

# MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (VAFAC)

## Board of Trustees Meeting, March 27, 2018

**Trustees Present:** Mary Riley (Chair), Lisa Specter-Dunaway (Vice-Chair), Frank Blechman (Secretary), Judy Kurtz (Treasurer), S. Duke Storen (Commissioner), Berry Wade Coyle, Beverly Crowder, Linda Gilliam, Allison Lawrence Jones, Tarina Keene, Kay Kovacs, John Oliver. **Trustees Absent:** Robert Bolling, Lilliana Hernandez, Yasmine Taeb **Staff Present:** Nicole Poulin (Executive Director), Meghan Resler (Research Associate), Michelle L'Hommedieu (Attorney). **Guests Present:** Dottie Wells (VA DSS), Emily Griffey (Voices for Virginias Children).

**Opening:** Chairperson Riley called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM, at the DSS Central Regional offices at 1604 Santa Rosa Drive, Henrico, VA. After introductions, a video segment from "60 Minutes" was shown, featuring Oprah Winfrey reporting about Trauma Informed Care in her hometown of Milwaukee. In the discussion that followed, most agreed that Oprah's attention to this subject has raised national awareness of TIC, and provides us a stronger foundation for our work.

**Decisions and Actions:** The following actions were approved by the Board unanimously except as specifically noted.

Minutes: On a motion by Linda Gilliam seconded by Allison Lawrence Jones, the minutes of the December 12, 2017 Trustees Meeting were approved with one amendment to note that Lisa Specter-Dunaway was not in the room and did not vote on awarding a grant to her own organization.

Grant Review: On a motion by Betty Wade Coyle seconded by Lisa Specter-Dunaway, the Trustees moved into closed session to discuss the proposals for grant support submitted for funding in FY 2019-2020. Chairperson Riley read the following statement in compliance with Virginia Code: "The FACT Board will now go into closed session with all persons present for the limited purpose set out in Virginia Code 2.2-3711 (A)(za) of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act."

On a motion by John Oliver seconded by Betty Wade Coyle, we ended the closed session. Chairperson Riley read the following statement in compliance with Virginia Code: "Whereas the Family and Children's Trust Fund has convened a Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Freedom of Information ACT; and Whereas, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Family and Children's Trust Fund that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Family and Children's Trust Fund hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters were identified in the motion convening the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Family and Children's Trust Fund.

Frank Blechman moved and Linda Gilliam seconded a motion to affirm a statement that in the closed session Trustees had addressed only matters of business authorized by state law.

Chairperson of the Grants Committee Judy Kurtz presented a recommendation to fund two "system change" grants and eight "direct services" grants for a total allocation of \$316,712.02.

Frank Blechman moved and John Oliver seconded a motion that these recommendations be approved (Lisa Specter-Dunaway abstained).

Judy Kurtz also reported that six organizations sought "Ad Hoc" grants to support statewide conferences.

John Oliver moved and Linda Gilliam seconded a motion that five grants be approved totaling \$9,200 to support Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Greater Augusta Coalition Against Adult Abuse, Supreme Court of Virginia, and Vision 21.

Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (VCPEA) did not specify an amount requested and submitted their request late. John Oliver moved and Beverly Crowder seconded a motion that Executive Director Poulin is authorized to provide up to \$2,000 to VCPEA.

CAN Advisory Committee: Betty Wade Coyle moved and Allison Lawrence Jones seconded a motion to forward recommendations to DSS regarding five topics:

- Develop a communication plan to clearly and uniformly disseminate information surrounding

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Substance Exposed Infants, particularly related to new laws for medical and service workers in addition to the general public.

- Increase training for CPS workers around the Structured Decision Making Tool to make sure it's being implemented the way it's intended. Continue involvement with the Children's Research Center and develop a long term evaluation of the tool.
- Address the statewide hotline structure, specifically to address the wait time as well as training on how to take calls. The average wait time is currently over 20 minutes per call. This presents a clear obstacle to reporting and greatly weakens protections of children.
- Local agencies have been using varying practices of diversion to keep children out of the system for years. DSS was conducting a study on this practice but findings of that study have not yet been released. The CAN Advisory Committee requests that report and accompanying recommendations.
- Improved training recruitment and retention of child welfare workers.

