

**DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND  
(VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Participation:**

Trustees Present: Mary Riley (Chair), Allison Lawrence (Vice Chair), Jennifer Gillyard (Secretary), Judy Kurtz (Treasurer), Carter Batey, Gena Berger (Chief Deputy Commissioner, Commissioner's Designee), Yvonne Bibbs, Tavares Floyd, Tiffany Garner, Linda Gilliam, Tarina Keene, Dominique Marsalek, Season Roberts and Linda Wilkinson.

Trustees Absent: Beverly Crowder, Kay Kovacs, Virginia (Ginny) Powell

Staff Present: Nicole Poulin (Executive Director), Michelle L'Hommedieu (Attorney)

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**Opening:** Chairperson Riley called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM via an electronic conference system.

**Decisions and Actions:** The following actions were approved by the Board unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Minutes: The minutes of the June 2020 Board meeting were approved with a typographical amendment to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act code provided in the Executive Session of the minutes. Allison Lawrence made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Tavares Floyd, with no abstentions.

Chair's Report: Chairperson Riley reminded the Board that at the June meeting the nominating committee presented a motion that the term of current officers be extended for up to a year given the extraordinary circumstances. The motion was approved at the June meeting. However, since the last meeting the term of our Secretary expired and Jennifer Gillyard's name was presented as the option for Secretary by the nominating committee. Chairperson Riley asked for additional nominations, none were offered. Floyd moved that the nomination for Secretary be closed, Berger seconded, there were no objections. Chairperson Riley asked for a motion to elect Ms. Gillyard. Floyd moved that Ms. Gillyard be elected to the position of Secretary and Berger seconded, all were in favor. Ms. Gillyard abstained from the vote.

Grants Committee: Chair Judy Kurtz reported on two ad hoc grant requests. The Virginia Victim Assistance Network asked for \$2,000 to cover speaker fees and conference costs. The Domestic Violence Action team requested \$1,900 for gift cards for focus group participants with an end result of putting together a practice guide for professionals in the field. Kurtz and Gillyard questioned whether or not the Domestic Violence Action team have begun their research given the outdated timeline submitted and if the focus groups would be representative across the state. Judy Kurtz opened the floor for a motion to approve the requests. Gena Berger moved to approve the ad hoc requests for their respective amounts, Vice Chair Lawrence seconded. The motion passed.

Chair Kurtz mentioned that FACT's new grant cycle started in August 2020 and we funded \$50,000 to seven organizations whose program implementation is underway.

Staff Report: The full report of the Executive Director was provided in the meeting package.

## **DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Highlights included:

- A state hiring freeze continues to delay our ability to replace our research assistant and to fill several other pending positions. This impacts the production of FACT's Issue Briefs as well as the online data portal.
- Due to the pandemic, we have a \$15,000 carryover from the last grant funded cycle because one of the projects could not continue due to the pandemic.
- Existing TICNs will be distributing the emergency funds we approved in June in the amount of \$15,000 to support families in need during the pandemic and mitigate trauma. Recipients will provide impact statements as well. Although this will be a pilot program for us, the Department of Juvenile Justice plans to replicate our model for the emergency grant to provide for the service needs of youth involved with the juvenile system.
  - The Director of the Department of Juvenile Services will attend an upcoming meeting to request funds for their proposal.
- There is a proposal for the establishment of a Permanent Children's cabinet. Our partners, Voice for Virginia's Children, created a letter of support and listed FACT as a signatory in support of the creation of the cabinet. Kurtz approved the proposal for establishing the cabinet at the State level, seconded by Wilkinson. No discussion, no objections. Motion approved.

Adjournment: Moved and everyone seconded a motion to adjourn at 11:40AM.

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**Discussions:** The following reports and discussions did not conclude with formal proposals for action. However, they do highlight areas of substantive discussion on which the Board may want to act in the future.

