

Federation of Foster Families Virtual Board Meeting, Friday February 7, 2025 6-9pm via Microsoft Teams

Present

Darlene Arseneau-Kennedy (Secretary)	Allie Pitre	Sheila Hill
Wendell Fraser (Co-Chair)	Mary Ann Burke	Brenda Pettis
Lloyd Sweeney	Rob Richardson (Board Chair)	
Glenda Marsman	Patricia Cain	

Not Present - Darlene Francis

Regrets – Ann Jennex-Roberts (Treasurer)

Welcome – Board Chair

Introductions – Introductions between Susan and board members who have not yet met her as this is her first board meeting since becoming Executive Director

Land Acknowledgement – Read by Allie

Mission Statement – Read by Shelia

Team agreement – Read by Board Chair

Review agenda – One addition (WCB coverage for staff – to be presented by Susan)

Approval of agenda – 1st Sheila, 2nd- Mary Ann. Passed

Approval of minutes - from our last meeting held Dec. 7th at Future Inn, HRM

- Made a minor change to use Federation lawyer instead of the lawyer's name in minutes.
- Minutes were passed with change 1st Darlene, 2nd Allie

Approval of financials

- Received quarterly installment and reimbursement for youth reference group
- Reviewed financial statement to December 31st. Highlights were shared by Board Chair. 1st Wendell, 2nd Allie
 - Point to note – Foster caregivers without placements can submit mileage for gatherings.

Executive Director's Report

- Susan started on Jan. 3rd, has been making connections with foster parents and others. She shared monthly report to be reviewed by the Board.
1st Brenda, 2nd Patricia – approved.

Board Chair action plan

- Worked alongside Susan while she transitioned into her to new role.
- Higher than normal questions (placement assessment types, practice framework, hub home gathering requirements).
- Connected with each committee chair
- Attended meetings virtually with caregivers who have reached out
- AGM planning – Virtual meetings with potential presenters and community booths.

OLD BUSINESS

- Service agreement – met with DCS on Feb.3rd to discuss service agreement. Discussed concerns that were brought forward by the board this past fall. Still waiting for the revised document from Service Delivery. The aim is to have this by March 1st, 2025. Once it is received, will send to the Federation lawyer for review and will share with the board.
- Ambassador job position update from ED. – looking to have ambassadors across the province. Goal is to put together training program around recruiting caregivers. Hoping to re-post this job shortly.
- Meeting request with the New Minister of Opportunities and Social Development – Contacted the Minister's secretary, hoping to meet by late March.
- Governance training – Scheduled for March board meeting. The topic is basic non-profit governance highlighting roles and within non-profits. Wanda Herbert to provide training and there will be follow-up with Board Chair and Susan closer to the training date.

- FFFNS statement of values. As discussed at December's board meeting, there was a typo in the original document. A motion was put forward to change the wording in this document replacing the word "child-in-care" to now read "foster caregiver" 1st Mary Ann, 2nd Brenda. Passed

NEW BUSINESS

- Year-to-date board meeting budget
 - Over approx.. 10K on board budget. Board meeting budget has not been adjusted since 2019
 - Increase in childcare reimbursement (effective September 2024)
 - Increase in the cost for hotel and board room reservations
 - Board attendance for Launch event (extra night hotel and childcare)
 - Expenses for Board Chair as he travelled to meet with foster caregivers
 - Job interviews for Executive Director
 - Over approx.. 17K over training budget
 - Some trainers required re-certification
 - Canada Post mail strike cost approx. 350.00 extra to deliver reimbursement cheques
 - Legal budget is \$2000 but the YTD actual was approx. \$10K. This was due to the drafting of a new OHS policy required by our Insurance Provider, drafting new documents required for Executive Director succession planning and job interviews
 - Examining the board budget to look for potential areas of cost savings. Board Chair to connect with Coordinator of Foster Care to share information around our board budget and to see if this can be increased.
- Did You Know communication for all foster caregivers.
 - Introduce the new ED.
 - Upcoming AGM
 - First aid and sensitivity training available from the federation office.

- Deferred questions from September
- AGM update
 - meeting once a month – met Feb. 15th.
 - Aim to have largest update.
 - Approached Dawn Sherry to share about new practice framework in a joint session for all foster caregivers.
 - Received question from OSD staff why our AGM is held in the month of May.
 - For Clarity – By-law 5.01 states that we must have the federation AGM within 3 months of the end of the fiscal year. The Federation’s year end audit is done in early May and is shared at the AGM with membership.
 - Discussed having a 10am start time for Saturday’s workshops.
- HR/OHS committee update
 - OHS policy needs revision at the request of Intact Insurance.
 - Mary Ann will send a draft to the ED.
 - There is another policy needed for volunteers.
- Policy committee update
 - Wendell gave updates on the committee’s work to date. Still more revisions required, will inform the board when they are completed.
- Compassion committee update was shared by Allie. Discussed potential consultation with hub homes to get their feedback on a draft referral form.
- Diversity committee update was shared by Trish.
- Kinship foster caregivers – Discussion around kinship foster caregivers being able to volunteer on the board. This will be discussed further at our next meeting.
- Request from ED – Workers compensation for Federation staff
 - Consulted with board lawyer
 - Could apply on a volunteer basis.
 - Cost is \$7716.65 a year

- Will get more information and bring to next meeting.
- Survey – Board Chair will send out revised survey. If the response is low, another option is to potentially give to Foster Caregivers at the AGM on Friday and collect them on Sunday.
- Due to the board meeting budget being over budget, Board Chair will follow up on the date, time, location for the next board meeting after the OSD quarterly budget meeting.
- Meeting was adjourned 9:55pm

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Arseneau-Kennedy

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