Ozark Opportunities, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
November 21, 2019

The Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors met at Western Sizzlin’ in Clinton, AR, at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2019.

Board Members Present:
Paulette Hill          Jim Sprott          Debra Clemons          Althea B. O’Haver
Margaret Hodges       Gloria York       Kristen Smith          Roger Rogers

Board Members Absent:
Trish Beck (rep. for Hon. Mickey
Pendergrass
Nicole Campbell

Sandra Holt (rep. for Hon. John Massey

Paul Wellenberger       Charmaine Seaton (rep. for Hon. Jim Harness)

Jan Larson                Roger Hooper          Janice Mann

Staff Members Present:
Richard Atkinson        Shirley Richesin      Jane Bueg              Rebecca Hanlin
Ryan Clayborn

Guests Present:
George Hill              Dr. Robin Myers      Lorie Williams          Beverly Buchanan
Linda Myers

The primary purpose of the meeting was to review and take action on: previous meeting minutes, ratification of Executive Committee actions, Election of New Members, 2020-21 HS/EHS Grant Application, 2019 CSBG Carryover Budget, Agency Progress Report, agency Finance Report, Strategic Plan update, adoption of governing body documents, Health/Dental/Life benefit options for 2020, & CEO Evaluation.

Audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.

1. Welcome & Meeting Called to Order:

Chairperson Paulette Hill led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, read the Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Mission Statement and established that a quorum of members was present. Chairperson Hill welcomed all in attendance and called to order the meeting of Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Board of Directors at 6:00 p.m.

CEO Richard T. Atkinson introduced special guests from Arkansas Department of Human Services, Office of Community Services: Lorie Williams, Beverly Buchanan and Linda Myers.
2. Prior Meeting Minutes; Approval & Ratification of Exec. Committee Actions:

- Debra Clemons moved to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2019 meeting of the Board of Directors, and ratify the actions and approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings of September 26, 2019 and October 29, 2019. Gloria York seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Election of New Members:

Chairperson Hill asked for a motion to appoint Boone County Board Member Jim Sprott to the Executive Committee of the Board.

- Debra Clemons moved to appoint Mr. Sprott to represent Boone County on the Executive Committee of the Board. Althea O’Haver seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Hill called for election of Heath Kirkpatrick to represent Boone County Public Sector, as he is an elected member of Harrison City Council and has completed the proper paperwork to join.

- Jim Sprott moved to elect Heath Kirkpatrick to the Board. Roger Rogers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Hill called for election of Dr. Robin Myers to represent Baxter County Private Sector, as he is the Chancellor of the Arkansas State University Mountain Home campus.

- Jim Sprott moved to elect Dr. Robin Myers to the Board. Debra Clemons seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Program Updates:

A. Child Development:

Ryan Clayborn, Child Development Manager, reported that all programs are fully enrolled and fully staffed. Head Start/Early Head Start special funds are being spent on repairs and enhancements, computers, printers and classroom improvements. Staff training events included a Safety Day focusing on self-defense, fire extinguisher operation, and Stop-the-Bleed; Mental Health CPR, Adverse Childhood Experience and War on Poverty training.

- Classroom Observations are currently underway, conducted by Patricia Murray, Disabilities Coordinator and Carrie Ragland, Mentor-Coach.
- OOI Head Start is in the top 10% in the nation in CLASS Instructional Support, after being in recompetition in 2014 due to low Instructional Support scores(!)
- Overall, all OOI Child Development Programs are doing well.
Mr. Atkinson conducted training on the HS/EHS Grant Process for the 2020-21 funding period. He reported that Head Start Policy Council met on November 19, 2019 to review and approve the 2020-21 HS/EHS Application. Mr. Atkinson spoke of the impact the new minimum wage has on the new budget: an increase from $9.25 per hour to $10.00 per hour in January 2020, and up to $11.00 per hour in January 2021; he detailed the changes in the number of students and classrooms in the Head Start Program.

Recent additions of classrooms that serve the Pre-K population in the Boone County area has had an impact on Harrison Head Start. Bergman School opened an additional classroom in August, Harrison has added additional slots, and additional Pre-K classrooms are coming to the area in the coming school year.

The OOI HS/EHS programs need more funds to pay the lower tier workers (Teacher Assistants, EHS Teachers, and Nutrition Workers). The grant proposal includes eliminating two classrooms in Harrison. Current staff will continue to work through the 2019-2020 school year, and will be offered an opportunity to fill vacancies next year. The reduction in Pre-K slots will not decrease overall funding; the plan includes shifting a portion of the HS funds to EHS for wage increases.

Mr. Atkinson presented the HS/EHS Prioritization Criteria for 2020-21. The Policy Council took action on November 19, 2019 and recommends the Board approve the updated criteria.


- Debra Clemons moved to approve the 2020-21 HS/EHS Grant Application and attachments. Margaret Hodges seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Atkinson noted that, hopefully, expansion funds for EHS would be available in spring 2020.

