



## Board of Directors' Meeting

### MINUTES

Wednesday, January 20, 2021  
Go to Meeting

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- Present:** Christine John (Chair), Linda Van Sligtenhorst (Co-Chair), Tim Nicol, Christena Dawson, Alison Fernandes, Julie Lawrence, George Mackowski, Andrew Marttinen, Donald Porterfield, Selwyn (Buck) Hicks, Susanne Snowdon and Marie Tudor
- Staff:** Phyllis Lovell, Kelly Ferris, Anne Bester, Deb Pope, Julie Lipsett and Karah Wall (CUPE)
- Guests:** Nancy Craig (Foster Parent Association) and Shelly Blue (HR Supervisor)
- Regrets:** Renee Schlonies
- Recorder:** Kim Fleming
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#### 1. **Welcome / Opening Remarks**

Linda Van Sligtenhorst 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 Donald Porterfield; SECONDED by Julie Lawrence*

*CARRIED*

**No conflict of interest declared.**

#### 3. **Approval of the Minutes from December 16, 2020 & Business Arising**

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the minutes from December 16, 2020 meeting as presented.*

*MOVED by Julie Lawrence; SECONDED by Donald Porterfield*

*CARRIED*

#### 4. **Presentation – HR by Shelly Blue, HR Supervisor**

Shelly Blue presented on the annual Human Resources Report for 2019/2020.

As of December 31, 2020, there were 126.3 positions at BGCFS. 95.3 positions are in direct service and 31 are in non-service positions. 74.3 are union members. 92 percent are female and 8 percent are male.

As of December 31, 2020, there were 143 employees (121 active including 1 temporary contract and 22 in-active). 61.6 are Child Protection Workers.

The qualifications we look for when hiring a Child Protection Worker is those with a Bachelor of Social Work. When hiring supervisors, we look for those with MSW qualifications.

We have a stable staff turnover rate where in 2020-21 (Q3), we had 9 new hires (6 CPW's) and we had 9 employees who exited the organization (3 CPW's).

All new child protection workers that are hired go through training and at the end they are expected to write an exam to be deemed an authorized child protection worker.

Ms. Blue also spoke about the 'Attendance Management Program' that was implemented on April 1, 2019. This program allows HR to monitor the casual sick time in our organization. We have developed a fair and equitable process when we need to discuss attendance and absences with employees.

The Attendance Management Program is designed for non-culpable absences. The program is a fair and equitable process to discuss attendance and absences. It was designed to support employees to be well and to be in the workplace.

In the fiscal year of 2020-21 (Q3) we have had 19 staff on short term disability with 3 who were transferred to long term disability. This number is lower than in previous years. There were 13 Infectious Disease Emergency Leaves (IDEL). This number is low due to allowing staff to work from home so they are able to manage their health better. We continue to have good practices in place around hygiene (washing hands frequently and regular cleaning of surfaces); staff are expected to wear masks in the workplace and are adhering to the social distancing rules.

To date, 54 employees accessed the board-approved \$500 stipend for home office equipment. 63 employees received COVID-19 temporary pandemic pay totaling \$65,113.60.

Ms. Blue has been seconded as the lead to work on the Oracle Cloud Human Capital Management Project. Phase One is underway and Phase Two will begin soon. Employees will have access to their own data including attendance management, learning and training, performance management, goal management and career development.

## 5. Reports

- **Chair:**

Christine John attended the Foster Parent Association meeting last night where she was impacted by some of the comments and concerns expressed by the foster parents who are supporting access visits. Some foster parents shared their frustration of not being heard and the worry and frustrations around safety plans for the child in their care. Ms. John wanted to alert the Board of her worries and concerns after last night's meeting and wondered what the Board could do to support these families around access visits. It has been challenging times for foster parents around access especially during Wave 2. Ms. John heard from foster parents that they wish to continue with face to face visits but in a very safe manner.

Ms. John shared with the Board that we have heard from Chippewas of Nawash and they have appointed Martha Pedoniquotte as a Board Representative. Martha is a band counsellor, head of native child welfare and she is a foster parent and has been nominated to represent the community by Chief and Counsel. She has lots of experience and a deep interest in the community and sector. The plan will be to meet with Martha so she understands her role on the Board and to discuss how she can best represent the Nation. This is a first for the board and a great benefit for BGCFS.

- **OACAS**

Ms. Lovell reported that after the December meeting, things have been very quiet from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. On January 29<sup>th</sup>, the CAS Southwest Zone Indigenous virtual Gathering is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The Southwest Zone CAS Executive Directors/CEO's have been committed to organizing an annual gathering in order to report back to the Nations we serve on our progress on the nine (9) Indigenous commitments made by non-indigenous Children's Aid Societies in 2017. Christine John and Linda Van Sligtenhorst will also be attending this meeting.

