

The Child Care Center in Norwich
Board Meeting
Monday, January 9, 2012
5:30 pm
at the Center

Attendance

In attendance: Allison Colburn (Executive Director); Board members Neil Odell (President), Jenny Letendre (Vice President), Marlene McDonald (Treasurer), Wendy Teller-Elsberg (Secretary), Lynne Chow, Shoshana Hort, Erin Jacobsen, Allison Moskow, Bristol Rayno, Erin Salcone, and Julie Stevenson; Tuck Fellows Azhar Karachi and Amith Mohan

Absent: None

Quorum present? Yes

Minutes

1. Consent Agenda

- a. November Consent Agenda (November minutes and December director's report):
 - i. Due to lack of a quorum at the December meeting, there are no December meeting minutes. Tonight we approved the November consent agenda that would have been considered at the December meeting had there been a quorum.
 - ii. The November board meeting minutes were amended to include the following sentence: "The refinance money must be used for infrastructure." Thus amended, the minutes were unanimously accepted.
 - iii. The December director's report was unanimously accepted.
- b. January Consent Agenda:
 - i. The January director's report was unanimously accepted, and the following items discussed as contained therein:
 1. Facility:
 - a. The pad is in place for the new shed, and the new shed has been ordered.
 - b. After a break-down in the heating system last week, the system is now back up and running. The plumber installed a "tiger loop" which cleans the oil before it goes to the burner, solving the problem of the previous system which recirculated oil to the tank, bringing sludge into the burner. The plumber also moved the intake line up above the level of sludge. However, as Allison looks forward, she anticipates that our 20-year-old oil tanks are going to need to be replaced within the next few years. This will be a \$4,000 to \$5,000 investment. The location of the oil tanks is another issue; they must be inside in this climate, and the A-frame has no basement, so currently they are in the vestibule outside the Nursery. This is an unwieldy

spot for repairs and also means that a bad smell fills the building when oil is delivered. However, Allison is not hopeful that an alternative location will be found. As for when to replace the tanks, Neil asked Allison to get some estimates now, because we have some unallocated funds left in the capital improvement fund. We have spent \$35,000 of the \$60,000 in that fund, and there is some flexibility in terms of how we spend the remainder. It must all be spent within a certain time frame, so saving it is not an option.

2. License: The item in the Director's report about the A-frame license refers to the program license for the child care programs provided within the A-frame building, not a license for the structure itself.
3. Fundraising: If we count everything but the United Way grant, we have currently raised \$31,278 this fiscal year. That includes \$3,000 from Turrell and an expected \$10,000 from Burne. We budgeted for a fundraising level of \$35,000. Thus, we are \$3,722 short of our goal. We have yet to do a spring fundraiser (presumably Tikes on Trikes), which will hopefully allow us to meet our goal. The \$10,000 from Burne should come in soon; Allison is just waiting to be able to document our \$10,000 which they will then match. She needs documentation of our profits from the Tupelo event in order to fully document the \$10,000 we have made. In other fundraising news, the Boloco 12 Days of Giving Event was a success; thanks to those who staffed our table at Boloco.

2. *Health Insurance Review/Decision*

a. Discussion of Options

- i. The board discussed at great length the situation we now face regarding the choice of health insurance options from NEEBCO. Marlene and Neil provided a history of this ongoing dilemma. Every year, health insurance options become more expensive while providing less coverage; and every year, the current year's "premium" plan is eliminated, while the current year's "basic" plan is promoted to the position of "premium plan"—it's the same plan, it just costs more now and is re-labeled as the Cadillac or premium or best plan. Every year, the board faces the choice of accepting new, worse plans in an effort to keep costs level or only slightly elevated, or attempting to hold on to existing "premium" plan options for our staff so that staff will not lose important medical and pharmaceutical coverage on which they have come to rely. In addition, as plans get worse, one critical factor that changes is the level of catastrophic coverage they offer. Our current two plans under NEEBCO both offer something of a cushion in catastrophic conditions; part of this is that member pay a percentage of pharmacy costs only up to a certain point, rather than paying a percentage of any and all unanticipated pharmacy costs, regardless how much that may amount to (this latter option is called co-insurance and gives little protection for unexpected, costly prescription drug needs). Now, the board is faced with choosing two NEEBCO plans to offer to

our staff. As usual, NEEBCO's offerings this year are worse than the year before. If we accept the new plans, then the lower of the two plans (which most employees choose because it costs less) will not provide the level of catastrophic coverage we feel plans should ethically provide. But if we choose instead to keep our two current NEEBCO plans by simply re-enrolling, then there will be a cost increase this year of 9.5%. We have already budgeted for a 5% increase in center health insurance costs this year, so the Board proposes to reenroll in the current plans and to itself pay for the equivalent of a 5% cost increase so as to minimize cost passed along to our staff. We propose to pass along the equivalent of a 4.5% cost increase to our staff. For staff on the 1-person, lower-cost plan (the majority of our staff), this would mean they would go from paying nothing for their health insurance to paying roughly \$11 every 2-week pay period. Though the board regrets passing along any cost to our employees, we feel that in the current economic and medical-care climate, such a cost is not unreasonable, and allows us to continue to offer the best health care package (price considered) of child care centers in our area. We as a board are consciously fighting the continual degradation of health care packages offered to our staff every year.

- b. Approval of Motion
 - i. Julie made a motion, Wendy seconded, and the board approved by vote of 9 to 2 (9 yay, 2 nay, no abstentions) a decision to retain our current health care options through NEEBCO. Staff will have the same two plan choices as they have this year, and will be allowed to change between those two plans as usual only during the re-enrollment period. However, there will be a 9.5% increase in the cost of the basic plan; the center will cover the equivalent of a 5% increase, passing along the equivalent of a 4.5% cost increase to enrollees. A staff member on the 1-person basic plan will thus need to pay approximately \$11 every 2 week pay period, to be deducted from his or her pay. Staff members wishing to have the "premium" plan or to purchase the 2-person or family plan will continue to pay the difference between the cost of the plan they choose and the cost of the 1-person basic plan.

3. Tikes On Trikes

- a. Date: March 10, 2012
- b. Duties: Julie will take the helm ONE LAST TIME this year as director/delegator for this event, but Neil stressed (repeatedly) that SHE CANNOT DO THIS AGAIN. Wendy and Erin Salcone will apprentice under Julie this year and see how she does it, and will commit her institutional memory to paper (or better, Google Doc) so that there is a Tikes on Trikes Playbook for future generations to use. Shoshana will manage the food table. All board members will solicit donations to the silent auction; Wendy will take Julie's emailed list of past donors and create a Google Doc so all board members can sign up to solicit from them, and can add new items to that list as well. All board members must solicit at least 5 organizations by the February board meeting.
- c. Venue: The venue (HHS gym) has been booked. In future years we may want to consider a Norwich location.

d. Poster: Neil will update and print the poster and we will all post it around town.

4. ***Green Room Discussion***

a. Due to lack of time this discussion was deferred.

5. ***TIME CHANGE FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING:***

a. The February board meeting will be held at the Center at **5:30 pm** Monday, February 6, 2012.