

OCOURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE
 2356 Myrtle Ave.
 EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501



Tuesday, August 24, 2021 5:30 – 7:00
 Zoom Meeting ID: 839 0538 3751 and Passcode: 329742

<p>WELCOME AND CHAIR’S REMARKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductions <p><i>Meeting called to order by Board Chair at 5:35 pm</i></p> <p><i>Attending: Samantha Day, Jessica Estes, Jason Baxter (joined later), John Gracyalny, Madison Stefaniuk DiDomenicantonio, Allison Tans, Madison Goddard, and Jeanne Gordon</i></p> <p><i>Absent: No one</i></p> <p><i>Board Chair welcomed Jeanne and reported to the board she has been meeting with her weekly. Board members introduced themselves and their backgrounds to Jeanne.</i></p>	<p>Sam</p>
<p>UPDATES FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</p> <p><i>Jeanne has been with CASA for four weeks and reiterated a lot of transition in the organization with the E.D. position. She identified several urgent priorities to address.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Staffing <p><i>Currently have three employees, plus Jeanne on the CASA team. Working on adaptation of having a full time leader on site to support them. The new Development Director will be starting soon. There is a Case Supervisor position available. Historically this position has not been held by someone who is licensed, but Jeanne is interesting in exploring this to open up opportunities to bring on student interns.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VOCA Contract Compliance <p><i>A good amount of time has been spent on the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) contract. It is very important to CASA because the organization receives just over \$128,000 annually through this contract. The way the funding comes down from the federal government to the counties is very interconnected. If one county does not do well it could affect the funding for other counties’ CASA programs. Jeanne’s first week was spent responding to a seven-point Corrective Action Plan. (insurance, policies & procedures, working with contract monitor on the budget) Jessica asked if we could announce the new Development Director, but she was still going through background checks and we were not announcing yet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Super Kids Season <p><i>Without a Development Director and no official fundraising experience from Jeanne, we still proceeds with launching this year’s fundraising. This year’s event is much scaled back from</i></p>	<p>Jeanne</p>

previous years. We were unable to proceed with doing a raffle because we did not have the proper certification in place from the state. We hadn't sold many raffle tickets at that point. The Cabin Fever (online) auction concluded, raising \$3,500. Previous to the meeting starting, Jessica informed the board the Blackjack tournament at the fair brought in just over \$1,500. On the horizon, the month of September, the North Coast Co-Op will be "rounding up" and all proceeds will go to CASA. We've asked the teams if they have any associations with other businesses in the community who would be willing to donate a percentage of their profits on a given day/time period. Maddie suggested other local businesses to add: The Social Club, The Scotia Lodge, Papa & Barkley Social (massage).

Jeanne stated it was challenging to prepare for this first meeting and not having much up-beat information to share. It wasn't what she wanted to share but it is important because it's an honest picture of reality. It is important to know where we are to know where we're going. We will turn the ship around and we'll get there. Jeanne looks forward to get to the fun part and expanding the services we offer to our children and our community. We will need resources to make these things happen. An example is a security system – it was there but not hooked up. A lot of little things that need to be taken care of. Being honest and transparent sets the stage for us working together. Jeanne looks forward to working with the board and getting to know everyone and their special skills and strengths.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Sam

Moving forward, Jeanne will be doing this piece. In the past, the Treasurer did this. Jeanne and Sam decided it would make more sense for the E.D. to do this with input from the Treasurer. We are in arrears three months on this. We are hoping to transfer our whole accounting system to a "one stop shop". Friday was scheduled for a meeting with someone on this. We had planned to run a deficit this year with all of the transitions. We have engaged the consultant (JMT Consulting) we used for the E.D. search to assist with other things like the employee handbook and organizational structure. These costs will be covered by our endowment fund. We have had trouble getting things on time, including the monthly financials and payroll. Jessica said payrolls were going out on time, there were just issues with the pay they were getting approved and released. We had asked (former board member) Tammy Brown from RCB to help with this. Jeanne and Sam informed that was incorrect, the last payroll that was supposed to go out on Friday did not go out until Monday. RCB had told us it would go out same day (Friday).