**B. Community Services:**

Rebecca Hanlin, Community Services Manager, provided an update on LIHEAP, Family Development and Community Engagement. Ms. Hanlin will be on a panel at the upcoming Arkansas Energy Conference. She also mentioned that the **OOI Family Development Seminars are free and open to the public** (the seminar schedule is published in the Agency Progress Report monthly). OOI has applied for a “Prosperity Now” mini-grant application (made for one of four nationwide grant opportunities of $20,000 each year for 2 years.) Staff training and development is ongoing, as Community Services is in the “off-season” for LIHEAP and SUCCESS Programs.
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Mr. Atkinson asked that an agenda item, 2019 CSBG Carryover Budget, be tabled, as the figures are not yet available from the State OCS Office. Shirley Richesin, CFO, shared that Beverly Buchanan would call Friday morning with the figures.
   ✔ Roger Rogers moved to table the 2019 CSBG Carryover Budget. Gloria York seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Atkinson reported that a CSBG Funding Allocation Survey (regarding an upcoming change in CSBG funding amounts to agencies in Arkansas) was recently received from Lorie Williams. Mrs. Hill and Mr. Atkinson both completed the survey and returned it to Mrs. Williams by the deadline.

5. Review and Acceptance of Agency Progress Report:

6. Acceptance of Finance Report:

Shirley Richesin, CFO, presented to the members for their review, consideration and approval the Finance Report Packet including: Grant Period Expenditures Compared to Budget as of 10/31/19 for Community Service Block Grant, Healthy Families America, Minor Grants, Head Start, Early Head Start, and ABC; Credit Card Statement Re-Cap October 2019 (credit card purchase documentation is present for inspection); verification of Payroll Taxes Report; balance sheet as of 11/20/19 and Retirement Plan Recap.

Mr. Sprott inquired why funds were spent on “faulty equipment”, as listed in the Credit Card Statement. Ms. Hanlin explained that this category includes repairs to heating and cooling systems (“faulty”), and not the purchase of equipment that is not working (⊂).
   ✔ Jim Sprott moved to accept the Finance Report. Roger Rogers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Richesin requested the Board table action on the Cost Allocation Plan, pending changes in the HS/EHS program (as outlined in the new application), as the new plan would include the changes in the program and coincide with the agency fiscal year, March – February.
7. Executive Director’s Report: State of the Agency (w/Strategic Planning Update):

Richard Atkinson, CEO, presented the results of the new comprehensive community assessment; top three (3) key findings were Housing, Employment, & Health (& Nutrition). He also reviewed the updated Strategic Planning Matrix. He stated that, despite the reduction in Head Start Pre-K slots, the plan is to expand and grow Early Head Start.

Jim Sprott inquired about the occupancy at Hope Cottages; Ms. Hanlin replied that there is one vacancy in the cottages, and that Family Development Worker Ferrin Carlton is working with Hope Cottages to get all families enrolled in SUCCESS. Ms. Hanlin did not know the funding status of Hope Cottages.

Mr. Sprott then inquired about House of Hope. Mr. Atkinson responded that House of Hope has had recent leadership changes, and that he is not current on their funding status.

Mr. Atkinson stated that as continued part of the focus on Pre-K the agency would explore applying for after school program funds through Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) for next year, with the plan to offer the services over the summer for the coming school year.

The next phase of the Strategic Planning cycle is the “Planning Phase” and will include members of the Board, Policy Council, Staff and Community Partners. Mr. Atkinson presented the OOI Code of Conduct/Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Statements as sent and asked for approval to use in the future.

- Nicole Campbell moved to approve the OOI Code of Conduct/Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Statements (as sent.) Margaret Hodges seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Training:

Rebecca Hanlin provided training on “ROMA in Action: Developing Results-Oriented Plans”.

9. Corporate Services Update:

Jane Bueg, COO, reported there were no Employment Actions in October. The agency is currently fully staffed. Ms. Bueg presented the job description for Community Services Supervisor for review and approval. The position is reclassified as “non-exempt” effective January 1, 2020 due to changes in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

- Jim Sprott moved to approve the revised job description for Community Services Supervisor. Roger Rogers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
Ms. Bueg presented for Board review and approval the Health, Dental and Life Insurance premiums for 2020 with the recommendation that the Board to accept the Arkansas BlueCross/BlueShield renewal increase of 6.3%; & no increase in premium for Dental or Life Insurance. The health insurance increase will increase the employee-paid portion of the premium from $9.02 to $31.32 per month, an increase of $22.30 for employee coverage.

- Jim Sprott moved to approve the Health, Dental and Life premiums for 2020, and the agency continue to pay $345.00 per month for employee health insurance, $30.78 for employee dental insurance, $3.30 for employee life insurance and Air Evac Family Membership. Margaret Hodges seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Bueg requested the Board to table the CEO Evaluation until the next meeting. Evaluation forms were mailed to the OOI Executive Committee in late October and many members did not receive their packets until late last week. Chairperson Hill did not receive completed evaluations from all the Executive Committee members in time to review and compile the results for the Board Meeting.

- Jim Sprott moved to table the CEO Evaluation until the next meeting of the full Board of Directors in February 2020. Gloria York seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Beverly Buchanan advised Ms. Hanlin to attach a copy of the minutes of tonight’s meeting to the Organizational Standards as a reminder to the OCS review team of the reason for the delay of the CEO Evaluation.

10. Adjourn:

- Roger Rogers moved to adjourn. Gloria York seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.