



**THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.
Board of Director Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 18, 2017
Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.
1414 North Star Drive, Zumbrota Minnesota**

Members Attending: Heather Robins, Galen Malecha, Julie Steberg, Abdullah Hared

Staff Attending:

Jennifer Larson, Executive Director
Amy Repinski, Transportation Director
Kindra Papenfus, Chief Financial Officer
Jane Adams Barber, Head Start Director
Jennifer Prins, Continuum of Care Coordinator
Leah Hall, Community Development Director
Donna Stamschror, Support Staff Coordinator

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Members Excused: Ekta Prakash, Jo Anne Krier, Ruth Boudet, Alicia Norton, Dave Windhorst, Mark Thein, Brian Goihl, Barney Nesseth

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chair Heather Robins

Determination of a Quorum: Quorum was not met. The members met as a committee for the whole.

***Approval of the September 20, 2017 Meeting minutes (enclosed in agenda packet)**

Galen Malecha made a motion to approve the September 20, 2017 minutes, Julie Steberg seconded, motion unanimously approved.

***Approval of the October 18, 2017 agenda (enclosed in agenda packet)**

Julie Steberg made a motion to approve the October 18, 2017 agenda with the removal of Individual Action Items A and B, Galen Malecha seconded, motion unanimously approved.

Case of the Month – None

Director's Report

1. The Goodhue County Health Assessment has been released in draft form. The report features the top 10 health issues in the county. The #1 issue is Poverty, followed by Mental Health and Obesity. We will continue to work closely with Goodhue County on strategies.
2. Fare for All – Faribault. Three Rivers is a sign-up location for the Fare for All program in Faribault. This is a cooperative program that delivers healthy food options at an affordable price. It is open to any household, orders are taken monthly and food is delivered to the Elk's Club for pickup. Clients can pay with EBT or credit card, we will not be handling the payments, only serving as a sign-up location.
3. Hyatt Childcare Center in Faribault is being investigated by DHS and local authorities for issues regarding child care payments. The center was closed for one day, but did re-open, and no charges have been filed. We are working with Hyatt and Families First on a Childcare Partnership grant through Head Start at that location, helping improve the quality of childcare programming. We will be monitoring this closely.
4. We have gotten our health insurance quote for this year, which is a 12.5% increase for the same coverage. We will be doing some modeling and are working with the agent to discuss additional options. We will bring our strategy for addressing the increase back to the board in our budget proposals next month (draft) and December (final). The Winona Agency is our broker and we have a Blue Cross policy right now. Jenny was asked if we can we join the Southeast Cooperative. Galen will provide Jenny with the information. Jenny was asked about Health Partners and said we bid it out last year and Blue Cross was cheaper. They do have a plan that would take Mayo out and would be cheaper but we are going to survey staff first. We could possibly offer both a Mayo and non Mayo plan.
5. We are working on connecting our office locations with technology. We are ordering cameras, speakers and screens for our satellite offices. If there is interest, we will also make remote access available for Board meetings.
6. The Cannon Falls housing project has been funded by Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. The Knollwood and River's Edge Apartments will be combined into one project – Riverwood Apartments. It is a

preservation/rehab of 39 apartments in Cannon Falls. The owner is very motivated and gifting a large part of his equity to Three Rivers.

7. We have just been notified that we will not be getting a federal Head Start review this year. This is due in large part to the very successful reviews we have had over the last few years. The scores from this year's federal review were some of the highest scores in the country, and we are lucky to have very talented staff in our classrooms.
8. Energy Assistance season has started and we have already received 2600 applications, about half of which have already been processed. The federal government has not yet released the funding for the program, but we do have limited crisis funds for furnace repairs and replacements.
9. Strategic Planning is going well and we look forward to getting Board Member input at the meeting today.

