

Johnson County Empowerment-Early Childhood Iowa Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 2, 2021
6:30-8:00 p.m.

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

Members absent: Rick Leyendecker, Marguerite Oetting, Joan Tephly

Staff Present: Samantha Turnbull, Laurie Nash

Guests: **Pat Heiden** (Johnson County Board of Supervisors member), **Lynette Jacoby** (Johnson County Dept of Social Services), **Lori Hora and Kathy Klingman** (Child Care Resource & Referral), **Debbie Ackerman** (Johnson County Public Health)

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 8 of 11 members present at 6:33 PM. **Jon Green** moved to approve the Board's Meeting Minutes from 10-21-21. **Susan Wall** seconded the motion. **Passed unanimously.**

2. Public Comment: Kathy Klingman (Child Care Resource & Referral regional supervisor) gave a brief introduction of Lori Hora to the Board, who will serve as the CCRR staff assigned to Johnson County.

3. Director's Report- The following are key highlights from the Director's Report. The full written report was included in the September Board packet. Refer to it for further details including committee meeting dates.

a) **Sam submitted our Community Plan and Strategic Plan to the State Early Childhood Iowa** team as for consideration in our upcoming designation process.

b) **Association of Early Childhood Iowa Area Boards.** Sam attended the first annual conference of this association on November 4th. State team and board members attended along with most of the other area directors- that was an excellent networking opportunity. **The Association's lobbyists gave a presentation on the upcoming legislative session:**

-**Support a comprehensive health and integrated early care, health and education system** for the youngest Iowans through funding for Early Childhood Iowa

-**Develop Systemic Solutions to the Childcare Crisis**

-**Include ECI as a key partner** in implementation of the Children's Behavioral Health System

c) The Iowa **Governor's Office** released its Child Care Task Force Report which can be found at:
https://governor.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/IGOV_ChildcareTF_Report_112021.pdf

d) **Website:** We are waiting for County IT to have capacity move our website to the County site.

e) **Expense Report:** October and November 2021 expense reports are in December board packet.

f) **School Ready Scholarships:** We currently have 12 families on our school ready scholarship wait list. With the re-allocated unspent PREP funding, we funded 2 additional scholarships.

g) **Car Seats:** We had a car seat clinic on November 6th. We checked 44 car seats that day and cleared out almost our entire car seat inventory. Thanks to Emily and Cheryl who assisted with the clinic!

h) **Injury Prevention Day November 18:** We received pack n plays and sleep sacks from UIHC. Sam also has first aid kit supplies to distribute to childcare programs.

i) **Car Seat and Pack N Play Drive:** We are again holding a car seat and pack n play drive. Sam

posted the information on our social media. Several area churches will also hold collections in December and January for us.

j) **Iowa Children’s Museum-Coralville Library School Readiness Grant:** Sam met with the Iowa Children’s Museum and Coralville Public Library regarding a school readiness grant they received. They are working on figuring out what activities or materials they will use this funding for and want to collaborate with us on this planning.

k) **Indicator of the Month-** As a Board Development activity, at each board meeting, Sam will highlight a relevant ECI Indicator. This month, the indicator relates to regulated childcare programs and slots in Johnson County. Sam reviewed the most recent data for this area and the local programs that our board funds to have a positive effect on this indicator.

4. Presentation from Lynette Jacoby on JCE/ECIA and Johnson County relationship. As background for Lynette’s presentation, Sam provided relevant information on the relationship between the JCE/ECIA Board and Johnson County. Two Johnson County positions are directly funded by ECI funds: an Administrative Assistant (Terri at 15 hrs per week) and an Early Childhood Coordinator (Sam at 40 hrs per week). These positions are contracted through the Johnson County Board of Supervisors, which (on an in-kind basis) serves as both the Employer of Record and the Fiscal Agent for our Board, our two employees and our contracted activities with local early childhood service organizations. Sam also shared a chart listing the programs located within the Johnson County Social Services Department (Empowerment/ ECI, Decategorization, Community Partnerships for Protecting Children and General Assistance).

