

**DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND  
(VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, June 9th, 2023  
Virtual Meeting**

**Participation:**

Trustees Present: Linda Wilkinson (Chair), Tyler Hart, Maureen Coffey, Linda Gilliam, Tiffany Garner (Treasurer), Virginia (Ginny) Powell, Linda Gilliam, Beverly Crowder, Gena Boyle (VDSS Deputy Commissioner), Abigail Wescott, Cindy Han, Cherie Short, Dominique Marsalek, Season Roberts (Vice Chair), Allison Lawrence, Tavares Floyd (arrived 10:17am) Dominique Marsalek (arrived 11:30am)

Trustees Absent: Tarina Keene

Staff/Guests Present: Nicole Poulin (Executive Director), Taylor Hohle (Senior Research Associate) and Michelle L'Hommedieu (Office of Attorney General - FACT Counsel), Claire Gastañaga (FACT Contractor), Lisa Specter-Dunaway (FACT Contractor)

**Opening:** Chairperson Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM. A quorum was present.

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

Minutes Approval:

- Chairperson Wilkinson opened the floor for comments and corrections on the previous Board minutes from March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and the Sustainability meeting minutes from March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.
  - FACT Counsel L'Hommedieu provided clarification around virtual and in-person meetings. Trustees are to follow the procedures in Appendix A of the recently amended by-laws when requesting remote participation. Those who do not follow the procedures are allowed to monitor the meeting virtually but cannot participate in voting.
  - On the first page of the March 30<sup>th</sup> minutes, "statues" was corrected to "statutes."
- **A motion was made by Trustee Powell to approve the minutes as amended. Trustee Hart seconded.**

Nomination Committee Report: Chairperson Wilkinson provided the update.

- Chairperson Wilkinson presented the slate brought forth by the Nominating Committee. The slate is:
  - Board Chair: Linda Wilkinson (Second Term)
  - Vice Chair: Season Roberts (Second Term)
  - Treasurer: Tiffany Garner (Second Term)
  - Secretary: Abigail Wescott (First Term)
- As per the by-laws, officers are allowed to serve two terms. Chairperson Wilkinson opened the floor for additional nominations. No nominations were made.
- **The Board of Trustees approved the slate of officers for FY 24 as presented by the Nominating Committee.**

VDSS Report: VDSS Deputy Commissioner Gena Boyle provided the update.

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- Major Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Priorities for Summer 2023
  - End of Federal Public Health Emergency – Return to Normal for Annual Medicaid Redeterminations
    - During the public health emergency, re: covid-19, those who were enrolled in Medicaid did not have to go through annual redeterminations. Typically, IDSS agencies would conduct a redetermination annually for Medicaid eligibility. Due to the end of the federal public health emergency, departments are in need of assistance to process all redeterminations over the next twelve months.
    - The General Assembly allocated \$10 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Relief Funds (SLRF) to VDSS to support local DSS offices with redeterminations.
    - VDSS is partnering with community providers to help individuals/families navigate alternative options if they are no longer eligible.
  - Major IT System Replacement Procurements Underway
    - Child Welfare Information System – Requests for Proposal (RFP) is currently out for vendors to submit
    - Child Support System – Post-RFP and about to select a vendor
  - Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) – temporary program through ARPA to provide financial support for water bills for customers in arrears. Funding must be distributed by September 30, 2023.
    - Almost \$19 million has been distributed through this program. Virginia received additional funding to assist families, due to our ability to distribute the funding quickly, while other states have had to return some of their funding that will not be spent by September.
  - Awaiting approval of state budget changes for FY 24
    - July 1, 2023 (FY 24) is the start of the second year of the current two-year budget. This budget was already approved in the 2022 General Assembly (GA) special session so there is already an operating budget in place.
    - Changes were proposed by the Governor, House of Delegates, and Senate but the GA adjourned without adopting changes to the budget, except for a few select changes. They may come back into session later this month to adopt some of these changes. Two important factors in the cause of the delay were the federal debt ceiling debate and June 20<sup>th</sup> being a primary election for many GA positions.
    - One of the budget areas that has yet to be resolved is directly related to FACT's mission. The Governor proposed changes (investing an additional ~\$8.5 million) to address the State Inspector General's Child Protective Services (CPS) system recommendations. This funding would allow hiring of

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approximately 65 additional local staff, 18 hotline positions, and 5 regional practice consultants to support the work at the local level.

