

New River Community Action Head Start Policy Council Meeting Minutes

held at First Baptist Head Start Center, 215 3rd Ave., City of Radford, Commonwealth of Virginia, on February 22, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. The following members were present:

Members Present

Sharite'a Webb – Pulaski
Serena Ming – Dublin
Cheyenne Dalton - Pulaski
Stephanie Smith – Community Rep
Randi Webb – Pulaski
Sean Chamberlin – Christiansburg
Mary Chamberlin – Christiansburg
Rhonda Seltz – Community Rep
Jennifer Woodruff – Floyd
Mark DeBusk – Christiansburg
Rebecca Hosey- Pulaski
Kari Meador- Narrows
Desiree Smith- Christiansburg
Lori Maupin – Blacksburg

Staff Present

Sheryl Helm – Director of Early Childhood/ Family Services
Amy Beecher – Administrative Assistant
Diane Wise – Family Services ERSEA Specialist

Sharite'a Webb called the meeting to order at 5:52 p.m.

Rhonda Seltz had intern with her, he was introduced to the Policy Council.

Randi Webb moved to approve January minutes. Cheyenne Dalton seconded the motion, motion carried.

Sheryl Helm presented the Director Report. Ms. Helm introduced the Head Start Management Wheel to members. Ms. Helm stressed the need for substitute teachers. Ms. Helm mentioned that in the mid-year data, family engagement has dropped. She reported that the MBI report looks good. Ms. Helm also mentioned that the Head Start waiting list has dropped to 107.

Diane Wise presented her Specialist Report. Ms. Wise spoke on the importance of using internet technology to reach more people for recruitment. Ms. Wise wants FHAs and parents to set up info booths at Kindergarten Registration. She mentioned that she has attended a FOCUS meeting. Which consists of many community organizations coming together to help fill in the gaps between services. It is strongly encouraged by the state for each locality to have a FOCUS meeting. Ms. Wise also spoke on the importance of continuum of care and working closely with CHIP to make sure that happens.

Rebecca Hosey presented the NRCA Board Report to the Policy Council. She went over the January meeting minutes. Ms. Hosey spoke on Ms. Angert presenting the combined agency and Head Start Community Needs Assessment to the Board. She stated that the Board is working on the NRCA Bylaws.

Updates on Centers were addressed. Several members are parents of Pulaski Head Start Center. They spoke about how there are no longer parent meetings, only Facebook. They are not happy with this change. They would like it to be both. Ms. Ming spoke on how the ELC also has a Facebook page, but parents are not allowed to comment on posts. She sees this as one sided and not beneficial. Would like to see it to where they can interact with the teachers.

Diane Wise spoke about recruiting parents for "Parent Videos". Parents would share their story on how Head Start has benefited them.

Cheyenne Dalton presented the Finance Report.

Diane Wise presented the New Hires for Head Start. Julie Sherrill was hired as a Teacher for Narrows Head Start Center and Gina Griggs was hired as a Center Aide at Narrows Head Start Center. Stephani Smith motioned to approve, Serena Ming seconded; motion carried.

Jennifer Woodruff asked if Policy Council could receive short bios of new employees.

Sheryl Helm presented the Refunding Grant Application. Ms. Helm shared with the Council that a new site has been arranged for the Pulaski Head Start center. They will move from their old site to their new site during the summer. For the 2017- 2018 school year, the Radford Duration class will move from First Baptist to McHarg. They will be moving a class from Christiansburg HS center to Radford.

Ms. Helm presented the Head Start Fleet summary. Ms. Helm informed us that she budgeted 12,000 dollars this year for maintenance and we have already spent 20,000 dollars. She stated that there are currently 14 buses and she would like to reduce that to 5 buses. 1 Bus would remain in Floyd, 1 in Giles, and 1 in Pulaski. This would leave 2 buses as spares. She informed the council that there are no certified mechanics in the NRV to preform maintenance on the buses. Ms. Helm opened the discussion up.

Mark DeBusk stated, from what he gathered from the Finance Meeting, that buses were not on a regular maintenance schedule. He stated that the bus that comes to his house to pick his children up, has issues. He stated that Head Start is not obligated to provide transportation. However, he does not see data that will show the effects of not having transportation. He shared he felt like Christiansburg would be a mess if all parents would be dropping off/ picking up their children due to limited parking. He understands that funding is an issue but states the Policy Council should find the money. He asked if it was possible for NRCA to create a part time job just for bus maintenance. Asked if Head Start could sell advertisement on the Bus as a fundraiser. He suggested that Buses should have been replaced every other year. Mr. DeBusk doesn't think we have exhausted all revenues for transportation. Wants to brainstorm how to come up with the money.

Rebecca Hosey voiced that our data showing children are not dropping due to transportation is not accurate.

Mark DeBusk suggested instead of spending 46,000 on vans, could we use that money to buy a newer Bus. Mr. DeBusk is not in favor of the vans. Wants to find a way to come up with money. Questioned if parents raised money, could they chose for that money to only be used for buses. Sheryl Helm informed him, that yes, that could be done. He also suggested NRCA should cover some of the Bus expense.

Jennifer Woodruff stated that she met with Finance and Mark DeBusk as well. She stated that Head Start Federal side has said no money for transportation because it is not a requirement. She stated even though there is a bus in Floyd, riding the bus is not an option for her child as the bus is limited due to travel time.

Sheryl Helm mentioned that purchasing old Transit buses is not an option as they do not meet Head Start requirements.

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Jennifer Woodruff stated that if Ms. Helm submits the grant without transportation, and funding is found, she can go back and add transportation.

Serena Ming motioned to approve the Grant. Lori Maupin seconded, motion carried.

Mark DeBusk asked if they could use Policy Council money to send letters to Parents. Ms. Helm said that would need to be approved by Policy Council.

Desiree Smith motioned to approve Policy Council's use of funds to send letters out. Lori Maupin seconded, motion carried.

Jennifer Woodruff motioned to approve Finance Meeting Minutes. Policy Council members voted to approve only if NRCA would pay for van maintenance. Serena Ming seconded, motion carried.

Next meeting will be March 23rd 2017 at 7:00pm at the main office where we will meet with NRCA Board members. Child care would still be provided at First Baptist.

Serena Ming motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kari Meador seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.