

**DRAFT MINUTES, VA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND  
(VA-FACT) Board of Trustees Meeting, December 9th, 2025,  
Microsoft Teams**

**Participation:**

Trustees Present: Abigail Wescott (Vice Chair), Cherie Short, Ian Danielsen, Amy Greear, Joseph Van Name, Maria Salgado\*, Carl Ayers (VDSS Commissioner Designee), Nichele Carver – arrived 11:29am, Season Roberts (Chair) – arrived 11:32am, Tiffany Garner (Secretary) – arrived 12:29pm

Trustees Absent: Tyler Hart (Treasurer), Cindy Han

Staff/Guests Present: Nicole Poulin (Executive Director), Michelle L'Hommedieu (Office of Attorney General - FACT Counsel), Taylor Hohle (Senior Research Associate), Rebecca Simmons, Executive Director of Child Advocacy Centers of Virginia

*\*A technology issue occurred that showed Maria Salgado's account name as Paul Krizek, who was not in attendance.*

**Opening:** Vice Chair Wescott called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM. A quorum was not until present until 11:29am.

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

VDSS Report: Commissioner Designee Ayers provided the update.

- The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is busy preparing for the transition of the new Governor and new Commissioner. Commissioner Designee Ayers is not in an appointed position and will be able to provide some continuity for the new team.
- Safe Kids, Strong Families – The final report is hopefully going to be released next Tuesday. It is still awaiting approval for public release from the Governor's office. The Governor's budget will be released on Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - As part of the VDSS budget request, they have asked to extend the 24-hour response time to include all children under the age of three.
- Child and Families Service Review – interviews were pushed back due to the federal government shutdown but will begin soon. Virginia is not meeting a single measure. No state has ever passed one of these reviews, it is always anticipated that states will have to make a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).
- Commissioner Designee Ayers provided an update on technology issues VDSS is focusing on. A major technology issue is the outdated Child Welfare Information System (CWIS) and VDSS has included a note to the Governor transition team to prioritize these updates.
- Trustee Short asked about opening the mandated reporter portal to citizens. After the last meeting, Commissioner Designee Ayers reached out to the Office of the Attorney General seeking legal advice on the issue.

Treasurer's Report: Executive Director Poulin provided the update in place of Trustee Hart.

- Executive Director Poulin reviewed the new financial documents created in collaboration with staff, Treasurer Hart, and our accounting contractor. These documents will show the Board what funding has been awarded, what has been invoiced/billed, and what is still restricted from use.
- Trustee Van Name noticed a miscalculation on the document. Staff will double check the Excel formulas and calculations and send out an updated sheet to Board members.

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Grants Committee Report: Vice Chair Wescott provided the update.

- The Grants Committee has met three times since the September Board meeting to discuss changes to the current Ad Hoc Grants process and the details for the upcoming Requests for Proposals (RFP) process for larger grants.
- Ad Hoc Grants recommendations:
  - The Committee is recommending that the Board approve an additional \$50,000 for the Ad Hoc awards which would bring the remaining budget to \$200,000 and allow for 20 awards of up to \$10,000 each to be made for direct services.
  - The Committee is recommending that instead of a competitive process, FACT makes the Ad Hoc awards available in a similar way to how the Emergency Funds Grants were made in the past. Programs that meet the minimum criteria, outlined below, receive the funding on a first-come, first-served basis.
    - Local Government Agencies in Virginia
    - 501c3 Nonprofits who are currently receiving funding and are in good standing with one, or more, of the following agencies:
      - Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
      - Virginia Department of Health
      - Virginia Department of Social Services
      - Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
      - Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
    - Agencies that have had a formal audit or review of accounts within the last three years
    - Non-profits that have filed a current 990 form
    - Agencies have not received an ad hoc grant from FACT in state fiscal year 2026 for training or organizational capacity support
  - The Committee is also recommending that those awards be made in two cohorts of 10 to allow more opportunities to receive the first-come, first-served funding.
    - Applications will be accepted for the first cohort from January 5, 2026 to February 13, 2026. Notices of Awards will be made on or after February 27, 2026 for services to begin on or after March 1, 2026.
    - Applications will be accepted for the second cohort from April 1, 2026 to May 13, 2026. Notices of Awards will be made on or after May 27, 2026 for services to begin on or after June 1, 2026.
  - **A motion was made by Trustee Wescott to approve the Grants Committee's recommendations on the updated Ad Hoc Grants process as presented and to revise the budget to include an additional \$50,000 towards Ad Hoc grants.**
- RFP Recommendations:
  - The Committee is making the following recommendations for the RFP funding:
    - Eligible programs will be: 501 © 3 nonprofit organizations with annual budgets of \$750,000 or higher and local governments in Virginia.
    - Five to ten awards of \$150,000-\$300,000 to be made be made
    - Up to 70% of the total funding allocation of \$1.5 million will be directed

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toward the support of programs that have faced or anticipate facing a significant loss in funding for existing services related to the federal budget reduction

- Up to 30% of the total funding allocated will be directed to support innovative pilot programming and expansion of current services
  - Organizations may submit up to two proposals, one from each category, with a total award request amount limited to no more than \$300,000.
  - The Committee will work with Nicole, Michelle and VDSS staff from the Office of Procurement to finalize the RFP to be released the first part of the 2026 calendar. Our goal is to complete the grant review process by the March meeting to make a final recommendation on funding for projects to start on July 1, 2026.
- **A motion was made by Trustee Wescott to approve the Grants Committee's recommendations on the Request for Proposals process as presented.**

Minutes Approval:

- Chairperson Roberts opened the floor for comments and corrections on the previous Board minutes from the September meeting.
- **A motion was made by Trustee Greear to approve the minutes as presented. Trustee Danielsen seconded.**

Guest Presentation: Rebecca Simmons, Executive Director of Child Advocacy Centers of Virginia provided the presentation.

