



**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES OF NORTH FLORIDA, INC.
BOARD MINUTES
4057 Carmichael Avenue
Jacksonville, Florida**

March 9, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

The Monthly Meeting of the Board of Directors of Family Support Services of North Florida, Inc. (FSS) was called to order at 11:30 AM by Philip Mobley, Board President. A quorum of voting members was in attendance as set forth in the Bylaws.

Chief Wayne Clark introduced Mr. Mike Bruno, from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office to the board of directors. Chief Clark proposed that he would be a good addition to the board since he is both a foster and adoptive parent.

OLD BUSINESS

- Mr. Mobley called for approval of the last month's Minutes that were previously emailed to board members. **Motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Minutes from the February, 2010 board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS – NEW ENTITY

Linsay Warren, In-House Legal Counsel for FSSNF, passed out the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Conflict of Interest policy for the New Entity which will be called Family Support Services, Inc. (FSS). She explained that this New Entity allows our existing organization (FSSNF) to transfer all non-DCF funds to the New Entity (FSS) so that this funding would be segregated from those of DCF and be the sole property of FSS.

- **A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation of Family Support Services of North Florida, Inc. Motion passed unanimously.**
- **A motion was made to approve the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for the creation of the New Entity, Family Support Services, Inc. Motion passed unanimously.**

See above list of members attending. Thirteen out of 18 members approved (more than 2/3 of membership required).

Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation of Family Support Services of North Florida, Inc. and Articles of the New Entity can be obtained by contacting Ms. Linsay Warren, House Counsel, of Family Support Services.

Articles will be subsequently amended to include Committee changes to read standing committees: Executive, Finance, Advocacy, and Community Cultivation.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Dinah Kossoff and Joy Korman, Living Leadership consultants, presented a Table of Contents and Summary of the Reflective Practice Grant that was given by the Community Foundation. *A complete Summary is provided as an Attachment to these Minutes.*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jim Adams gave a brief update on the Legislature and what was currently being presented. It is Jim's belief that the "Rollover Funds" will survive, but with some restrictions. There is currently a \$3 million dollars FSS rollover projection.

There is also a CBC "Equitable Funding" bill before the House of Representatives, that if passed, would give FSS an addition \$6 million to bring our County up to average funding. Additionally, there is a proposed to reduction to the Independent Living subsidy through a consolidation of the funding.

Metrics: For the first time FSS reduced the Out-of-Home Care daily expense to under \$13 thousand a day. The high was over \$30 thousand. A large part of this is due to the reduction in the number of children in out of home care which has been reduced by 64% since the redesign.

Jim Adams gave a brief description of the Scuba diving lessons at UNF and highlights of the trip to Key Largo.

He also described a new project, a book fundraiser that would give profits to three different charities. The book is called "Jason & Elihu" and tells a story of foster children. Two hundred copies of the book will be distributed at the Pinwheel Event on April 24th. Jacksonville has been selected by the national Ounce of Prevention fund to highlight Child Abuse Prevention.

Plans were discussed for Child Advocacy Day at Tallahassee on the 13th. Several Legislators have been contacted for Board Members to speak with them.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Michael Mullin, Chair of the Committee, explained that the financial reports would be prepared for the board in a more understandable format. Lee Wilson, CFO, reported that as of, 2/28/2010, the administrative expenses as a percentage of DCF contract expenditures was 6.6%, and 5.9% YTD.

The board now has approximately \$588 thousand largely a result of the Magellan Contract. FSS continues to legislate for carry forward of surplus funds. As of today, FSS would have to return a projected \$79 thousand in Maintenance Adoption Subsidy and \$33 thousand for Protective Investigator training that the Department has yet to use.

Board reserve funds have now been invested in two separate institutions fully guaranteeing by the FDIC. Lee reported that we are receiving the highest possible interest rates for our funds.

COMMUNITY CULTIVATION

Kimberly Waterhouse, Co-Chair of the Committee, reported that Jim Adams, Chief Clark, Kimberly Waterhouse, and Jay Alligood would be addressing the Blue Foundation of Blue Cross Blue Shield on April 21.

Sarah Markman will be honored by the Jacksonville Business Journal for their “40 under 40” award on April 22nd; and Jim Adams will be receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Exchange Club on April 14th.

Ms. Waterhouse requested that board members seek opportunities from their employers for FSS to hold a “lunch & learn” session to increase the awareness of the agency.

The committee also requested that board and staff compile a list of future events that the committee could consider for the agency to attend or nominate an award candidate.

Dr. George Armstrong would like the board to review Crisis Management and how child abuse incidents are handled. Nancy Dreicer, Regional Director and Circuit 4 Administrator, requested that staff from DCF be part of a workgroup to ensure that everyone is on the same page when an adverse media event occurs.

A Board Strategic Planning Retreat will be held in the fall. FSS staff will coordinate the event and time.

Good and Welfare

The Board of Directors expressed thanks to Ashley Smith Juarez and her husband for the special lunch provided by Tropical Smoothie.

The Board also acknowledged the donation by Michael Shorstein, Shorstein & Kelley, P.S. who sponsored the tee-shirts for Child Advocacy Day at the Capitol.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.



