

**Johnson County Empowerment-Early Childhood Iowa Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, May 19, 2022**  
**6:30-8:00 p.m.**

**Members present:** Chris Carman, Cheryl Collins, Jon Green, Rick Leyendecker, Richard Lipman, Emily O'Sherridan-Tabor, Marguerite Oetting, Lori Roetlin, Angel Taylor, Susan Dale Wall

**Members absent:** Joan Tephly

**Staff Present:** Samantha Turnbull, Laurie Nash

**Guests:** Debbie Ackerman (JCPH), Andy Coghill-Behrends (NCJC), Amy Mertz (ARC of SE Iowa)

**1. Call Meeting to Order, Establish Quorum, and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes [Board Action]**

**Board Chair Richard Lipman called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM**, attendance was taken, and a quorum was recognized with 10 of 11 members present. **Minutes from 4/21/22 were reviewed and Angel Taylor moved to approve them. Rick Leyendecker seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.**

**2. Public Comment:** Debbie Ackerman (JCPH) reported that WIC staff are working very hard to make sure participants are able to get infant formula during the current nationwide shortage. She also shared that she has an upcoming interview with an applicant for the Empowerment-supported Child Care Nurse Consultant position.

**3. Director's Report:** Refer to the Director's report in the Board packet for full details on this agenda item. Highlights are given below:

o At the time of the meeting, the statewide ECI budget had not yet been decided by the legislature. Thus, our board decisions for this meeting were based on the next most reliable source, FY'23 budget projections from the state team.

o **Expense Report:** The April 2022 written expense report was shared- see packet.

o **Board evaluation forms** were sent out in early May. Responses have been positive and helpful. See board packet for further details. Sam noted there was a good suggestion that Board Strategic Planning be considered for the coming year.

o **Car Seats:** A car seat clinic will be held on June 11th. Board volunteers are welcomed to assist with paperwork at the event and to keep a watchful eye on children. Sam recently completed her car seat tech training so she can now assist with installs during these clinics.

o **Site Visits:** Site visits have been going well and there is still one more opportunity for board members who wish to participate in a visit.

o **Committees:** Meeting dates/times for Board committees was included in the packet.

o **Juneteenth:** Sam plans to hand out books at the Juneteenth health and resource fair on Saturday June 18th.

o **Board Development/ Indicator of the Month:** % of domestic violence cases with children present. Sam shared data from 2015-2021 on this important indicator and noted that there were several years during which information was unavailable, but fortunately, statewide collection of this data has resumed.

**4. Accept Audit [Board Action]** Sam sent out relevant sections of the most recent Johnson County Audit which documented there were no findings of non-compliance within the Johnson County Empowerment operations in the fiscal year reviewed (FY'21). Motion made by Marguerite Oetting to accept the audit report. Seconded by Emily O'Sherridan-Tabor. Passed unanimously.

**5. Nominating Committee:** Per the Board Bylaws, the Secretary pulls together a nominating committee each spring to address board openings, upcoming changes in officer positions and a recruitment process for filling these roles. In terms of board openings, Chris Carman shared that he is nearing the end of his first 3 year term on the board and is opting not to serve a second term. The Bylaws permit a flexible board size, so depending on the results of upcoming recruitment efforts, one or more new members may be added. Additionally, Richard Lipman is completing his final term as Board Chair, though he will continue to serve as a regular board member beginning in October. Thus, the Nominating Committee will also need to identify current board members willing to be nominated for both the Chair and Secretary roles effective October, 2022.

Laurie Nash highlighted the board's ongoing commitment to having membership reflect local diversity in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, age, rural-urban mix and inclusion of families eligible to be served by Empowerment. Board members voiced support for this ongoing focus. Serving on the nominating committee is a short term commitment and Sam will survey all board members to seek volunteers for the group and determine a workable meeting time for the committee.

**6. 3rd Quarter Reports-** These reports were included in the May Board packet, along with a 2 page summary. Sam highlighted areas in which programs were coming in under their stated goals or were underspending.

