



Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting
June 21, 2010; 2:00 p.m.
ELC Board Room

Committee Attendees: Octavio A. Verdeja (attended via conference call); Yvonne Johnson; Gerald Schwartz; Yesenia Perkins (attended via conference call)

Staff Attendees: Evelio C. Torres, CEO; Leana Pena; Blythe Robinson; Fred Hicks; Ana Pizano

General Attendees: Santiago Echemendia (attended via conference call); David Williams, Jr. (attended via conference call); Silvia La Villa, Ed.D., (attended via conference call); Dr. Lori Hanson, The Children's Trust; Linda Carmona-Sanchez, AECE; Veronica Fernandez, AECE; Armando Guerra, AECE

I. Welcome and Introductions

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- O. Verdeja welcomed everyone to the Executive Committee meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- Y. Johnson moved to approve the minutes from 06/2/2010.
- Motion seconded by Y. Perkins.
- Motion unanimously passed.

III. Strategic Planning Process

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- E. Torres stated they are trying to accomplish a discussion about their strategic planning process for this year so that at the end of this year, they will end up with a 2- or 3- or 5-year plan. They thought it was important this year to take a little bit longer to go through this process instead of just having the one-day retreat. Some important decisions have to be made including the discussion the Board has been having about the age groups they serve--whether they should try to limit the services to the children that are 5 and under or continue to serve some percentage of school-age children. The other important decision they have to make is time limits, how long children and families are able to stay in the program. The other important consideration is that they are going to see less money next year in the budget and in the following year the prediction is the state's deficit is going to continue to grow. For next year they are going from \$3 billion to a \$6 billion dollar deficit in the state. In school readiness, there is a mandate to use 70% of the budget to fund slots and then they have a quality set-aside plus administration. From the quality set-aside they take the gold seal payments, which is over \$8 million dollars. It leaves a little bit for child development screenings and assessments that are mandated and then another little pot for some of the services they provide. He also thinks it's important to



look at not just what they are doing at the ELC but the actions some of their other partners have taken so they can look at the community as a whole.

- O. Verdeja stated there are three areas to discuss: what age group they should keep in and what effect it has on the mothers, the other area is budget, and the third is impact on other partners. If they divide it into these three areas, how long would they need for this strategic planning?
- E. Torres recommended that the first thing to do is to get all of the Board members on the same page--that everyone starts from the same understanding of the challenges they are facing. That may take half a day but there really needs to be a commitment to really take part in this process so everyone has a good overview of the budget, what the requirements are etc. They also need to go out into the community to two or three listening sessions to hear from people in the community as to what they think our priorities should be so they don't make these decisions in a vacuum. They have a September 7 strategic planning date and they can do everything in between or they can move the date and do it sometime right before the December holidays. He is thinking at least a few days.
- Dr. L. Hanson stated they had a couple of really important pieces to making their process different this time around. They have a history at the Trust to do a full day retreat at the board but then felt like there was a challenge in this past year coming up because they wanted to use a new planning framework. All the board was not completely familiar with that framework so there needed to be some education about how to use result-based accountability. They also felt like there was some really important current information that their board members needed to be aware of to inform their decisions and discussions, and they knew it would be information overload to try to put all that into the same day where they were asking people to contemplate and make decisions. They completed their process with the full board in about 4 months. They had an ad hoc planning workgroup of their board headed by their board chair. They met three times once a month to get everything off the ground. They had about 9 hours of workshops that were optional for board members prior to the retreat. It was a total of 3 workshops 2-3 hours each. Workshops were held in January and February and the retreat was in the beginning of March. They also didn't want them spending time at the retreat having 33 board members sharing their perspectives with one another. So they tried to do that footwork ahead of time, and then they were able to say at the beginning of the day--here is where the board stood and what people thought about different issues. They did survey the board members after the retreat because many board members said they would maybe want to change some of their responses based on some of those group discussions. From that point they drafted a 5-year strategic plan and released it for public input. They held 3 community listening sessions. That seemed to go very well and following that process they were able to incorporate revisions and accept written feedback and the board had another chance after to give their input about revisions. The final plan was approved by the board in May.
- E. Torres asked about the results-based accountability that was adopted at The Trust. L. Hanson stated it's a framework intended to connect community level results and indicators with program level outcomes and work on the ground. It's a way of bringing groups together to define in advance the outcomes they want to see for children and families in the community and what data is available in the community to see how are they doing on those results. Another part looks into the program accountability and program level data. It recognizes the limitations of the program. E. Torres stated an example would be to look at FCAT scores in the community.