- Budget Priorities for 2024 (Governor will introduce the next two-year budget)
  - Funding to replace VaCMS (eligibility and enrollment system for **all** benefit programs) – this system is currently about 15 years old in terms of technology
  - Promoting kinship caregiving, reducing congregate care
  - Continuing to build the CPS workforce/response
  - Enhancing support of local DSS for training support on child welfare, benefits, etc.
  - Funding two-generation/whole family work – looking at what can be done in the areas of child support, family services, benefits programs, refugee resettlement, community action to really support two-generation/whole family approaches.
  - Supporting greater safety/disease prevention in assisted living facilities
- Office of Trauma and Resilience Policy Projects
  - The State Agency Trauma-Informed Leadership Team (TILT) has been reconvened. TILT is made up of around 12 state agencies that serve children/families (ex. Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Corrections, FACT, etc.)
  - Trauma-Informed Community Network (TICN) Support – received ARPA funding for this work
    - Statewide public awareness campaign that will operate this upcoming year.
    - Funding six TICNs in a healing-centered organizations learning collaborative
  - LDSS vicarious trauma research project – Developed focus groups to talk about experiences of vicarious trauma and how the local departments are (or are not) supporting those experiences.
  - Lived experience engagement community of practice – scanning across the agency and funded agencies to understand the landscape of groups that support those with lived experience. Examples of groups being examined: foster care youth, Parent Advisory Council
  - VDSS Hope and Resilience Transformation Team (HARTT) – representative from every division (Nicole is on this team).
  - Science of Hope framework – An interesting model that came from the University of Oklahoma studying the concept of hope in the context of trauma. One or two people from each division (including Nicole) were trained as a Hope Navigator. In Oklahoma, there has been major increase in retention and decrease in burnout after implementing this framework.
  - Technical Assistance (TA) for implementing Virginia Helping Everyone Access Linked Systems (HEALS) trauma-informed model of service delivery.
- There was discussion around the 18 additional staff that will be added to the hotline and if that will cover the large number of dropped calls. There are still vacancies so there will be a scaled effort to increase staffing each fiscal year. The CAN Committee recently received a presentation on hotline staff roles/needs. *Executive Director Poulin will send out those meeting minutes to the Board.*
- There was discussion around the “whole family” care. There are six whole family pilots happening at Local Community Action Agencies. Every family that participates gets a

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navigator who can assess what the family, as a whole, needs in addition to the child.

- There was discussion around current vacancies. VDSS is currently looking into what is causing the vacancies and how to increase retention. Financial compensation is frequently brought up. Localities have the opportunity, every time there is a state government pay increase, to increase their compensation; however, the local government is required to produce a 15% match in order for it to go into effect.
  - There was discussion around the differences between rural and urban regions, in terms of being able to fund their portion of the match. Those who have a harder time obtaining the 15% match, often have higher vacancies.
- There was discussion on how FACT can support the hotline staffing needs. In previous years FACT has advocated, via letter, for more support for the hotline.

Grants Committee Report: Trustee Roberts provided the update for Trustee Keene.

- The Grants Committee met on June 2nd to review the proposed funding areas from Executive Director Poulin and solidify their recommendations to the Board.
- Trustee Roberts provided the recommendations of the committee:
  - Continue to support the Skyward Fund at the current allocated amount of \$10,000.
  - Continue to support Balance of State Homeless Intervention Projects (recent expansion of the Emergency Funds Project) at the current allocated amount of \$60,000 (\$5,000 for 12 awards).
  - Allocate \$100,000 (\$5,000 for 20 awards) to home visiting programs serving low-income, at-risk families.
  - Allocate \$20,000 to partner with Virginia Department of Health in expanding the Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention (LEAP) program.
  - Allocate \$100,000 (\$50,000 per year) to support a two-year project that will implement Phase 2 of the FACT Problematic Sexual Behavior (PSB) Project
    - Year 1- Develop a 3-day, training for trainers curriculum on recommended coordinated responses to PSB cases for multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) within localities
    - Year 2- Implement the training with 3 MDTs
  - Allocate \$30,000 for 10 ad hoc state impact training events for up to \$3,000 each.
- There was a discussion around the 2-year project for Problematic Sexual Behavior. Phase 1 of the project was developing and releasing [the guidance document](#). This next project would be a continuation of that work. There was an advisory group established during Phase 1 that would be reconvened for Phase 2. Due to procurement delays, this project will likely begin in July 2024. There is vast support for this project across multiple stakeholders as Virginia could become a national model for handling these cases.
- **The Board of Trustees approved recommendations as presented by the Grants Committee.**
- Trustee Keene is no longer able to chair the Grants Committee. Those who are interested in chairing the committee should reach out to Executive Director Poulin or Chairperson Wilkinson.
- State procurement has increased the amount allowed through small purchases. The Small Grant Awards Policy previously covered up to \$5,000; however, that may be changed to

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\$10,000.