**7. FY23 RFP** The Board RFP subcommittees (Direct Early Ed, Indirect Early Ed, Health, Parent Ed/Family Support) have all met and provided feedback, including recommendations needed to guide board funding decisions on the FY23 RFP. Subcommittees assigned a priority level to each request, based on written priority definitions previously reviewed and accepted by the board. Sam noted that the total RFP requests received, exceed our anticipated FY23 funding by approximately \$400,000. Thus, it is inevitable that funding cuts and/or denials are necessary. A summary handout of subcommittee recommendations was included in the Board packet. We carefully reviewed each category and individual applications in the order listed on the handout. This in-depth review served as the background for the actual funding decisions made in the next agenda item.

**8. FY23 Budget [Board Action]** Sam shared the FY'23 Spreadsheets which were sent out with the May Board packet. Since total requests significantly exceeded anticipated funds, we narrowed our focus just to consider Priority 1 requests at the funding levels recommended by the subcommittee which reviewed it. Even with this tighter focus, an additional \$121,549 had to be cut to bring planned expenditures in line with anticipated FY'23 funding. To give additional options, Sam suggested considering possible reductions in a few internal programs which could be given a delayed start in FY'23 or a lower overall funding level. **The board considered a number of different funding configurations reflecting different balances between program types. The board deliberation is reflected in the following motions and votes:**

- a) **Chris Carman moved that the board delay allocating any funds at this time to the following internal programs (which total \$14,500):** Car Seats (\$6,000), Safe Sleep (\$4,000), Program Support (\$3,000) and Community Awareness (\$1,500). These programs may still be fully operational, even if given a late start further into FY'23 using carryforward funds. **Seconded by Jon Green. Passed unanimously.**

- b) Chris Carman moved to reduce NCJC Family Support funding by \$35,750. Seconded by Angel Taylor.** This motion was initially formulated in light of NCJC input that it preferred to reduce group session numbers rather than reduce family support enrollment. However, as part of contract finalization, NCJC will still have added time and flexibility in determining how best to incorporate this reduction. **Roll call vote:**  
**-Six “Aye” votes:** Chris Carman, Rick Leyendecker, Richard Lipman, Lori Roetlin, Angel Taylor, Susan Dale Wall  
**-Four “Nay” votes:** Cheryl Collins, Jon Green, Emily O’Sherridan-Tabor, Marguerite Oetting  
**Motion passed.**
- c) In order to come closer to balancing expenditures and available funds, Lori Roetlin moved to further reduce funding in the following amounts for the Parent Education/Family Support category where the greatest funding increases had been proposed: Reduce UAY Teen Parent program by \$15,000 and reduce NCJC Family Support program by an additional \$35,000.** As part of discussion on the motion, Marguerite Oetting shared her many positive experiences in which NCJC Family Support staff provided critical support to immigrant and refugee families in accessing pediatric care. Overall, the board expressed its high regard for both NCJC and UAY staff and services, despite the hard choices before it.  
  
**-Nine “Aye” votes:** Chris Carman, Cheryl Collins, Jon Green, Rick Leyendecker, Richard Lipman, Lori Roetlin, Emily O’Sherridan-Tabor, Angel Taylor, Susan Dale Wall  
**-One “Nay” votes:** Marguerite Oetting  
**Motion passed.**
- d) Jon Green moved to reduce FY’23 funding for the internal School-Ready Scholarship program by \$21,299. Seconded by Richard Lipman.** Sam had identified this as a viable option, in anticipation that this lost capacity could later be restored using Carryforward funds. **Passed with 10 Aye votes and 1 abstention (Marguerite Oetting)**
- e) Jon Green moved to accept the proposed FY’23 Johnson County Empowerment ECI Budget as presented, including the funding adjustments detailed above. Seconded by Lori Roetlin. Passed unanimously.**

It should be noted that there were difficult, thoughtful and in-depth board conversations surrounding each of these votes. No easy answers were found. These board actions focused on Parent Education/Family Support, in part, because other program areas (Direct Early Ed, Indirect Early Ed and Health) had already received substantial reductions earlier in the prioritization process. Chair Richard Lipman expressed his appreciation to the Board for its difficult work and said the split votes on several matters are indications of a healthy board in which a range of perspectives are valued.

**9. Adjourn:** Susan Dale Wall moved to adjourn. **Cheryl Collins seconded. Passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

**Submitted by Board Secretary, Chris Carman**