

**DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND  
(VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Sustainability Meeting, October 13, 2021**

**Participation:**

Trustees Present: Allison Lawrence (Chair), Judy Kurtz (Vice Chair), Jennifer Gillyard (Secretary), Dominique Marsalek (Treasurer), Virginia (Ginny) Powell, Tarina Keene, Tavares Floyd, Linda Gilliam, and Tiffany Garner

Trustees Absent: Carter Batey, Beverly Crowder, Tarina Keene, Virginia (Ginny) Powell, Gena Berger (Chief Deputy Commissioner, Commissioner's Designee), Season Roberts and Linda Wilkinson

Staff Present: Nicole Poulin (Executive Director), Taylor Davis (Senior Research Associate), Michelle L'Hommedieu (Attorney), and Hayley Mathews (Sustainability Consultant)

**Opening:** Chairperson Lawrence called the meeting to order at 10:15 AM

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

Minutes: The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the June 2021 minutes. Trustee Powell moved to approve the minutes and Trustee Floyd seconded.

**Sustainability Discussion:** Chairperson Lawrence turned the meeting over to Consultant Mathews.

Stocktaking: *Italicized comments were added by Board members or staff*

What's working:

- Broad mission
- Diverse board
- Strong staff
- Trauma lens
- Emergency fund grants
- DSS administration support
- Children's Trust Alliance

What's not:

- Under-resourced
- Limited staff
- Organizational scope
- Not highly publicized
- Not perceived as independent
- Limited power and influence
- Statutory responsibilities conflict with structure
- *No champion within Government or DSS*
- *Competing organizations with similar focus areas*

**Children's Trust Funds (CTFs):**

- There is a Children's Trust Fund in almost every state (excluding Illinois, Florida, Delaware) starting with Kansas in 1980. This served as a catalyst to support prevention efforts.
- The Children's Trust Alliance was established in 1989 as the backbone organization.
- Organizational structure for CTFs varies by state. Most are a part of state government.
- It is common to have public policy and communication staff
- Over half of CTFs are their state's lead agency for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding. 75% indicated that they utilize at least some of the CBCAP funding.
- Approximately 40% of CTFs are their state's Prevent Child Abuse America Chapter. In Virginia, Families Forward fills this role.
- The top revenue sources for CTFs are federal grants, state allocated funds, heirloom birth certificates, income tax check-off, specialty license plates, marriage license fees, death certificate fees, divorce filings, foundation grants, endowment interest, corporate donations, private donations, and special fundraising events.
  - FACT utilizes income tax check-off, specialty license plates, and private donations. In the past, FACT has tapped into foundation grants and fundraising events. *There are challenges around "selling" our work to donors since our scope was so broad*

#### **Citizen Review Panels (CRPs):**

- CRPs started in the 1970s-1990s due to concern over child fatalities in open cases, children languishing in foster care, children being returned to unsafe home environments. There was a call for increased accountability in the child protection system.
- In 1974, Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act (CAPTA) made requirements of a state plan for compliance in order to receive federal funds. The 1996 reauthorization of CAPTA included CRP establishment in the requirements (three panels per state by July 1999)
- .Virginia's three panels are the Child Fatality Review Team, Children's Justice Act/Court Appointed Special Advocates Advisory Board, and FACT's Child Abuse and Neglect Committee (incorporated in 2012 from the Governor's Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect).
  - *Being housed within DSS, it is difficult for FACT to act as a true outside party like CRPs should.*
- CRP Requirements:
  - Be comprised of members that are broadly representative of the community and include individuals with expertise in child abuse and neglect prevention/treatment
  - Meet at least quarterly
  - Examine policies, procedures, and practices and, where appropriate, specific cases for both state and local agencies
  - Maintain confidentiality

- Prepare an annual report with activities and recommendations

**FACT:**

- FACT is a public-private partnership with a Board of Trustees that serves in an advisory capacity. The legislation for FACT is within DSS legislation (Title 63.2 Welfare (Social Services)) and therefore is not an outside entity.
- VDSS serves as FACT's organizational home and provides administrative support
  - Executive Director reports to the Deputy Commissioner
  - *DSS at the time of FACT's creation also dealt with Adult Protective Services and that may have led to the establishment of FACT under DSS and has stayed there even after the structural changes in 2012.*
  - There was discussion of the Board's powers and duties and the difficulty of performing these roles while housed under DSS.
- FACT is a public entity and must distribute funds according to Code of Virginia §2.2-4367, Ethics in Public Contracting
- FACT's primary income comes from tax income and license plate funds which have been declining or stagnant throughout the years. *The recent increase in 2021 may be due to the increase in generosity during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**Recommendations:**

1. Structural change: legislative change to move FACT out from VDSS, protect administrative support from VDSS, closely monitor opportunities with change of administration
2. Funding change: potentially ask VDSS for a portion of CBCAP funds, target general funds
3. Procurement change: potentially, seek some level of exemption from state procurement processes

**Meeting adjourned at 1:10PM**