***Policy Action Items**
Consent Agenda

- A) September 2017 Financial Reports – Enclosed in agenda packet
- B) Mutual of America - September Monthly Reports – Enclosed in agenda packet
- C) Credit Card Expenses Summary – Shared at meeting
- D) Contracts, Awards & Contributions
Received
 - Minnesota Department of Commerce – Initial Funds \$195,450 - Energy Assistance - provides grants to low income households in Goodhue, Rice, Wabasha and Olmsted Counties to help heat their homes.
 - Otto Bremer Trust - \$57,700 – funds to support Emerging Markets households through increased homeownership in southern MN.

Not Received

 - None
- E) Grants & Requests Submitted or to be Submitted
None
- F) Monitoring Visits and Reports – None

Galen Malecha made a motion to approve the October Consent Agenda, Abdullah Hared seconded, motion unanimously approved.

***Individual Action Items**

A) ~~Fox Pointe Resolutions~~

B) ~~Hiawathaland Transit Facility RFP Selection/Contract Award~~
Bids were high and we are trying to negotiate.

Policy Discussion Items

A) Strategic Planning

Enclosures in agenda packet

1. Real Time Strategic Planning overview
2. Summary: All Staff Visioning Session
3. Three Rivers Visioning Report
4. Powerpoint Presentation by Brenda Holden
5. Draft Core Values Poster

Jenny introduced staff member Jennifer Prins who has been coordinating the Strategic Planning process with the staff. Jenny then introduced Brenda Holden, our consultant who has led the needs assessment and strategic planning process. Brenda has been working with Three Rivers since we had our all staff visioning meeting in May, which was the kickoff to the needs assessment and planning process.

Brenda talked about the process we have been going through as well as some of the findings. She said the depth of information that staff has been gathering will be useful to the board in their planning.

Brenda has experience with community action agencies. She has worked with Tri-CAP and West Central CAP. They found it to be a very useful process. Brenda began a PowerPoint presentation and overview.

At the visioning staff work sessions, staff interviewed each other and asked questions such as:

Why do you work here?

Why are we special?

What do we do well?

What can we do better?

What do we do fairly well but could step up?

We surveyed consumers and partner agencies. We had great responses from all. We also had six focus groups, attended by a mix of clients and partners, spread across our service area. Surveys allowed for open ended questions, suggestions, and ideas.

We talked about putting together summary report of data for each county so when we give presentations in the community, we can use that information.

We looked at funding trends and service need trends for each department. This process helps us to think beyond the immediate opportunity and think strategically all the time.

Our current mission statement is:

Three Rivers works with community partners to address basic human needs of people in our service area, thereby improving the quality of life of the individual, family and community.

Staff at the session and the board today did not recommend any changes.

Core values proposed for adoption:

At Three Rivers, we

- **Respect** people we work with
- **Embrace** diversity
- **Inspire** mutual trust
- **Listen** to community needs
- **Seek** collaborative solutions
- **Lead** with integrity
- **Promote** empowerment and self-sufficiency

The overview by department included looking at funding, trends, the business model and three types of competitors.

Director Competitors, many of whom are partners share the same market focus, do the same thing in the same geographic area, and for the same type of customers

Substitutable Competitors meet same need but in a different way

Resource Competitors do not compete for customers but do compete for funding, board members, volunteers, staffing, and media attention

Key indicators were reviewed (page 7 and 8 of the presentation handout)

Jenny explained Coordinated Entry, the model we use in our region for homeless services. Folks get assessed and get a score. Providers pull people off the list based on the score which is a prioritization of need rather than the first come first serve model.

The real time strategic planning model provides a tool for planning around "big questions". During three sessions, a committee of staff from across the agency worked on developing some "big questions" that the agency could plan around.

The big questions staff came up with:

- How does Three Rivers provide a positive, supportive work environment?
- How should we prepare for changing the funding environment to ensure stability for programs and agency?
- How do we use technology to improve communications and efficiencies for clients and staff?
- How are our programs meeting the basic needs of diverse populations?

