25,000.00. Additionally Connections has applied for a \$5,000.00 grant from the Weld Community Foundation to assist with the technology setup in WFH. Some possible uses for the grant money received is the purchase of Chromebooks for the Veterans group or other support groups in order for a new normal of meeting virtually to become established both now under COVID-19 and in the future when one or two participants cannot meet in person.
- The CARES Act establishes Part C Funding for ILCs in the amount of Eighty Five Million Dollars. We are a Part C Funding recipient and could apply for this next level of funding. Clarification of guidelines is being sought.
- An area of funding currently in limbo is the HCPA – Health Policy Commission on Finance. Their reimbursement requirements have changed and CILs have been unable to receive funding since January 1, 2020. This group supports the transitioning of people from nursing homes to independent living with a \$1,500.00 allowance. The requirements for enrolling Connections as an authorized provider include obtaining board members social security numbers and addresses. It is hard enough to get board members and would become impossible if they were required to provide this confidential information. We are presently receiving funding for the salaries of the two

transition personnel through CDLE. When or if the funding source from HCPA comes back on line we need to ensure that we do not double dip and bill them for the salaries as well.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- The Clifton Strengths is put on hold for now.
- Mark Holz consulting begins in May during the time of the scheduled Board Meeting (11:00 to 2:00).
- Communicate information with key constituents including but not limited to: Janine Truswell with the United Way, Rand Morgan with the Community Foundation. The file for this information will be made available online to all board members and key leadership.

The next Board Meeting will take place at 11:00 am on Wednesday May 13, 2020 at the Connections office or on ZOOM if the travel restrictions are not lifted.

Director Howell moved to adjourn the meeting Treasurer Fulenwider seconded. Vote taken. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, done to the best of my belief and ability, by Carol Cochrane.

**APPROVED AT BOARD MEETING** held \_\_\_\_\_.

Affirmed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth Mahoney, Board Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_