PROJECT SUMMARY
FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES
REFLECTIVE PRACTICE GRANT
By Consultants Joy Korman and Dinah Kossoff

March, 2010

Background

In 2002, FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES OF NORTH FLORIDA (FSS), a non-profit organization, was created to perform the duties of Lead Agency in the Community-Based Care project in Duval and Nassau counties. As the Lead Agency, FSS provides foster care and adoption services previously performed by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). There are 22 Lead Agencies in the State. FSS completed its first five years and has been awarded another five-year contract from DCF.

The FSS mission is to provide for the safety and stability of children and families by strengthening the child protection system and involving neighborhood networks to ensure success. The four main programs provided by FSS are:

- Foster Care
- Family Preservation (Foster Care Redesign and Prevention)
- Adoption
- Independent Living

Services are performed through FSS Direct Services and by a network of local community-based non-profit agencies. The primary agencies include Children's Home Society, daniel, PSI Family Services, Jewish Family and Community Services, and Mental Health Resource Center.

The Reflective Practice Grant

Since September 2008 (approximately 18 months), through a grant from the Jessie Ball duPont Community Building Fund and administered by The Community Foundation, Inc., FSS has been participating in Reflective Practice. Living Leadership, a consulting firm, was hired to facilitate the Reflective Practice process.

The grant came at a perfect time. FSS had just been awarded another five-year contract from DCF. The grant gave the organization the opportunity to reflect on seven key issues and challenges:

- The realigning of the organization's mindset and performance to focus on permanency (providing family prevention services within the child's home and promoting adoption) rather than removal – a cultural and operational change in the organization.

- Leading and managing an umbrella organization that works with sub-contractors – maintaining synergy and the same culture among all groups
- FSS has increased its workforce from 40 to more than 100. The organization needs to address this rapid growth and assimilation at all levels.
- Diversifying and expanding funding sources in conjunction with changing needs.
- Board Development - board governance and decision making processes.
- Public Relations/Marketing – Creating a more effective process throughout the organization
- FSS Mission/Vision and Strategic Direction going forward

The process of Reflective Practice involved the following components under the direction of the consultants:

- Ongoing planning, research, analysis and documentation
- On-going meetings throughout the process with FSS CEO Jim Adams, Executive Operating Officer Chuck Young and Board of Directors President Phil Mobley.
- Developing a Core Committee (19 members) consisting of Board, Staff, DCF District Administrator, Subcontractors, Donors along with the Consultants. The role of the Core Committee was to oversee the process, help shape the direction, analyze the findings and develop the recommendations. The Committee met several times during the process. The Committee members are listed in the final Reflective Practice Resource Binder.
- Facilitating two initial orientations, one with the Core Committee and one with the Board to address the key issues and understand the process including reflective questioning - “What do we know, what don’t we know, what do we need to know, where do we find the information we need and how shall we act on what we learn?”
- Attending all Board Meeting during the Reflective Practice Process
- Interviews and focus groups (approx. 35) with the following to discuss mission, relationships, what’s working, what’s not working, what needs improvement, and solutions:
 - Board Members
 - Department of Children and Families
 - FSS Staff
 - Subcontractors
 - PR/Marketing Staff and Contractors
- An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to address the following Board issues: Board Roles and Responsibilities, Nominating Process, Board Profile, Committee Structure and Board Meeting Scheduling and Format.
- Based on the reflective practice process and findings, several retreats and workshops were held:
 - Board Retreat
 - FSS Subcontractors Retreat
 - Independent Living Forum
 - Three Public Relations Workshops with Senior Management, Subcontractors, and PR/Marketing Contractors.
 - Two Strategic Direction/Missions Workshops with the Board and Senior Staff.
- Board Manuals were developed for the Board of Directors, Subcontractors, and the Independent Living Forum participants
- Preparation of a Reflective Practice Resource Binder related to the work completed with FSS in the 18 month process. It is divided into the following seven sections:
 - Reflective Practice Grant/Key Issues
 - Background Information
 - Reflective Practice Process
 - Consultants’ Project Summary

- Findings
- Recommendations
- Board Development
- Follow-up and evaluation

Consultants' Reflections

Reflective Practice can take on many forms within an organization. We believe the most effective process is when there is total ownership and involvement by the Board and Staff. We felt that commitment with Family Support Services (FSS). We had complete cooperation from the FSS staff and were included in all their Board meetings during the Reflective Practice grant; this enabled us to fully understand the workings of the organization and also, feel part of the team.

The grant process lasted longer than expected, but for all the right reasons. The original five key issues were increased to seven. As findings and recommendations were discussed, CEO Jim Adams moved forward with implementation, not waiting to the end of the grant period. Some examples were workshops and retreats related to Board, Subcontractors, Public Relations and Independent Living. The hiring of a full-time Human Resource Director was critical to meet the needs of the FSS rapid growth; this was accomplished.

Based on the key issues, we realized early on that the project was not about program, but process – process related to growth; process related to the Board, State, Staff, Subcontractors, Contract Employees and community relationships and initiatives.

It became clear that FSS is the Lead Agency of a highly specialized “Network” - a network made up of over 100 employees, five primary subcontractor agencies, several other support service providers, four vital programs for children and families, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), as well as the Board of Directors and the community it serves. FSS is surrounded by a tremendous amount of expertise.

For FSS to lead most effectively, the primary recommendation is that all aspects of this vast network must be aligned in mission, goals, strategies, communication, teamwork, and responsibility. As Lead Agency, FSS needs to utilize its network through inclusion and collaboration.