Lynette shared that she had had a long history with Johnson County Empowerment, going back to involvement with the community planning group which wrote and submitted the original application for funding from the State Board. An Administrative Services Agreement is in place between the Johnson County Board of Supervisors and our board covering the following functions: a) Employer of record services, b) extending county benefits to our staff, administrative supervision of staff (including performance evals), c) maintaining fiscal records and documentation of funds received and payments made with these funds and d) providing monthly and year-end financial reports for use by our staff and board. Lynette reviewed the local control which our Empowerment/ ECI Board retains in this arrangement, including decisions related to: a) setting and overseeing our budget, b) determining bylaws for the functioning of the board and c) selecting and overseeing contracting partners who provide local ECI programming. The benefits of this partnership were reviewed including financial advantages, connections created by our staff being part of a larger team and additional staffing support for various projects. Board members expressed appreciation for Lynette’s presentation and for Johnson County’s overall support for local Empowerment/ECI efforts. Lynette’s full explanation of this support from Johnson County can be found in the Zoom recording of the 12-2-21 meeting.

5. RFP and scoring sheet development committee: Sam shared the work in progress on the RFP development and application scoring process. The Board packet contains an overview of four planned RFP Scoring Work Groups which will review applications related to specific service areas. This approach means that a majority of board members will not need to read ALL the applications received, but instead can focus on professional areas that fit best with their expertise/ interest. Four board members volunteered to read all applications, in addition to serving on a Work Group; this will help ensure that in addition to as the in-depth service view, there is a still a broad perspective spanning all applications. The RFP Development Committee also recommends requiring a “letter of intent” (submitted after the Bidder’s Conference) from programs wishing to apply for funding. This will allow the RFP Scoring Groups to better anticipate the number of applications they may receive and the amount of time they should reserve for their review. The Board discussed having the Work Groups each hold an initial meeting prior to receipt of applications, at which they can: a) closely look at the scoring criteria and priority groupings, b) review the ECI community plan/ strategic priorities, documented services gaps and non-ECI

programs also addressing this need and c) the general ECI budget share that their service area has received years as a reference point in making funding recommendations to our Board.

In looking at RFP Priority Level definitions, Laurie Nash noted the following about Priority 1:

- In cases where ECI has been the primary funder for a certain type of community service, eliminating such funding might easily CREATE a new gap in essential services. This is part of the rationale behind the Priority 1 category. While we should be open to the possibility of funding new programs, we must also be careful our decisions do not unintentionally create new gaps.
- Priority 1 is written to give weight to exemplary PROGRAMS with documented success, rather than more generally to SPONSORING AGENCIES.
- Placement in Priority 1 should be contingent both upon documented compliance with grant requirements and success in meeting goals. Board members expressed an interest in considering a Priority 1 definition that is broad enough to include exemplary programs that have a positive track record, but which may NOT have previously applied for ECI funding. While it might be rare for a new program to be placed in Priority 1, it is conceivable we could receive an application from a successful existing early childhood program which was cut by its prior non-ECI public funding source, due to reductions in available public funding. Such an application could potentially be ranked as Priority 1 IF it had a strong existing track record of successful performance and IF it also filled a high-priority need identified by our board.

The RFP Committee will continue to refine the Priority Level definitions to assure that they accurately reflect the method the Board intends to use when sorting applications next April. Laurie noted that if there was an applicant appeal of a funding decision, we would be required to show that we followed our own stated policies and procedures.

6. 1st Quarter Program Reports- These reports were submitted by our newest programs and were included in the Board packet for individual board member review.

7. Board Development Kahoot Game- Board members took part in an on-line trivia game which Sam customized using facts related to Johnson County Empowerment operations, goals, policies and organizational history. A good time was had by all (and we each learned something along the way)!

8. Opportunity for Public Comment/ Adjournment: Chairperson Richard Lipman opened the floor to general comments from both the public and board members. Debbie Ackerman praised the recent car seat installation effort. She also shared that the Child Care Nurse Consultant role is currently vacant, and the position will be posted very soon. Chris Carman wished to recognize the strong contributions made by our two newest members, Cheryl Collins and Emily O'Sherridan-Tabor: each volunteered to help with the recent car seat distribution and each also signed up to serve on two RFP Grant Review Work Groups. Richard Lipman thanked tonight's guests for attending and also recognized the excellent work of our staff, Sam and Laurie.

Motion to Adjourn: Jon Green. Second: Cheryl Collins. Passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Richard Lipman at 7:52 PM.

Next Monthly Meeting: Thursday, January 20, 2022 6:30-8:00 PM

Submitted by Board Secretary Chris Carman