



Minutes of the Meeting of the
Board of Directors
 Eckerd Community Alternatives – Pinellas/Pasco
 8550 Ulmerton Road, Largo FL
 Clearwater, Florida
 Tuesday, February 26, 2019

	BOARD MEMBERS	OTHER ATTENDEES
Attendees:	Ray Ferrara	Chris Card
	Daniel Boon	Pam Griffith
	Glenn Waters	Josh Talkington
	Nancy Nichols	Brain Bostick
Via Phone:		April Lott - DFL
Recorder:		Laura Hunt, Secretary

The Board meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Mr. Ray Ferrara

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ferrara presented the minutes of the October 15, 2018 ECA 6 Board meeting for approval. Mr. Ferrara asked for a motion to approve the October minutes. Mrs. Nancy Nichols gave the motion and Mr. Glenn Waters seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with 2 minor corrections.

Mr. Ferrara asked if there were any comments from the public.

With no other comments from members of the public, Mr. Ferrara asked Dr. Chris Card to give the operations update.

Operations Report

Dr. Card reported to the Board that during the last three months of the calendar year (October through December), the removal rate trend in ECA 6 outpaced the state average resulting in higher than normal entry rates for youth placed in out-of-home care. These system of care stressors have challenged our workforce and impacted our ability to maintain the historically high performance that ECA6 has always achieved. This population growth experienced by our ECA 6 child welfare program has resulted in a budget shortfall of approximately \$7M during the current fiscal year.

On September 4th, ECA 6 experienced the tragic death of 2-year-old Jordan Belliveau (a youth receiving case management services through Directions for Living). A DCF review of this case identified several recommendations impacting system partners to include: the Pinellas Sheriff, Guardian Ad Litem, State Attorney, and Directions for Living. As a result of DCF's review, several countermeasures have been implemented to increase system oversight to include ECA 6 conducting a system wide review of policies and protocols designed to increase cross system communication, and ECA6 partnering with DCF and Case Management to broaden our scope of review of cases with increased risk factors.

Dr. Card indicated that we got the final assessment report back from Dr. Joyce Taylor. DCF created a system of care corrective action plan and continue to meet with all involved.

Dr. Card also provided a legislative update indicating that we have great support with our lobbyist and are very engaged with the new administration. Dr. Card has met with every legislator in Pinellas and Pasco county and has a meeting tomorrow with the Secretary of DJJ.

With no more questions from the Board, Dr. Card concluded his Operations report.

Finance Report

Mr. Ferrara asked Mrs. Pam Griffith to give the Board the ECA 6 Finance report.

Mrs. Griffith indicated that ECA 6 is projecting a \$4.1M deficit or a \$1.1M variance to budget after Risk Pool Allocation. The allocation for ECA 6 was \$2.97M which is 56.966% of the total amount requested. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) held back \$5.4M of the \$15M Risk Pool Funding to be allocated later in the fiscal year.

Mrs. Griffith highlighted that Out-of-Home (OHC) Services expenses are expected to realize a negative variance of \$3.8M due to growth in residential placements. ECA 6 continues to experience a growth in the number of kids in paid placement. At the end of December there were 989 kids in licensed care compared to 853 twelve months prior. Of the 136 increase, 72 or 52.9% were placed in residential group care. An increase of 34 children has been realized since the last Board Financial Report (August 2019 reporting). The agency is actively increasing efforts to address exits, while ensuring kids exit safely. Additional actions involve drilling down on exceptional costs and stepping down kids. Client Related expenses are projected to have a negative variance to plan of \$132K. This variance is due to the increase of children in care and increased mentoring and supervision services to stabilize a few teens.

Mr. Ferrara asked for the motion to accept the Finance report. Mr. Glenn Waters gave motion and Mrs. Nancy Nichols seconded the motion. The December financials and Mrs. Griffith's report were accepted by the Board.

With no more questions from the Board, Mrs. Griffith concluded her finance report.

Case Management Update

Mrs. April Lott addressed the Board and gave them an update on Directions for Living (DFL) and the services provided in Pasco and Pinellas. She specifically discussed what DFL did in the mental health arena and what homeless services they provided.

External Relations Report

Mr. Ferrara asked Mr. Josh Talkington to give the External Relations report.

National Adoption Day: 49 children were adopted during National Adoption Day ceremonies in November in Pasco and Pinellas counties. 33 adoptions were finalized in Pinellas, while 16 were finalized in Pasco. Thank you to the 35 families that opened their hearts and their homes to these beautiful children. This truly was a community effort and we are eternally grateful to be partnered with so many amazing organizations and individuals. Thank you to the judges, sponsors, our community partners, and everyone who came out to support these children and adoptive families.

Red Sled: For the fourth consecutive holiday season, the Seminole Lake Rotary Club continued its Red Sled initiative, working to collect toys and other gifts for children in the foster care system. All donations collected were donated to Eckerd Community Alternatives Pasco & Pinellas. At the heart of the project is a giant Red Sled that the organization brings into the community through a variety of events. The Rotary Club then fills the sled with toy donations everywhere it goes. The club collected thousands of dollars in gifts, gift cards and cash throughout the holiday season.

Muscles for a Great Cause: Eckerd Community Alternatives Pasco & Pinellas was honored to partner with these big guys with even bigger hearts to collect new toys for children in the foster care system for Christmas.

Every competitor in the deadlift competition was asked to bring a new unwrapped toy for a child in foster care in order to compete.

With no questions from the Board, Mr. Talkington concluded his report.

Chair's report

Mr. Ferrara welcomed Mrs. Liz Sutherland and Mr. Rick Davis to the ECA 6 Board Committee. Mr. Ferrara also stated that it may be advantageous to have foster parents write a letter to our legislators in response to the lack of funding.

With no more questions from the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Laura Hunt
Secretary