- Rebecca provided an overview of Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and the important work they do supporting children and families who have experienced abuse. CACs provide forensic interviewing, family advocacy, mental health services, and multidisciplinary case coordination.
  - There are currently 19 CACs that cover around 80% of Virginia.
- CACVA is hoping to raise awareness of the importance of CACs during the upcoming General Assembly session.
  - Currently CACs are funded at \$7.4 million/year. CACVA is asking for an increase in funding to \$20 million/year. \$16 million would be for current CACs to replace the loss of federal Victims of Crime Act funding. \$4 million would be utilized to address the 20% of Virginia that lacks a CAC.
- The Child Abuse and Neglect Advisory Committee is recommending that the FACT Board support budget legislation for CACVA's request.
  - **A motion was made by Trustee Wescott to send a letter of support for the anticipated budget bill for the Child Advocacy Centers of Virginia's request for additional child advocacy center funding. Trustee Carver seconded.**

Child Abuse & Neglect (CAN) Advisory Committee Report: Chairperson Roberts provided the committee update.

- The CAN Advisory Committee met on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- During the meeting, the Committee heard an update from The Office of the Children's Ombudsman who recommended in their annual report for Virginia to create a permanent Children's Cabinet to

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coordinate services and funding across state agencies for the improvement of the health and welfare of children and families.

- FACT has been supportive of this idea for several years, including sending a letter to the Youngkin transition team in 2022 outlining support.
- The Committee is recommending that a similar letter be sent to the incoming Spanberger transition team.
- **A motion was made by Trustee Danielsen to send a letter to the incoming Governor transition team outlining support for the creation of a permanent Children's Cabinet. Trustee Garner seconded.**
- The issue of the critical updates needed for the Child Welfare Information System (CWIS) was also discussed at the CAN Advisory Committee meeting. The current system is very outdated and unable to collect consistent and accurate information. One of the recommendations made in FACT's recent report on System Responses to Child Fatalities is to prioritize updating that system.
  - The Committee is recommending that FACT send an advisory letter to the new Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), once appointed, to prioritize the purchase of a new system as it's critical to determining effective prevention strategies to support children and families.
  - **A motion was made by Trustee Wescott to send a letter to the incoming VDSS Commissioner, once appointed, to prioritize the procurement process to update a new Child Welfare Information System and restate the request for the CAN Committee co-chairs to be included in conversations on outcome measurement development. Trustee Garner seconded.**
- Executive Director Poulin provided the CAN Advisory Committee with an update on her communications with staff from the Association of Professionals Solving the Abuse of Children (APSAC) program.
  - The Committee is recommending that FACT take on the role of coordinator for the Virginia section of APSAC.
  - **A motion was made by Trustee Van Name to approve FACT taking on the role of coordinator for a new Virginia section of the Association of Professionals Solving the Abuse of Children (APSAC) Trustee Greear seconded.**
  - **A motion was made by Trustee Van Name to allow Executive Director Poulin to utilize funding budgeted for dues and subscriptions to cover the cost of APSAC membership for up to \$3,000 for FACT Board of Trustees and Child Abuse and Neglect Advisory Committee members who are not currently members of APSAC. Trustee Garner seconded.**

Chair's Report: Chairperson Roberts provided the report.

- Chairperson Roberts provided a reminder to contribute to FACT through donation. Online donations can be made at: <https://www.fact.virginia.gov/donate/>
- Conflict of Interest Trainings and required updated forms are due in January. VDSS staff will be contacting Trustees to provide more information on these requirements.
- The Ad Hoc Committee established to plan events for FACT's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration met last week.
  - A Legislative Coffee Hour will be hosted in partnership with Delegate Krizek's office on February 3<sup>rd</sup> beginning at 8:30am. Trustees are heavily encouraged to attend.

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- The creation of a nomination process for FACT to recognize four FACT champions in Virginia will be coordinated by the Committee. Once selected, grants of \$10,000 will be awarded to the nonprofit of choice related to FACT's mission. The Champions will be recognized at an evening reception held in September 2026.
  - The Committee is recommending that the Board approve a revision to the budget for an additional \$10,000 to hire an outside contractor to help FACT's staff coordinate and plan the events for next year. Nicole will work with the committee to select the contractor and determine an appropriate hourly rate.
- **A motion was made by Trustee Roberts to accept the Committee's recommendation to revise the budget to include an additional \$10,000 to hire a contractor to help FACT staff coordinate and plan 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary events next calendar year. Trustee Greear was not present for the vote.**

Staff Report: Executive Director Poulin provided the update.

- Child Fatality System Response – the subcommittee of the CAN Advisory Committee has finished their review of cases. A report with anonymized composite cases will be released in the coming weeks to provide awareness of the trends and stories of these children.
- Problematic Sexual Behavior Pilot Project – the train-the-trainer pilot will be conducted in Staunton January 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- The Biennial Impact Report was released covering Fiscal Years 2024 & 2025.  
<https://www.fact.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/FACT-Biennial-FY-2024-2025.pdf>
- There are currently four vacant Board positions that are to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. Executive Director Poulin will continue communicating with the Senate to have those positions filled.

Board Announcements

- Trustee Carver was appointed to co-chair the Commerce and Trade Housing Committee on the Governor transition team.

Adjournment/Wrap up: The next Board meeting will be March 24th, 2026 at 11:00 AM -3:30 PM, held in-person. Chairperson Roberts concluded the meeting at 1:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Taylor Hohle*

Taylor Hohle, Senior Research Associate