Options for addressing the big questions are evaluated by putting the options through a series of evaluation questions, known as a strategy screen.

The first draft of the strategy screen questions:

- Does it support our mission?
- Does it support our competitive advantage?
- Do we have the capacity to support the program or could we build the capacity?
- Does it duplicate other services?
- Is it something in our needs assessment or what clients want?
- How much of our target population does this serve?
- Are tradeoffs identified and is it worth pursuing this?
- Is there an identifiable funding source?
- Would this help our target population?

Brenda asked the Board if the questions were useful or if they would like to see other questions. Abdullah thought the questions were very useful but might want to make some changes after thinking about it or trying it. Brenda said that real time strategic planning is about being adaptable, so the questions can change as your needs change.

Heather asked about the question "Does it support our competitive advantage?" One thing that that could mean is can we provide services better and provide more of them so that some of our competitors fold/disappear. If you are competing for funding you could drive someone out of business. Brenda said there is that potential. Competitive advantage is knowing what you are really good at and it is not to discredit other people or other agencies. It is really looking at what are you best at and in the best position to do.

If Three Rivers gets better and better, what we might be doing is replacing other agencies and doing more work with more of the money. Brenda said that is where you would really need some strategic thinking. Is it best for the greater

good or not? Thinking about the big questions is important. One of the reasons for doing the real time and always thinking strategically is thinking about those important questions so you just don't drive a competitor out of business and then two years later say that was a bad idea. You want to be thinking through all of the considerations on the front end and that is why we do all of this.

Jenny said it relates to the tradeoff question – if we do this what else happens? Does something we already do drop off, or do we harm someone else who is trying to do the same thing? Or do we start it and everybody joins us? Are we launching something? Jenny likes the tradeoff question better than the competitive advantage question.

Heather said one thing missing is the value of partnership. She suggested adding a question: Are we taking the best advantage of possible partnerships?

Galen said Three Rivers does partner with other agencies and you have to see the value in that, we don't want to lose that since it is a strength.

Brenda said these ideas will be brought back to the planning group later to be incorporated.

Part of real time strategic planning is if it needs changing we change it. It continues to evolve.

Jenny said that she anticipates that we will be bringing the results of the screening process to the board in program reports and action item requests. That way you can see it and know how we thought about it before we brought it to you for action. Jennifer Prins said that using the screening tool is a great way to identify if we have the questions we need.

Heather would love to see if there is something proposed so you could use the tool and end up with a score. Brenda said that is an interesting idea.

Brenda said in the focus groups with providers and partners there is high respect for the level of collaboration of Three Rivers - that was loud and clear. Three Rivers has a good reputation of being a good partner and sharing information.

Brenda shared some of the closing comments from staff. She is impressed with how engaged the staff has been. Jenny said that they were deliberate in how the committee was put together. It was not just management staff, we had all levels of staff from all departments, and from each location. They all did a great job and participated.

There are lists of ideas from the surveys, staff, etc. These ideas will be useful for staff and board in planning for the future. Brenda makes sure people are comfortable with the process and the tool, and know that it is ok to revise the tool as necessary. Some groups run with it and some need a little refresher six months down the road.

Jenny shared the draft poster of core values. If anyone has any thoughts let Jenny know.

Staff will be wrapping up their work with Brenda after two more meetings. Then Brenda will prepare a final report for the board to review. She can come to a future meeting if needed.

Advisory Committees

- A) Head Start Policy Council - minutes from August 22, 2017 meeting – Enclosed in agenda packet. They met yesterday and those minutes will be available next month.
- B) Hiawathaland Public Transit Advisory Council – Next meeting November 9, 2017

Comments: none

Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting: 9:00 a.m., November 15, 2017 in the Zumbrota office conference room.

Adjournment

Galen Malecha made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Julie Steberg seconded, motion unanimously approved.



Frist Vice Chair

November 15, 2017

Date