

Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.
Board of Directors' Meeting
May 30, 2024, 3:30 p.m.
Neighborhood Center Card Room/Zoom Conference Call

Members present: Bruce Day, Susan Geise, Trever Kirkland, Teri Lilletvedt, Jerry Loendorf, Erin Lyndes, Bob Mullen, Daniel Pocha

Members absent: Kate Anderson, Dannai Clayborn, Jen Gursky, Andy Hunthausen, Niki Redford, Lindsey Richtmyer, Eric Schindler

Others present: Hayden Behm, Hannah Danzer, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Steven Ferriter, Joanna Halland, Taya Hovan, Lori Ladas, Jean Leischner, Samara Lynde, Jim Marks, Kathy Marks, Liz Mogstad, Angela Nelmark, Ashley Peña-Larson

Call to Order/Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by Trever Kirkland at 3:31 p.m. and a quorum was present. No public comment was received.

Approval of Minutes

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the April 25, 2024, Board of Director's meeting minutes, the April 25, 2024, Executive Director Performance Appraisal meeting minutes, and the February 29, 2024, Finance Committee meeting minutes. Daniel Pocha seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Lori Ladas

Lori referenced her written report to the Board and asked for any questions based on that report or the monthly updates provided by Program Directors. Regarding current employment vacancies, she reported that a new Senior Center Coordinator will be starting tomorrow, and interviews for the Senior Nutrition Volunteer Coordinator position will be held tomorrow.

General Fiscal Update – Lori Ladas

Cash balance is \$1,928,931, which is comparable to last month's total. Accounts payable balance is \$31,500.62, which is current. Lori provided a general report on the 990 Tax Return, which was recently filed. The 990 is an informational return. Lori mentioned that an amended return and refund were issued following review of taxes previously owed by Rocky Mountain Preschool Center. Lori then provided an update on WIPFLI's 60-Day check-in with Jonathan Schmitz and Nate McCarthy. The main priority for WIPFLI thus far has been establishing a balance sheet-based month-end close process. Other areas of review have included receivables, prepaids, loans held between Rocky entities and long-term receivables. WIPFLI also has software that will calculate depreciation, which will be used for Rocky financials. Lori reported that establishing these new processes does feel a little more time-consuming for fiscal staff on a monthly basis but should make the year-end audit processes feel less stressful. Lori mentioned that WIPFLI is also working with Rocky staff on financial reporting to present to the Board on a regular basis, in addition to the cash and accounts payable balances. Working virtually with an outside organization has been an adjustment, but overall, Lori feels the collaboration between Rocky and WIPFLI is going well.

Head Start Director's Program Report and Budget – Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley reported that the Policy Council has taken some pictures and quotes from members, trying to recruit others for involvement with the group. Head Start has received approvals for several items previously presented to the Board, including the reduction grant, grant year adjustment and the Non-Federal Share Waiver. Head Start just participated in a regional site visit, which went well. Regional staff visited the Helena and East Helena sites and spoke with Townsend and Whitehall staff via telephone. Ashley has been attending meetings for various state committees, including a group discussing a comprehensive fiscal analysis plan along with a STARS workgroup. Friends of Head Start are beginning preparations for their fall event, which will be held on the first Thursday of October. Whitehall and Townsend classrooms end their school year tomorrow, while Helena and East Helena end on June 5. The end of the year family picnic for Helena and East Helena will be held at the fairgrounds on June 5 from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., and all are invited to attend. No budgets were presented this month, but two will be presented next month, both a closeout of the previous year and the first month of the new grant. Ashley reported that the program is being urged to submit requests for one-time funding for special projects, and Rocky Head Start plans to request funds for an expansion of the Townsend Head Start building along with cameras for Head Start classrooms and adjacent areas.

Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program Report. Bruce Day seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Title VI Plan – Mindy Diehl

Mindy reported that the Title VI plan being presented today requires approval of the Rocky Board of Directors prior to submission. The plan prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in relation to the use of Rocky's transportation program. Rocky received financial assistance with the purchase of two shuttles, and The Montana Department of Transportation is bringing all subrecipients of funds into compliance through the completion of these plans. The Department of Transportation reviewed Rocky's draft plan document and has given its approval.