VDSS Report: Chief Deputy Commissioner Gena Berger reported the following highlights:

- November is National Adoption month and the theme is Engage Youth: Listen and Learn. The theme in practice with families can be highlighted in three ways 1) authentically listen and engage, 2) engage in evidence based programs to ensure safety, permanency and well-being and 3) prioritizing a kin first culture to facilitate and maintain family connections
  - In regard to kin families, the state is looking into providing kin with similar financial supports as are provided to guardians and adoptive parents. Moreover, legislation to remove barrier crimes for kin is being considered for the next session.
  - Follow-up: Does the state track adoption disruptions?
- The state has more than 700 waiting youth, which has been fairly stable. The state finalized 850 adoptions this year (the second highest on record for Virginia).
- State intended to begin implementing Families First Prevention Act activities January 1,

## DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020

2021, but due to the coronavirus pandemic implementation has been moved to July 1, 2021.

- Federal dollars will be spent to prevent children from entering the system and focused on providing evidence based resources in areas of mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and parent skill-based in-home training.
- General Assembly restored \$8.8 million to support staff in providing prevention services as part of setting up the infrastructure
- A package for funding was submitted to fully implement the remaining aspects of the new law. These funding considerations will be determined in December by the Governor.
- Virginia's Linking Systems of Care funding request was re-submitted to support mitigating childhood trauma specifically reducing ACEDS for children in foster care in addition to working with the juvenile justice system to implement a new screening tool.
- To support the emotional and social well-being of children there is a focus on the child care market especially virtual learning and supporting school-aged children but not excluding including infants; about 2,000 out of 6,000 licensed child care facilities have remained closed during the pandemic.
  - \$16.6 million was dedicated during the special session to assist with emergency funds for child care options and additional COVID relief funds; the Governor directed an additional \$4 million in the coronavirus relief funds to jumpstart this effort
  - \$55 million will be used as direct grants (for tradition child care market providers) to traditional child care market providers so they can safely remain open with PPE; dollars will hone in on areas where the gaps in child care are widest in the state
- Food Insecurity remains an issue
  - A \$238 million EBT benefit was released and approved for extension; it served about 635,313 children at about \$376 per child to offset food insecurity experienced
  - There has been a 13.8% increase in SNAP requests
    - The state is conducting an online shopping pilot program with Amazon and Walmart to have groceries delivered. Congress expanded this benefit and supported the food banks across the state with \$7 million in coronavirus relief funds; funds that will not only be for the boxing of food, but also allow the food banks to purchase refrigeration, and other fresh food supplies and building infrastructure for sustainability, etc.
  - An increase in TANF benefits was initiated in the 2020 session; General Assembly added an increase for two-parent households which was originally unallotted in July 2020 in the general fund, but those families will receive a 15% increase in that benefit starting Jan 1, 2021

Treasurer's Report: Judy Kurtz gave an overview of where FACT's revenue comes from for new

**DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND  
(VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

trustees. Kurtz reported on the budget for FY2021, profit and loss report and balance sheets. We were hoping to hire a strategic planning/fundraising consultant as there are more needs than money however this was halted due to COVID. Ad Hoc funding is at \$5,000. We designated \$50,000 in emergency funds that were adopted in the June meeting.

The average income of FACT has been about \$196,000 per year. We've experienced a drop in income from license plates and individual donations but increases in tax check-off donations. The administrative support for FACT is in the Department of Social Services budget. Although there is anticipated revenue of two-tenths of 1% of casino revenue, those funds may not come for 3-5 years. Executive Director Poulin expressed the need for FACT to examine its long term sustainability plan.

CAN Committee: Executive Director Poulin provided updates for Committee Chair Ginny Powell in her absence. Poulin encouraged trustees to review the report. In CAN's last meeting they discussed changes in the state code to address child sex trafficking. In the next CAN meeting they will be addressing child-on-child sexual assault which has posed jurisdictional challenges.

Wrap up: Chairperson Riley thanked all current and new members. The next meeting is December 17<sup>th</sup> from 1 – 2:30 pm. Trustees were reminded to make FACT contributions this year.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Gillyard, FACT Secretary