- **A motion was made by Trustee Powell to approve the Small Grant Awards policy as amended. Trustee Gilliam Seconded.**

Sustainability Committee Report: Chairperson Wilkinson provided the committee update with assistance from FACT contractors Lisa Specter-Dunaway & Claire Gastañaga

- Lisa Specter-Dunaway presented the proposed Strategic Plan 2023-2026
  - The Strategic Plan includes a summary of the information gathered, through survey, interviews, and meetings during the sustainability process.
  - The proposed goals and strategies for the FACT Strategic Plan are as follows:
    - 1) FACT will focus its efforts on state and local systems that prevent, reduce, and treat family violence across the lifespan
      - a) FACT will raise awareness of the importance of and distinction between primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts related to family violence across the lifespan.
      - b) FACT will prioritize issues identified by the Child Abuse and Neglect Advisory Committee in its work.
      - c) FACT will support and promote efforts to collect and utilize accurate data to evaluate the impact of current practices so that it can recommend effective policies and practices.
      - d) FACT will support efforts that assess, prioritize and promote the implementation of trauma-informed policies and practices.
    - 2) FACT will educate policymakers on ways to prevent and treat family violence.
      - a) FACT will identify opportunities and provide input on studies, policies, and proposed legislation related to family violence.
      - b) FACT will educate policymakers including other state-appointed boards and commissions, legislative advisory groups, secretaries, and commissioners by making presentations at relevant meetings.
      - c) FACT will increase the use of advisory letters, in concert with issue briefs, for other agencies within the Health and Human Resources secretariat and across agencies outside of the secretariat that support children and families.
    - 3) FACT will grow and leverage resources to address the prevention, reduction, and treatment of family violence.
      - a) FACT will coordinate with organizations that have complementary missions.
      - b) FACT Trustees will personally educate their local and state officials about the prevention and treatment of family violence across the lifespan.
      - c) FACT will identify ways to deepen the impact of ad-hoc grants, increasing the capacity of organizations and service providers.
      - d) FACT will allocate the majority of its funding towards systems-level issues.

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- 4) FACT will seek changes in its governance, financial, and operational structures to enhance its effectiveness.
- a) FACT will seek administrative and legislative support for Code changes and a line-item appropriation that will establish it as an independent state agency
  - b) FACT will modify its funding processes based on the requirements of the new structure, as needed.
- Trustee Short requested that the partner that she suggested as a previous Board meeting, The Virginia Family Foundation, Todd Gathje, to be included as a partner moving forward. Specter-Dunaway informed Trustee Short that Gathje was contacted for involvement but did not respond.
  - **The Board of Trustees approved the [Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#), as presented by the Lisa Specter-Dunaway and recommended by the Sustainability Committee. Trustee Floyd abstained.**
  - Claire Gastañaga discussed her change report based on the now approved Strategic Plan 2023-2026.
    - During the Sustainability Committee meeting, members reviewed the current barriers to FACT's success. Those identified barriers were: lack of autonomy, conflicting roles with VDSS, inability to hire staff, lack of funding (impacting multiple areas), procurement act challenges, and FOIA/open meeting requirements.
    - There was discussion around the need to build a "case" for these changes that Trustees can then utilize to explain the necessity of restructuring FACT to stakeholders.
    - There was discussion around the timeline of the proposal. Trustee Boyle let the Board know that VDSS is currently in the process of preparing budget recommendations for the Governor so this would align with the ability for FACT to move quickly.
      - The next steps will be to discuss these proposed changes with VDSS Deputy Commissioner Gena Boyle and VDSS Commissioner Danny Avula. If VDSS is supportive of these goals, then the next steps will be to discuss with the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Governor's Policy Office.
    - There was discussion around selecting a group of Trustees to move this work forward. Executive Director Poulin reminded Trustees of public meeting requirements that are placed on meetings with more than two Trustees.
      - **A motion was made by Trustee Wescott to create an ad hoc workgroup of the Sustainability Committee to work on implementation of the Strategic Plan 2023-2026. Trustee Han seconded the motion.**
        - Trustees who would like to join this group should email Executive Director Poulin by Tuesday (6/13/23) at 5pm.

