

**DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN’S TRUST FUND  
(VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, December 17, 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, Virginia (Ginny) Powell, Season Roberts and Linda Wilkinson.

Trustees Absent: Beverly Crowder and Kay Kovacs

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

Guests from VA Department of Juvenile Justice: Valerie Boykin, Brooke Henderson, Lara Todd and Mike Favale

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**Opening:** Chairperson Riley called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM 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 November 2020 Board meeting were approved with no corrections. Ginny Powell made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Linda Wilkinson, with no abstentions.

DJJ Presentation Highlights: Sixty-five percent of all young people committed to DJJ’s care have at least one significant trauma in their lives. DJJ operates 32 court service units around the commonwealth that provide services to young people. DJJ has reduced the number of youth involved with the court system significantly (600 to <250 over the last six years) and has worked hard to create a continuum of care to help youth remain out of the system. DJJ has been looking at creating or working with a nonprofit that could help the youth and families they work with in ways they cannot as a government agency. DJJ has difficulties in supporting youth transitioning out and their families in ways it would like to and needs support to fill that financial gap to provide for the needs of youth to mitigate a return to corrections.

Example of Financial Gap: A youth obtained 24 hours of college credit while detained and when he transitioned out, he could not return home, but needed assistance with funding for school including purchasing books.

A prospective partnership with FACT could be a way of ensuring the community knows and meets the needs of these families. It is recommended that DJJ in partnership with FACT’s grant committee identify two TICNS, with current court service unit collaboration, to support this effort. Referrals would be community lead. Over the next six months, DJJ would fundraise \$5,000 and FACT would match that for a total of \$10,000 for this pilot project. In regards to incentives, young people under court supervision often benefit from encouragement when doing well (e.g., tangible food or gift certificates, helping with materials for career opportunities) and because the government cannot purchase these items there needs to be public-private partnership. Nicole says the proposal will be an

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extension of the emergency fund project and up to individual TICNs to work with local court service units to develop proposal guidance- so this is an extension of the current pilot but with the focus of DJJ. Michelle offered that if FACT is disbursing funds there should be a specific purpose to get monies out in advance.

DJJ will provide details to FACT members who would like to support the fundraising effort as individual donors.

FACT committee members see this as a starting point to include DJJ into the trauma conversation as it was a gap in the previous grant rounds. A motion was on the table by Chairperson Riley to approve the DJJ proposal as an extension of the existing emergency fund project for which FACT would provide a match of \$5,000 to DJJ upon them fundraising \$5,000 to cover 2 pilot projects. Tavares Floyd approved the motion and Linda Gilliam seconded, with no abstentions.

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

Highlights included:

- The establishment of the Children's Cabinet was not included in the Governor's budget
- We are funding 10 TICNS. We have awarded two emergency grants thus far, one in Alexandria and one in Petersburg.
  - Nicole will follow-up with the Grants Committee to determine the Board's action upon reaching the end of the first period of the emergency fund grant- should we extend or close and expect a larger pool of applications during the second open grant period
- The hiring freeze has been lifted so Nicole is asking the Board to assist with identifying PHD students to support the research role for the vacant part-time Board staff position
- Season has offered to support Nicole with the FACT website

Grants Committee: No Update. See DJJ presentation and Staff Report notes.

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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.

Chair's Report: Chairperson Riley reminded the Board about the FACT Match Challenge led by Allison and Tarina. The hope is that all Board members will participate. We currently have \$1,200 between four members and we are hoping to reach \$5,000 by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Online donations versus mailing checks are better since mail has been slow this season.

VDSS Report: Chief Deputy Commissioner Gena Berger reminded the Board of updates from the November meeting. Below are revisited and/or additional highlights in the past month:

- The Governor has proposed the budget for the Regular Session (*new*)

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- DSS fared well from special session and general session budget
- Food Bank applications continue to rise and would only get worse if the Government does not assist with maintaining benefits beyond the end of the month.
- A cost of living increase in foster and adoptive payments were included at 2% versus the requested 5%.
- State intended to begin implementing Families First Prevention Act activities January 1, 2021, but due to the coronavirus pandemic implementation has been moved to July 1, 2021. [Revisited from November]
  - 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. These monies will be made available July 1, 2021
  - General Assembly restored \$8.8 million to support staff in providing prevention services as part of setting up the infrastructure
  - Government workers will receive a one-time bonus if there is excess revenue (*new*)
- 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. [Revisited from November]
- 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. [Revisited from November]
  - \$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
  - There will be access for new options for school aged children to learn virtually but in a child care space (*new*)
- Food Insecurity remains an issue [Revisited from November]
  - A \$238 million EBT benefit was released and approved for extension (includes a benefit for head start children); 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

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- 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.
- SNAP budget proposed further food assistance to allow for broad-based categorical eligibility since there is a different eligibility and asset test between SNAP, TANF and Medicaid. This change will permit DSS to say automatically if someone is eligible for TANF or Medicaid if you are eligible for SNAP. (*new*)
- 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 a financial update. Kurtz reported on the budget for FY2021, profit and loss comparisons and balance sheets. The budget captured finances as of December 15<sup>th</sup> and includes some additional donations thus far. Our interest income is down because the overall income is down, but the tax checkoff monies have raised considerably.

CAN Committee: Purpose and charge of committee was reviewed Ginny Powell and is outlined in Board's packet. The committee expanded to 23 members for more local representation. In the last meeting we heard from several agencies (DJJ, DSS, Dept of Education, Dept of Criminal Justice Services) to understand what's happening across the state. Focus was child on child sexual abuse; an issue to address from VA's CAPTA letter. It's a complex problem because family dynamics are challenging and jurisdictions handle them differently (e.g. services, prosecution for children).

We are trying to understand from these agencies- how many incidents, prevalence, experiences, and what are the policies and practices around managing those problems. Anecdotally, we hear from advocates that the numbers are staggering, but there are not a lot of clinical models or funded services to meet the needs of the families. The committee decided to pull together a round table with key stakeholders to identify what is going on in state, gaps, problems and needs in hopes to establish some protocols on this issue.

Adjournment/Wrap up: Chairperson Riley concluded the meeting at 2:31 PM. She thanked all attendees. The next meeting is March 11<sup>th</sup> from 1 – 2:30 pm. Trustees were reminded to make and match FACT contributions this year.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Gillyard, FACT Secretary