Bruce Day made the motion to approve the Title VI plan as presented. Bob Mullen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Rocky Mountain Preschool Center Budget Discussion – Lori Ladas and Hannah Danzer

Lori reminded the Board of last month's program presentation about Rocky Mountain Preschool Center and the proposed possibilities of bringing the preschool's tuition rate up to the state rate. For FY2024, the preschool is projected to end with a deficit of around \$99,941. This loss is due to the center being understaffed part of the year, which meant enrollment was less than anticipated. The state rate for the upcoming year is an approximate \$300 increase per month compared to current Rocky Mountain Preschool Center rates, and projections were presented showing the impact of implementing that increase all at once or split over a two-year period. Increasing to state rate for FY2025 is projected to pull the program out of its deficit within the year. By splitting the increase over two years, the program would remain in a deficit for FY2025 but should recover by FY2026. The financial impact of a \$300 monthly increase on families was discussed, and Hannah expressed her concerns about their ability to continue with the program at that cost. Families with multiple children in the program would feel an even greater impact. Hannah noted that fall enrollment is full already, and the program has been doing well during her time as Director. Discussion continued about the pay rates of Preschool staff, and how increasing rates would allow more ability to reward the staff with a paycheck that is closer to market rate for their positions,

along with allowing the program to grow and continue to operate with increased expenses in other areas such as rent and grocery costs. The need for childcare in the Helena area was noted, and the rate increase was discussed as a way to continue to provide this essential service. In consideration of the current Preschool families, the suggestion was made to implement the full increase to state rate over the course of one year, but incrementally, to allow them time to prepare for the additional costs or find alternative care if needed.

Susan Geise made the motion to approve the tuition rate increase to state rate over a 12-month period, with half of the increase implemented in September and the remaining increase implemented after six months. Daniel Pocha seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment – Kathy Marks

Kathy noted that Rocky is required to complete a needs assessment by the end of the year. Information for the assessment will be collected through surveys, focus groups, and key interviews in the communities that Rocky serves. Previously, Rocky has held focus groups at each of its senior centers, and attracting participants has been a struggle. One possibility being considered this year is doing a “walking mall” survey, asking community members just a few questions from the survey to bring in more results. A recommendation was made that the farmer’s market might be a good opportunity to find participants. All clients and partners will have the opportunity to complete the full survey, either online or with a paper copy. Kathy asked for a Board representative to be part of the needs assessment process. Susan Geise and Bruce Day volunteered to assist.

CSBG Annual Report – Kathy Marks

Kathy provided an overview of the annual report, which is a requirement for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The full report was included in Board packets and consists of four modules. The first module includes input regarding state administration, noting accomplishments and difficulties encountered. Kathy mentioned the state’s delays with contract approval and subsequent funding as a challenge to overcome. Module two includes CSBG expenditures, capacity, and resources. Kathy highlighted the Board member hours of service for the year, along with staff training hours, volunteer hours, and the variety of certifications held by Rocky staff. This section also includes the unduplicated number of organizations that Rocky partners with. Module three asks for initiatives intended to achieve community level outcomes. For Rocky, this section highlighted the Our Redeemer Lutheran’s Church project, a collaborative effort between Rocky, the Helena YWCA, Helena Habitat for Humanity, and Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church. The final module includes services and outcomes for all CSBG domains. This includes information in the following areas: Education and Cognitive Development; Income, Infrastructure and Asset Building; Behavioral Development; and Civic Engagement and Community Involvement. Not all services provided lead to outcomes. Kathy noted that the final page reflects data for all Rocky programs, not only those included in the state’s CDS database.

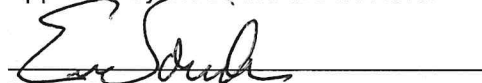
The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar
Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board of Directors:


Eric Schindler, Secretary/Treasurer

7/31/24
Date