**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 15th, 2023**

**12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Members Present**: (CEO of Smart Start of Forsyth County) **Louis Finney Jr**., (Board Chair) **Reggie McCaskill,** (Board Vice-Chair) **Tembila Covington,** (Secretary) **Sabrina Hinton, (**Treasurer) **Bennett Bruff,** (Human Resourcing Committee Chair) **Linda Jackson Barnes**, (NC PreK Co-Chair) **Brian Hart**, (NC PreK Co-Chair) **Effie McMillian,** (Board Member**) Debbie Best**, (Board Member) **Jessica McCrory**, (Board Member) **Tonya McDaniel,** (Board Member) **Emily Rector,** (Board Member) **Takeisha Redd,** (Board Member) **Theressa Stephens**

**Members Absent:** (Board Member) **Vivien Stearns,** (Board Member) **Dorothy Pearce-Brady,** (Board Member) **Denise Hartsfield**

**Staff Present:** Tabitha McAllister, Elizabeth Wallace, Glynnise Highsmith, Marvin Fulwood, Malcolm Winston, Tim Campbell

**Call to Order:**

(Board Chair) Reggie McCaskill called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. via ZOOM platform. The Chair established a quorum, and the agenda was adopted.

**Introduction of visitors and opportunity for public comment**:

**Visitors: No Visitors**

**Public Comment: None**

Consent Agenda:

* **For Consent:**
* January 18th, 2023 Board of Director Meeting Minutes (see attached)
* Proposed Changes to Non-Discrimination Policy (see attached)
* **For Receipt:**
* City ARPA Contract (see attached)
* County ARPA Contract (see attached)
* Pre-K Priority Contract (see attached)

For Committee Discussion

* Board Chair Update
* CEO Corporate Update
* Board Composition Committee Update – *to be provided at meeting*
* Development Committee Update
	+ Committee Report – *attached*
	+ Race to 100% Giving – *attached*
* Finance Committee Update
	+ Committee Report – *attached*
* Human Resourcing Committee Update
	+ Committee Report – *attached*
* MALea Committee Update
	+ Committee Report – *to be provided at meeting*
* NCPREK Committee Update
	+ Committee Report – *attached*

**Agenda: Reggie McCaskill**

Dr. Finney asked for the agenda to be amended by adding two consent items to the agenda: first, to approve Chief Wilson Weaver to return as a board member, and second, to approve the Senior Director of Pre-K Initiatives to enter into contracts on behalf of the organization. A motion was made by Sabrina Hinton to approve the agenda as amended and was seconded by Tembila Covington. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes: Reggie McCaskill**

A motion was made by Sabrina Hinton to approve the minutes from the January 18th meeting and was seconded by Debbie Best. The motion carried unanimously.

**Non-Harassment Policy: Reggie McCaskill**

A motion was made by Tembila Covington to approve the proposed change to the non-harassment policy and was seconded by Debbie Best. The motion carried unanimously.

**Contracts: Dr. Louis Finney Jr.**

Dr. Finney shared the contracts that have been drawn up with both the City of Winston-Salem and with Forsyth County. The first of these contracts with the City grants us $660,000 to serve infants and toddlers, as well as support family child care homes. The second contract is with the County and governs our use of roughly $3.7 million in ARPA federal funds that we applied for and received to serve 30 preschool classrooms. The third contract is with the City and grants us $350,000 to supplement the County funds and to provide health and safety services.

**Board Chair Update: Reggie McCaskill**

Reggie informed the Board that he had spoken both with Chief Wilson Weaver and with former Mayor Martha Woods about joining the Board. He also mentioned the possibility of a board retreat within the next few months.

**CEO Update: Dr. Louis Finney Jr.**

Dr. Finney began by sharing the updated organizational chart for the organization to highlight the number of new positions created over the past two years. All told, we have risen from 17 positions to 38. This expansion also helps make better use of our office space, which had been largely underutilized.

Dr. Finney then moved on to his report, beginning by updating the Board on the status of our ARPA-funded projects. In other areas of organizational interest, Dr. Finney has been selected as a participant in the Leadership Insight program offered by Leadership Winston-Salem. We had an excellent Early Education Conference at Atkins High School, with Tricia McManus, superintendent of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools, serving as keynote speaker. Our NCPC monitoring is nearing completion, and we are finding that there was some miscoding of funds in previous years. Having realized this prior to the monitoring, we’ve placed new internal controls and hired new staff to help prevent such errors in the future.

**Contracting Authority for Senior Director of Pre-K Initiatives: Reggie McCaskill**

Dr. Finney reminded the Board that we needed to grant authority to sign contracts to the Senior Director of Pre-K Initiatives, a position held by Glynnise Highsmith. Tembila Covington requested a more thorough breakdown of the contracts that would be signed by her versus those that would be signed by others of Dr. Finney’s direct reports. A motion was made by Sabrina Hinton to grant the Senior Director of Pre-K Initiatives authority to sign contracts, contingent upon receipt of the breakdown of which contracts each of Dr. Finney’s direct reports is responsible for, and was seconded by Debbie Best. The motion carried unanimously.

**Development Committee Update: Sabrina Hinton**

Sabrina Hinton gave an update on the last meeting of the Development Committee, in which the Committee confirmed that Dr. Dawn Tafari, associate professor of birth to kindergarten education at Winston-Salem State University, would serve as MC for the Raising Forsyth event. She also highlighted that only 26% of the board has given so far this year to the organization, compared to 57% of staff, and requested that board members make their contributions to raise that figure. We have raised $38,391 for the Raising Forsyth event this year.

**Board Composition Committee Update: Tembila Covington**

Tembila Covington updated the Board that the Committee had interviewed several potential board members: Jessica Ijames of Novant Health, Shana Heilbron of Crossnore Community for Children, and Martha Wood, former mayor of Winston-Salem. One member of the Board who had to take a year off for term limit reasons, Chief Wilson Weaver, has also been invited to return. A motion was made by Sabrina Hinton to accept the nominations of the four potential new or returning members and was seconded by Debbie Best. The motion carried unanimously.

**Finance Committee Update: Bennett Bruff**

Bennett Bruff mentioned that the committee was unable to meet since January, and as such did not have anything new to report.

**Human Resources Committee Update: Linda Barnes**

Linda Barnes mentioned that, since we had already voted on the updates to the non-harassment policy that were proposed by the committee, there was no other action to report.

**MALea Committee Update: N/A**

As the MALea Committee still lacks a chair, there was no report given.

**NC Pre-K Committee Update: Effie McMillian**

Effie McMillian updated the Board on the business of the NC Pre-K Committee. At the time of the February 21st meeting, there were 674 children enrolled out of 725 slots. Fifteen additional slots will be added now that a previously vacant teacher position at Forest Park Elementary has been filled. A retroactive funding increase for all sites should have gone out to all providers by the end of February. There was also a called meeting on March 2nd to determine how to move forward with the site selection process. The Committee decided to make application open to all, and for all current sites to go through the same application process as all other sites. The site selection sub-committee was selected, as were local indicators worth two points each on the site selection rubric.

**Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Sabrina Hinton at 1:35 p.m.