### **Discussions:**

Board vacancies: In her Chair's report, Mary Riley noted that two members (Lisa Specter-Dunaway and Betty Wade Coyle) of the Board would be completing their second terms at the end of June and would be cycling off due to Board term limits. Two others (Kay Kovacs and Judy Kurtz) would be ending their first term at the same time. She encouraged Board members to consider potential new members. She also urged the two current board members eligible for reappointment to remain.

Grants: A question was raised as to whether VA DSS can help publicize the results of these grant processes. The answer was yes'. Further discussion affirmed that the Board would receive a copy of any press release by VA DSS or FACT regarding the awarding of these grants.

Outreach: Meghan Resler reported that although our Facebook reach is still small, paid advertisements have definitely expanded our visibility and engagement. We discussed ways Trustees could support these efforts ranging from "liking" posts to making contributions to support ads. She also thanked those who have contributed to the blogs.

Executive Director's Report: Nicole Poulin reported that all the current year direct service grants are going well. Further both of the system change grants are performing adequately, however the Up Center has had continued challenges with getting their Trauma-Informed Community Network off the ground and does not have funding or a clear plan for sustaining their efforts once this grant period ends. She also reported that our current effort to get funding in the Virginia budget appears very unlikely. Otherwise, her work on various planning and advisory groups goes well. FACT is now recognized as a leader in promoting and supporting trauma informed care.

The Commissioner's Report: Duke Storen, the new DSS Commissioner, introduced himself to the Trustees. He then reported the good news that the new Federal budget passed in December includes the passage of Family First legislation. Family services dollars will no longer be tied to income, and there will be an uncapped 50-50 match for prevention activities starting in October 2019. New standards for group homes for foster children will also go into effect, impacting many current arrangements. Commenting on FACT, he said that he thought our work is "very important" but noted that our resources are very small. To raise more, we need a clear vision and a professional fundraising staff.

Treasurer's Report: Judy Kurtz presented reports showing that our income and expenses are largely in line with last year. It appears that our income is stable with a small but welcome increase in tax-checkoff contributions. During this report, Commissioner Storen asked why our reserve was so large, and again suggested that we should put more of it to work. Chairperson Riley responded that we would put the issue of contracting with a professional fundraiser, including a scope of work, on the agenda for our next Board meeting.

Legislative Report: Emily Griffey, Policy Director for Voices for Virginia's Children, reported that while legislative education about trauma informed care went well this year, proposals to fund TIC mostly did not make the budgets passed by the House or Senate. While the failure of the General Assembly to pass a final budget for FY 2019-20 leaves many questions unanswered (such as Medicaid expansion), she is

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generally hopeful about future progress.

Does the General Assembly understand the need for both prevention and treatment?

Yes, but treatment is always easier to sell.

Does the General Assembly understand the need for both policy change and changes in implementation?

Yes.

Will the "Children's Cabinet" continue?"

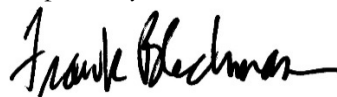
Yes, but it is likely to be more narrowly focused. TIC is one cross-cutting agenda they might adopt.

Marketing: Frank Blechman thanked several members of the Board currently working on contacts, but noted that overall, marketing has been very slow. Nicole Poulin reported that she has made contact with an official with US Trust who seems very interested in working with FACT and other statewide stakeholders on state level trauma initiatives. Betty Wade Coyle again urged us to reach out more assertively to former FACT Board members. Linda Gilliam requested a "template" fundraising letter.

Editorial & Planning Report: Linda Gilliam reported that the next brief on Trauma Informed Care for Elders is in draft and will be out in May. This meets their goal of getting three "Issue Briefs", one for each phase of the life cycle, done in 2017-18. She reported that the committee is considering topics or next year and will report at the next Board meeting.

**Adjournment**: There being no further business, the Board of Trustees adjourned at 2:15PM,

Respectfully submitted,



Frank Blechman, FACT Secretary