- E. Torres stated if they take all these main funders and align some of the priorities, they would see some of these community indicators changing for the better if they are all working together to some common goals. O. Verdeja stated he agrees 100%. They have talked about it too much and not done enough. After hearing all of this, September 7 is way too early. Is that too soon to plan all of these things? Y. Johnson stated it's a little soon because summer is such a difficult time to get everyone at the same place at the same time. She thinks if it's going to be a decision-making place then it's a little early. O. Verdeja agreed and stated to use September 7 as a way to shortlist what they need to do so they can come back with the results of everything. It might be best to use that retreat to figure out what they want to do.
- G. Schwartz pointed out that The Trust has more funding and resources available to them. E. Torres agreed they are a lot more limited so he doesn't think their process will be as extensive. But they do have a lot of flexibility in the School Readiness program.
- Y. Johnson stated she thinks one of the biggest questions is the issue of the age group that they target because they are going to have a smaller number of dollars in the future. The information she would like to have at that September 7 meeting is their ideas on how they can measure results with the different age groups. When you have a limited number of dollars, you have to put those dollars into the programs where you have a measured result so you can make a case for more dollars later. If you just spend money and you don't have a way of showing or measuring, you will be hit with just throwing money away. They need to show what they did with these dollars.
- O. Verdeja commented that he met with the YMCA and YWCA and they serve all of those age groups. There are some unintended consequences not only intangibly as far as a mother now having to take her child to two places but financial consequences when a center may decide they are not interested in serving an infant versus an 8-year-old because it's too expensive or whatever the case may be. If they cut the 7- or 8-year-olds, how would it affect the 3-year-olds?
- D. Williams stated they also shouldn't lose sight that you can't run a business off of subsidy. O. Verdeja agreed. One of the things they do at the audit committee at the United Way--is there a way to obtain financial statements from some of the providers that would find out if these are viable businesses? Our job isn't to sustain a business with subsidy dollars. Is this something they should or could get into? At the United Way, they have a committee that looks at it and says they won't provide money because they are not viable.
- L. Carmona commented that while she understands that it is not the purpose of the Coalition to financially support any private sector business there are many childcare centers that exist in neighborhoods where they could never get a private-paying client. These are the really economically depressed neighborhoods where child care is a matter of survival for the families. There are so many child care centers where there is no other way than a child care subsidy to get those kids into the centers. O. Verdeja stated even if they depend on the subsidy, if they don't have a good business model, it will never work with or without subsidy dollars. L. Carmona agreed. E. Torres stated they could try to get some of the centers that would be interested in sharing some of that information so they can analyze it and bring it to the meeting.
- Y. Johnson asked what other information they would be interested in having presented at that meeting to have a better framework for the plan. E. Torres stated it would be a good idea to use that meeting just for the purpose of beginning the planning process and to survey the entire Board to see what other information they would like to have available to them. O. Verdeja stated it needs



to be made clear that the purpose will not be to have the decision made but to decide what they are going to tackle.

