



Early Investment. Lifelong Success.

Commission Meeting
Thursday, September 24, 2020
8:30-10:30 a.m. via Zoom
Minutes

Present:

Co-Chair Kate Pew Wolters, Co-Chair Lew Chamberlain, Treasurer Bob Herr, Amanda Barbour, Ron Caniff, Kristina Donaldson, Lynne Ferrell, Maureen Hale, Ashley Karsten, Sue Jandernoa, Melinda Johnson, Karen O'Donovan, Dr. Juan Olivarez, Julie Ridenour, Milt Rohwer, Michelle Van Dyke, Carl Ver Beek, and Sean Welsh.

Staff:

Annemarie Valdez, Shelby French, and Jill B. Salisbury who recorded the minutes.

Welcome:

8:30 a.m.

Kate Pew Wolters welcomed everyone.

Consent agenda:

Kate Pew Wolters asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the minutes from the July 23, 2020 meeting.

Motion: Julie Ridenour

Support: Dr. Juan Olivarez

Unanimous

Public Comment:

No public comment

Finance Report:

Treasurer Bob Herr reviewed and presented:

- FSK's July and August financials and the Ready by Five July and August financials.
Michelle Van Dyke made a motion to approve the July and August financials.
Support by Sean Welsh.
Unanimous
- 2020-2021 FSK Organizational Budget
Kate Pew Wolters made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 organizational budget.
Support by Milt Rohwer
Unanimous

- Ready by Five Millage 2020-2021 Budget
Carl Ver Beek made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 Ready by Five Budget.
Support by Sue Jandernoa
Unanimous

First Steps Updates:

Annemarie Valdez provided updates on the following:

- **Grants:**
 - FSK was awarded CARES Act funding via Kent County; a \$450K grant for licensed child care providers (377 licensed providers are currently open) who have been struggling since COVID-19. Funds need to be spent by December 30, 2020. Six-hundred licensed providers were open before the COVID-19 pandemic began.
 - FSK estimates a 30% loss of child care providers overall in Kent County due to COVID-19.
 - Shared Services dream is to expand to license-exempt or not-licensed child care providers going forward.
 - Great Start to Quality program, housed at Kent ISD, is part of the Crisis Team that meets weekly. They have helped to increase the number of licensed child care providers, including helping with start-up fees.
 - FSK has two W.K. Kellogg Foundation grants. One is for Advocacy and Communications and one is for the Shared Services work. W.K. Kellogg Foundation has promised a renewal of the Advocacy and Communication grant when it expires in April 2021. It will be renewed for three years.
- **Communications:**
 - A team is working on our navigation and outreach strategies within the Ready by Five millage communications.
 - Equity work is underway with advisors and consultants. Recently FSK met with a Grand Rapids Community College professor to discuss incorporating equity into the early childhood curriculum via a series of videos.
 - FSK is working on a project with KConnect called Parent Listening Sessions. These will be focus groups, videos, and in-depth interviews with parents. We want to capture how parents are doing amidst COVID-19.
- **Shared Services:**
 - The County \$450K grant will be used for easy-to-clean toys and supplies and for back office support and liaison navigation which we have learned is needed greatly for provider support.
 - GSRP/Kent Intermediate School District gave an update on fall enrollment. They saw a decline in enrollment for preschool this fall and therefore they had to close 20 classrooms, laying off 11 staff members. However, the Governor's office told Kent ISD that they will be fully funded this year. Through GSRP, three thousand preschool children are served every year. Ron Caniff thanked board members for their advocacy efforts. Kent ISD also announced that Strong Beginnings, a three-year old preschool pilot, is moving forward and Kent ISD hopes to be awarded funding to open four

classrooms. Annemarie gave appreciation to Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative for their help with the pilot program.

- **Ready by Five:**
 - A new round of funding has begun; this is round three. The Pre-Conferences were September 11 & 12. New Request for Proposal (RFP) submissions are due on October 12, 2020. Presentation to the County is on October 8, 2020. Board members are welcome to attend. Ready by Five Allocation Committee's new member orientation is September 25, 2020. There are four parents on the nine-member committee.

Nominating Committee:

- Kate Pew Wolters noted that Karen O'Donovan will be retiring from the board. She thanked Karen for her 15 years of service!
- Melinda Johnson, chair of Nominating Committee, reported on the work of the committee to bring forward two names for new board membership. The Committee also re-wrote the Board's Roles and Responsibilities in preparation for recruiting and onboarding. The two new recommendations are: Claire Guisfredi, executive director of North Kent Connect and Kelsey Perdue, Kids County Project Director at the Michigan League for Public Policy.
- Next steps for the Committee are to design the onboarding process, term assignments, and bylaw review.

Melinda Johnson made a motion to approve new member Claire Guisfredi

Support: Sue Jandernoa

Unanimous

Melinda Johnson made a motion to approve new member Kelsey Perdue

Support: Milt Rohwer

Unanimous

The two new board members will be invited to their first meeting in November.

Strategic Planning:

Consultants Eureka People and Nicole Notario-Risk joined to present at 9:50 a.m. They provided a summary about the planning process, an overview of the goals and objectives and demonstrated the dashboard.

- Discussion/Feedback:
 - Board would like to see the vision and mission incorporated into the plan and the meeting agenda.
 - Board wants to be clear that needle movement can be shown especially in anticipation of a Ready by Five millage renewal.
 - Board asked for a lay person's perspective to be incorporated into the plan. Felt that it was very specific for Staff but harder to interpret for a lay person.

Adjourn:

Meeting closed at 10:40 a.m.

Next Commission Meeting:
Thursday, November 19, 2020
8:30-10:30 a.m.
via Zoom