- **FPA**

Nancy Craig presented on her report. There was a good turnout at last night's virtual meeting with 25 families represented. The online ZOOM platform works well.

Ms. Craig thanked the Board on behalf of the Foster Parent Association for the stipend that was given out in January.

Foster Parents are feeling tired especially with the schools closed and students having to do on-line learning. Children with learning challenges have some difficulty with on-line learning and this puts extra pressure on foster parents. The plan moving forward is to invite Joanne Thompson, Education Lead, to a meeting to offer support and provide some learning options on what other things kids can be doing to help with their learning in a more fun way.

Ms. Craig shared with the Board some of the concerns she has heard from foster parents around access. Foster Parents have verbalized their frustrations around face to face visits in the midst of a provincial lock down. Foster Parents have indicated that they are feeling unheard and worried that some do not have safety plans in place and this is concerning to them.

Ms. Craig thanked Ms. John for attending the meetings and expressed how important it is for her to be there to hear the worries and frustrations from foster parents during this difficult time.

Ms. Lovell assured the Board that all children in our care who have access to their families have a safety plan in place but a safety plan is only good if people are following it and we are aware that some safety plans are not being followed.

- **Chief Executive Officer**

Ms. Lovell attended the Executive Leadership Section Meeting (ELS) for Executive Directors on January 15<sup>th</sup> and Assistant Deputy Minister David Remington was invited to talk about the newest lockdown measures and to also provide updates from the Ministry. The numbers of COVID infections were reported higher than earlier in the Pandemic with 70 COVID infections in foster homes across the province. Only 31 involved placed children. Ms. Lovell reported that on the whole, the experience of COVID infection is related to contact with family and friends. The cases are lower than the community spread and this is an indication that the Infection Prevention Control measures are working in these settings.

The BGCFS workers are now required to wear a surgical mask when present in people's homes and delivering service. Face shields and goggles are also being used. BGCFS continues to receive ongoing information and support from Public Health and has a good supply of PPE on hand. We need to have more conversations around cloth masks versus surgical masks and when face shields should be worn or not.

Ms. Lovell reminded the board that in March 2020, face to face visits were cancelled due to COVID-19. In June 2020, when our pandemic plan was reviewed, our goal was to re-establish face to face contact with placed children and their families as it is the child's entitlement to be able to continue a relationship with their families.

It has been reported that social distancing is not happening all the time in visits and this is being reviewed. We have also received strong messaging from the sector, the ministry and the court that safe contact with family and children needs to happen. Our organization has worked hard using a Signs of Safety approach to ensure arrangements are put in place to establish an access plan where it would include the family's network, resource families and foster families into the plan. The resource families deserve the right to control their environment as much as possible to ensure all safety measures are put in place. We need to be clear about the expectations and we will continue to coach and educate and encourage people who struggle to honour safety protocols. It has been a difficult process for everyone. We continue to deal with parents that do not take the COVID situation seriously and refuse to wear masks during visits. If there is a level of risk identified, we would need to go to the court and get an order to stop the face to face visit. This is our process and we will work through the process with every single child.

The Board thanked Ms. Lovell and all of the staff and Nancy Craig and the foster parents for their hard work during this very difficult time.

- **CG&SR**

George Mackowski presented on his report.

Mr. Mackowski is currently working with Richard Thomas (video guy), on revamping the board orientation process and will be eliminating the orientation paper manual. Orientation videos are being created and should be ready in the next month or two.

The Committee confirmed the date of the 2021 Annual General Meeting and will recommend to the Board that the proposed date is Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and will take place in a virtual format due to COVID.

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board approves the date of the 2021 Annual General Meeting to Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. in a virtual format.*

*MOVED by George Mackowski; SECONDED by Linda Van Sligtenhorst* *CARRIED*

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the CG&SR report as presented.*

*MOVED by George Mackowski; SECONDED by Christine John* *CARRIED*

- **FRMA**

Linda Van Sligtenhorst reported on her report.

Kelly Ferris reported on the 2020 Risk Report and shared the highlights of the report with the Board.

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the FRMA report as presented.*

*MOVED by Julie Lawrence; SECONDED by Donald Porterfield* *CARRIED*

6. **New Business**

No new business

7. **In-Camera**

The Board moved in camera to discuss a plan to lease the house on our property to the north of the Owen Sound site.

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board of Directors meeting moves in-camera at 6:13 p.m. to discuss a plan to lease the house on our property to the north of the Owen Sound site.*

*MOVED by Linda Van Sligtenhorst; SECONDED by Donald Porterfield* *CARRIED*

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board of Directors meeting comes out of camera at 6:48 p.m.*

*MOVED by Julie Lawrence; SECONDED by Tim Nicol*

*CARRIED*

8. **Next Meeting – Wednesday, February 17, 2021**

9. **Adjournment**

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board of Directors meeting be adjourned.*

*MOVED by Selwyn Hicks*

*CARRIED*