- D. Williams asked for information on a child that gets support to 5 versus a child that gets support to 8, and what are the outcomes? E. Torres stated to keep in mind that for every study there is another study that counters what the other said. They can try to get their hands on a fair sample of the data. D. Williams said to get both sides of it.
- Y. Johnson stated the other thought she had was that if they have that meeting in September, it may be good to get some ideas from the community about where they are heading and maybe have the community input at the beginning of the process and then again after so they have something that's more formed to comment on as well.
- L. Carmona stated when they are looking to prepare their framework, she would like to encourage them to consider is--when you are identifying measurable outcomes, and they need to be meaningful, they often get stuck on progress but don't ask themselves what they did with that information. Did they get that child support services they needed? 9 times out of 10 a child is identified as having a special need and they are never referred or if they are referred, the waiting list is so long they never receive a service.
- O. Verdeja stated he thinks they should be determining the impact on serving 0 - 5 if they do not think about 6-, 7- and 8-year-olds. The question is if they do not serve 8-year-olds, what is the impact on the zero to five populations they do serve? That's what they need to be answering and focusing on.
- Y. Johnson stated they need to remember that those 5-year-olds become those 8-year-olds. Is the impact sustained beyond 5 without support? Or do those children need to continue to have some type of support or 0 - 5 don't matter? O. Verdeja stated they need to start with the premise that they are serving 0 - 5. They have to do the best job they possibly can and know every single outcome. What happens when they turn 6? Who is going to help them when we let them go?
- A. Guerra commented that maybe the question is not just 0 - 5 but how much bang can we get for our buck? If all the effort is lost, then all that money is lost. Then that wouldn't be beneficial to the community.
- G. Schwartz stated they also need to address the parents. A lot of parents just don't understand or care and they need to address that.
- E. Torres said they also need to get input from the parents. It always seems to be missing from these conversations. One of the hardest things they will have to do is decide where the ELC responsibility stops and what they can do to ensure there is a continuity of services. What kind of impact can they have if there are no services available to follow up? How do they address that not only as an organization but as a community?
- O. Verdeja stated they have the budget of the United Way and The Trust combined. They need to take a leadership role and call the meetings together.

IV. Selection of Facilitator

Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair

- O. Verdeja stated Bud Park is no longer on the Board and is interested in doing this. This is something Octavio promised he wanted to bring to the table and would like to know their thoughts.
- E. Torres stated he thinks it's important to decide on a facilitator early on in the process. It's important for the Executive Committee and the Board to feel comfortable. Bud Park is one possibility. They have used Jack Steele and there are other facilitators out there. The benefit to working with Bud is that he is



familiar with the organization. Santiago has already checked to see if there are any limitations and there are not.

- Y. Perkins stated she would be comfortable as well. G. Schwartz stated he has worked with Bud for a long time and has seen him work as a facilitator and is very comfortable with him.
- Y. Johnson stated she thinks it would be nice to present the Board with a choice of a recommendation. She doesn't have a problem that as an Executive Committee they are all comfortable recommending Bud but if there are any issues when they present it to the Board they would have a choice.
- E. Torres stated they would need to go through the procurement process for the facilitator. Considering the dollars, this is not that significant an expense. The main thing is does the Board feel comfortable with the facilitator.
- O. Verdeja stated they would rather not open this up when they would prefer to go with someone they know would be one of these two guys.
- Y. Perkins stated if they would use the same facilitator in the retreat and the strategic planning meeting in October/November (which would make sense), wouldn't it end up costing more than \$25,000?
- L. Hanson stated that they used the same facilitator for everything that they did at the Trust and it cost them just under \$25,000.
- G. Schwartz moved to recommend Bud Park as the facilitator.
- Motion seconded by Y. Perkins
- Motion unanimously passed.
- E. Torres stated he will speak with both Jack and Bud to get proposals in time for the Board meeting.

V. Public Comments	Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair
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- S. La Villa recommended looking into getting information on who The Trust used as their facilitator.
- L. Carmona had an opportunity to scan through the documents but she didn't see anything that had to do with provider satisfaction. O. Verdeja stated he would want to make sure it's done in a way that's valid and it's put out to everyone so there is some statistical validity. E. Torres stated this is something they would want to engage a university to do because there is a process to make sure they get the right response rates etc.

VI. Adjourn	Octavio A. Verdeja, Jr., Chair
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