



Board of Directors' Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 20, 2019

4:30 p.m.

Walkerton Board Room

Present: George Sanz (Chair), Linda Van Sligtenhorst, Selwyn (Buck) Hicks, Julie Lawrence, George Mackowski, Christena Dawson, Gord Hammer, Tim Nicol, Jamie McKinnon and Christine John

Staff: Phyllis Lovell, Anne Bester, Deb Pope, Julie Lipsett and Jeff Nickel

Guests: Nancy Craig, FPA; Karah Wall, Union Rep and Laura Schwindt, Presenter

Regrets: Donald Porterfield, Dave Wyles and Marie Tudor

Recorder: Kim Fleming

1. **Welcome / Opening Remarks**

George Sanz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Approval of the Agenda / Conflict of Interest Declaration**

BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the Board accepts the agenda as presented.

MOVED by Julie Lawrence; SECONDED by James McKinnon

CARRIED

No Conflict of Interest Declared.

3. **Approval of the Minutes from January 16, 2019 Meeting & Business Arising**

BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the Board accepts the minutes from the January 16, 2019 meeting as presented.

MOVED by Linda Van Sligtenhorst; SECONDED by George Mackowski

CARRIED

4. **Presentation – Signs of Safety**

Presenters: Laura Schwindt, Child Protection Worker

Laura Schwindt presented on the Signs of Safety 'Learning Case'. Laura Schwindt is a Child Protection Worker in Family Services and works out of the Owen Sound office. Bruce Grey Child and Family Services is in year one of SOS implementation. A learning case is one of the ways that our consultant team makes us look at the work we do and why we make the decisions that we do with the families and children we serve.

The first steps when presenting a learning case is to create a genogram. Genograms are very helpful when talking about families and it helps identify the members of the family and how everyone is related.

The worker then provides the background information on the family in a 3-5 minute timeframe.

The Signs of Safety uses a number of tools when working with a family. One of the tools is for the worker to create a 'Danger Statement'. The Danger Statement is used to describe specific behavioral events that take place in the family. These are the worries or concerns that resulted in our involvement. The next tool used is to create 'Safety Goals'. Safety Goals identify ways to help the family succeed and gives a timeline when a safety plan is implemented in order to make the decision when to close the file.

Some of the other tools used were the 3- column conversation and a Signs of Safety Assessment that is used during home visits to assess the safety goals. The 3 columns include: What are we worried about? What is working well? What needs to happen? There is also a scaling question at the bottom of the form. My 3 - houses is a form used by the child and is usually a fun activity of drawing or writing with identifying their feelings around the house of worries, the house of good things and the house of dreams.

Using SOS tools has really improved the relationships between CAS and the family. Different SOS tools are being used in intake and in family services. Having a signs of safety approach reduces the number of court cases. SOS is a paradigm shift and the workers that present on their cases are incredibly courageous as they talk about their cases and identify what is working and what is not working.

5. **Reports**

- **OACAS**

Christine John attended the provincial leadership meeting in Toronto on March 3rd and 4th. There were lots of discussions and information shared. Nicole Bonnie is the new CEO at OACAS who has recently replaced Mary Ballantyne. Discussions were about the government's direction around shared services and future amalgamations. Board members who attended focused on the direction of the government and what they can do as board members to deal with the issues. The message that was very clear was that children's aid societies need to work together and not in silos. There will be a time of change in child welfare over the next few years.

Phyllis Lovell spoke about a recent report in the Toronto Star about Brant CAS going through a financial crisis and how the ministry is doing a terrible job in protecting them from having to lay off 26 workers. Ms. Lovell indicated that this messaging is not congruent with the rest of the province.

- **Foster Parent Association**

Nancy Craig presented. FPA executive monthly meetings have started back up again. The FPA would like to start up a mentoring program to support new foster parents and to encourage them to come to meetings and connect with other foster parents. It is important to build on relationships and develop a support network.

- **Chief Executive Officer**

Phyllis Lovell presented on her report.

The strategic planning process is underway with Karen and Jay from KTA attending community table meetings with Ms. Lovell to receive feedback on the agency report card.

Ms. Lovell also shared with the board that the organization has experienced a series of death threats that resulted in lock down of the 2 buildings on 3 different occasions. The threats came into the organization by texting a landline. The first threat was received in February with the latest threat received yesterday where an evacuation of both buildings was required due to a bomb threat. The local police were on the scene in both Owen Sound and Walkerton. The police challenged our organization for not having call display on our phones. When the second threat came in, we had made arrangements with Bell to have call display installed. After yesterday's threat, the perpetrator was identified and spent the night in jail. The next step is to let our service users and community partners know that we now have call display. A protocol will need to be developed for when someone calls in to report on a child and wishes to remain anonymous. With call display, the caller's name and number will be recognized. We have more work to do with police with the development of a new protocol.

- **Finance, Risk Management & Audit**

Gord Hammer presented from the meeting on March 13, 2019.

Jeff Nickel presented on the budget.

Mr. Nickel also presented on the Balanced Budget Fund (BBF). As per a letter from the Ministry dated October 17, 2018, BGCFS had un-accessed contributions in the BBF of \$104,035. These contributions expire if they are not used in the current 2018-2019 year. As well, BGCFS had an operating surplus in 2017-2018 of \$56,485 to contribute to the BBF. This amount is still to be confirmed by the Ministry. Our 2018-2019 budget submission and subsequent reports to the Ministry included a request to access \$104,035 from the BBF and the remaining \$56,485 would be carried forward into future years. Requests to access the BBF can only occur at the time of our budget submission. Given the uncertainty of the funding allocation for 2019-20 as well as the future of the BBF, there are risks associated with spending it or not spending it. The recommendation to the board is given the uncertainty, and the risk of stranded debt, Mr. Nickel and Ms. Kelly Ferris recommends not spending the \$56,485, therefore not creating a deficit more than the approved BBF request for 2018-19. The Board of Directors supports this recommendation as presented.

Ms. Lovell reported on the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) payout to staff. One of the issues that was reviewed at the end of Q3 was the cost savings resulting from the number of vacancies in the organizations that we were unable to fill. A discussion took place around ways that the savings would benefit the organization for next fiscal year. One of ideas brought forward by Corporate Director, Kelly Ferris was to meet with CUPE and CUPE national to consider paying the COLA in one lump sum to staff. Ms. Lovell shared the plan with George Sanz. This process is now complete as the lump sum was paid out last week.

BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the Board of Directors accepts the FRMA Committee report as presented.

MOVED by Gord Hammer; SECONDED by Jamie McKinnon

CARRIED

Christina Dawson, Chair of the Governance Committee updated the Board on the Strategic planning process. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee met on March 7th to review the surveys that would go out to staff, foster parents, kin providers, adoptive families, service users, youth and community partners including our Metis community. The meeting was very productive and lots of good discussions took place.

6. **New Business**

Christine John provided a cheque to Ms. Lovell from Bruce Power to the 'send a kid to camp' campaign. The cheque is in the amount of \$20,000 and Bruce Power has made a commitment to pay this amount each year for the next 4 years. Ms. Lovell will contact United Way as it is a good time to review the Memorandum of Understanding between BGCFS and United Way.

7. **In-Camera (required)**

No in-camera

8. **Next Meeting** – Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. in Owen Sound

9. **Adjournment**

BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

MOVED by Linda Van Sligtenhorst; SECONDED by Christine John

CARRIED