*Chairperson Wilkinson called for a 10-minute break at 11:49am. The meeting was reconvened at 12:04PM. Trustees Crowder and Hart did not return, Trustee Floyd left the meeting after reconvening at 12:05; a quorum was still present.*

Child Abuse & Neglect (CAN) Committee Report: Trustee Powell provided the committee update.

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- At the previous meeting, the Board voted to accept the recommendation from the Child Abuse and Neglect Committee to send a letter to Governor Youngkin advocating for a child tax credit. This letter was sent earlier this week and is available for review on the FACT website.
- The annual Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) letter has been submitted to VDSS. VDSS will respond to the letter later this year.
  - The six issues identified within the letter were approved at the previous Board meeting.
- At the December meeting, FACT changed the By-laws to incorporate new changes to FOIA and meeting requirements. The CAN Charge was similarly updated at the most recent CAN meeting. These updates will allow the CAN Committee to utilize the virtual meeting options that the Board approved in Appendix A to the By-laws.
  - **There is a recommendation from the CAN Committee to accept the amended CAN Charge to become in-line with the FACT by-laws and appendixes. No abstentions.**
- There was discussion around the relationship between the CAN Committee and the Office of Trauma & Resilience (OTR). OTR is scheduled to provide an update to the CAN Committee at the September meeting. Trustee Boyle provided additional information on the Office's work and how it aligns with the FACT Board and CAN Committee.

Treasurer's Report: Trustee Garner provided the update.

- The fiscal year ends June 30<sup>th</sup>. Trustee Garner reviewed the FY 2024 FACT budget for Trustees, including projected revenue and expenses.
  - There was clarification provided that the budget is based on allocated amounts; therefore, it is not guaranteed that all of budgeted funding will be spent within the fiscal year. For example, the allocated amount may be \$10,000 but the entire \$10,000 may not be spent within FY 2024.
  - Due to the nature of the license plates and casino funding, exact numbers of revenue are not available at this time. The proposed revenue for these sections in the FY 2024 budget was calculated based on historical data.
  - There was discussion around hiring a bookkeeper and the differences between the bookkeeper's duties compared to the Board Treasurer. Hiring a bookkeeper, with expertise in QuickBooks, could allow FACT better organization of financials moving forward and ensure that FACT follows best accounting practices.
  - **A motion was made by Trustee Garner to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 FACT Budget. Trustee Coffey seconded.**

Editorial & Planning (E&P) Committee Report: Trustee Gilliam provided the update.

- The committee has begun work on the next issue brief series on special populations. Meetings have been scheduled through the summer and the first brief will be released later this fall.

Staff Updates: Executive Director Poulin provided updates.

- Executive Director Poulin met with the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) State

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Children's Justice Act Coordinator Program to discuss updates on the child homicide investigation training they are developing with Justice 3D. She also discussed possible partnership with FACT on Phase 2 of the Problematic Sexual Behavior Project (PSB) which will be a similar project. Executive Director Poulin has been invited to attend their training in the fall.

- Executive Director Poulin met with the Coordinator for the Safe and Sound Taskforce. This taskforce was created by Governor Youngkin to address children entering foster care who were temporarily housed in case workers offices.
- There was discussion around a potential future partnership with the Department of Health for the LEAP project (mentioned in the Grants Committee update). They currently have a contract with the Brain Injury Association of Virginia to educate law enforcement on the symptoms of brain injury, as it relates to survivors of domestic violence.
- Executive Director Poulin is serving on the state Trauma Informed Leadership Team (TILT) coordinated through VDSS Office of Trauma and Resilience Policy.
- FACT will be starting Lunch and Learn sessions this summer focusing on different issues outlined in the CAPTA letter from the CAN Committee. The first session will be focused on child fatality work.

Next steps:

- If Trustees are interested in joining the strategic plan ad hoc workgroup, please email Executive Director Poulin by Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>.
- If Trustees are interested in the open Grants Committee Chair position, please let Chairperson Wilkinson or Executive Director Poulin know.
- A poll will be sent to Trustees to decide on meeting days/times for the upcoming fiscal year.

Adjournment/Wrap up: Chairperson Wilkinson concluded the meeting at 12:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Taylor Hohle*  
Taylor Hohle, Senior Research  
Associate