



Johnson County Empowerment Area Board

Meeting Minutes---November 5, 2009

6:50 PM to 8:50 PM

Mercy Medical Plaza---Iowa City, Iowa

Members Present: Corey Watt, Sally Weyer, Alice Atkinson, Cheryl Whitney, Jill Dodds, Terrence Neuzil, Justine Retz, Carol Nordquist, Terri McGraw, Phyllis Tucker

Staff: Laurie Nash

Guests: Shannon Ortiz/IC Free Medical Clinic-MPH student, Aimee Weldon Pitlick/Busy Bees, Diane Dingbaum/NCJC, Jim Behle/ICCSA.

Consent Agenda:

1. Quorum – 10 members present at 6:50 PM--quorum reached
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Accept Budget Reports
4. Accept October Board Meeting Minutes
5. Accept Committee/Work Group Reports

Corey Watt brought the meeting to order and noted presence of a quorum. He requested that the agenda be modified because the State TA representative was not present for the COI presentation. He asked that approval of the budget for ARRA be added to the agenda. The revised agenda was approved on motion of Alice, 2nd by Carol. October minutes approved on motion of Terrence, 2nd by Sally. Committee and budget reports were approved on motion of Jill, 2nd by Sally.

Empowerment/Provider relationships:

Laurie reported that the Neighborhood Centers and ICCSD requested mediation from the State TA team. Their specific concerns are related to contract language and fiscal penalties. Laurie stated that Shannel Wagler agreed to set up a meeting for providers and our Board. Laurie also stated that Janet Peterson submitted a letter of resignation to the board and identified concerns about relationships with providers as contributing to her decision to resign. Corey stated that he was concerned that the request to the State was made prior to a request by providers to address the concerns locally. Corey stated that a local meeting could help educate providers about contract requirements. Sally stated that “mediation” is a legal term and asked if State TA staff are trained as mediators. Jill spoke about the Board’s need to follow state requirements and stated that she also liked to keep things at the lowest possible level.

Guest Jim Behle stated that he understands the trickle down effect with state requirements and the impact on contracts. He stated that this is not just about contracts but is about other disagreements such as the fiscal penalties. He stated that the State TA folks should be involved in the discussion because when he speaks to them he hears something different than what they tell Laurie. He stated that some providers met with a small group of legislators who suggested they request assistance from the State TA team. Jim state that the school has many state and federal grants and there is more paperwork with Empowerment contracts that with multimillion dollar federal grants/contracts. Laurie stated that she did not see the State TA staff as being a disinterested 3rd party in the concern about getting different messages from state technical assistance team members.

Guest Diane Dingbaum stated that providers would like to rebuild a positive relationship with Empowerment but expressed concern that the Board has lost its vision and a punitive environment has been created. She stated that the presence of the State TA staff could provide clarification on state requirements.

Laurie showed a grid that she is preparing that will identify state requirements and local requirements (in 2 different columns).

Jill moved that a fact finding work session be scheduled; Alice made the 2nd to the motion. Discussion followed regarding what would be the next steps following the work session. The motion was withdrawn. A question was asked about the Administrative Rule, and Laurie showed 28.6, b. “.if disagreement ..State or regional technical assistance may be provided..” Jim stated that the legislators used the word “mediation”. There was further discussion about local discussion

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vs formal conflict resolution. Diane stated that they have made attempts at local resolution but at this point the history makes it difficult. Diane stated that she contacted the State TA office in August the day following the Executive Committee meeting when they presented their appeal of a fiscal penalty. Jim stated that the providers would like to have some resolution before the next RFPs are issued. He requested that the “President, Director, and a couple other board members” meet with providers with a 3rd party facilitating and with the State TA represented. Diane stated that they are comfortable with the State TA team doing the facilitation but are okay with a 3rd party and would like to give input on the selection of the 3rd party. Board members made suggestions about possible facilitators, and the Child and Family Policy Center was named as a possibility.

Justine made a motion: "Move we obtain services of a neutral 3rd party to have a conversation/problem solving session with local empowerment agencies and have the State TA staff participate for technical assistance only." Alice made the 2nd to the motion and it was approved unanimously.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Allocation for Infant and Toddler Care Quality—Budget

Approval:

Laurie reported that because not all Empowerment Boards accepted their ARRA funds. Our allocation is now \$91,875 (available to be expended by June 30, 2011). The amount that can be used for administration is \$4593.75. The proposed budget is \$87,281.25 for services and \$4593.75 for administration. Alice moved to accept the proposed budget. Carol made the 2nd and the motion carried unanimously.

FY 2010 Budget Reduction

Laurie distributed handouts and gave an overview of our budgets. She stated that both School Ready and Early Childhood Budgets have now been cut by the State. The Early Childhood allocation was cut by \$16,081 and School Ready by \$78,115. Laurie suggested adjusting the FY 10 Early Childhood budget by moving \$7000 (4C's QRS to School Ready) and by eliminating the uncontracted funds. Two scenarios were suggested to balance the FY 10 School Ready Budget: 1) apply a 4% reduction to all contracts except for Empowerment staff salaries/benefits; 2) make targeted cuts: eliminate all unencumbered School Ready Scholarships; eliminate future Continued Care benefits; eliminate the uncontracted funds; and add the \$7000 (4C's QRS). Alice moved that the unexpended \$7415 for School Ready Scholarships be eliminated. Sally made the 2nd and the motion carried unanimously. After further discussion on the 2 scenarios, Alice moved that the proposed revised budget for Early Childhood be accepted and that for School Ready, scenario 2 be accepted. Sally made the 2nd and the motion carried unanimously. Abstaining from both votes were: Phyllis, Terri, Justine.

Other Business/Announcements/Public Comment:

Nothing was presented for other business/announcements.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Watt at 8:50 PM. (All 10 members remained present at this time.)

Submitted by Cheryl Whitney

Questions should be directed to Corey Watt at coreywatt@hotmail.com