- **Resolution regarding signature authority**

Sam brought up that we need to do a board resolution so that Jeanne and our new person (and other correct people) on our account to sign. Sam wants the board to make the resolution so that she can sign a resolution on behalf of the board to make these changes. There are multiple places – RCB, HAF, and CCCU, and also the credit card. Jessica stated RCB (our primary financial account) requires an additional resolution for allowing ACH abilities (payroll). Sam presented to vote on the resolution to have her sign instead of having four people sign approximately eight resolutions. Sam presented two items to vote on: that she could sign the resolution to add Jeanne to the above items and that when the new person starts to also sign that resolution to add that person. Jessica suggested we submit the meeting minutes, signed by the board Secretary, where it was all agreed to do these additions and that a formal resolution was not always necessary. Sam said she didn't think that would work in all circumstances and doesn't want to do something

that won't work for everything. Jeanne stressed that it was important that she get on the accounts, however that needs to be done because right now her hands are somewhat tied. Jessica stated that in her experience, meeting minutes were sufficient. Allison stated (via chat) that her time as Treasurer on another board, meeting minutes were accepted. Sam stated that since we don't currently have a secretary, we would need to vote one in prior to this. John suggested asking those we do business with what they would require. Sam said she would prefer to do the resolutions now because the quicker we can get Jeanne as a signer the better. Jason wants to do what we can to move this forward. Sam mentioned that if we are missing a financial relationship in the meeting minutes that may be a problem. If we do a resolution giving Sam power to resolve future banking needs, that would solve it. Sam asked for a motion to approve the board chair to have the ability to be the single signature on board resolutions to make changes to signers on all of our financial relationship accounts. John moved. Jessica to second. Ayes = All, Nays= None.

Jessica asked if we were also changing the historic signing authority of all checks over \$250 require a second signature. Sam thought we should. Jessica suggested we still set a dollar amount threshold for a single signature. Sam said the E.D. as the leader of the organization should have a pretty high limit and when the new person comes on they could be a signatory as well to prevent board members from having to come in to sign. Jessica said from an examiner standpoint we should have those checks and balances in place. Sam asked what dollar amount is suggested. Jessica reflected on the checks that are typically signed and agreed \$250 is too low, but aside from the large checks we've issued to JMT Consulting, the checks are usually under \$500 to \$1,000. Jessica suggested \$1,000 based on typical behavior. Sam felt that was too low and we can't judge future performance on past performance. Sam asked Jeanne for input. Jeanne wants to be able to run the organization within reason and informed the board at her last position had signature authority up to \$10,000. John thought \$1,000 was reasonable and to revisit it should it become an operational issue. Jessica agreed the past is not the future, and \$250 is ridiculous, but wanted to present something that is in line with our normal operations. \$1,000 to \$5,000 - \$5,000 is acceptable. Jason asked what our day-to-day check signing was like, used the example that a laptop is \$1,500 and Jeanne shouldn't need an additional signature for something like that. Sam mentioned we need a new info system/security business which will be a good size bill coming up. Sam asked the board for a motion to approve single signature authority of \$5,000. Jessica moved. Jason to second. Ayes = All, Nays = None.

Sam invited the board to submit any suggestions for any firms to be a "one stop shop" for our accounting and payroll needs. Jeanne informed the board that our bookkeeper is having trouble with some of our funding and contract requirements. Our accountant is not very responsive. All of this is creating challenges. Maddie asked what our budget is for these services. Sam said it's about \$700 for the accounting firm and our bookkeeper is hourly at about \$20 per hour for a few hours a month. Jessica stated she signed the CPA check recently and it was \$650. Total combined cost is \$800 to \$1,000 as an estimate. Maddie mentioned Amy Pelosi is who works with them and is great.

Allison asked how the staff time sheets work. Jeanne responded they are all on paper. Sam reminded everyone to send their board timecards to Jeanne because we rely on those for some of our funding.

STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

• Board Development and Structure

Sam is waiting on Cal CASA to get back to her on board development and training opportunities. There are other opportunities, but looking at free ones first. Jessica mentioned HAF also offers board trainings for local non-profit boards, not necessarily just CASA. Madison asked for more information on what the advocate training looks like and it would be helpful to see that. Jeanne thought that was absolutely possible. Sam told the board staff had previously expressed concern about not having transparency with what the board is doing and wanting to see board minutes. Jeanne clarified staff wants to know what is being talked about by the board. She stated she can help with real time information and to get more information on what they are hoping to get out of the minutes. She wants the opportunity to learn what they aren't getting and how to facilitate that. Jessica said team meetings after management and executive meetings to brief the team is a good idea. Maddie suggested an email recap of what was discussed is helpful to reference.

Sam reminded the board that Allison mentioned last meeting she would be willing to put her name in to be Secretary. No one else spoke that they were interested in that position. John stated is willing to serve as Treasurer. Jessica moved to nominate John as Treasurer. Allison to second. Ayes = All, Nays = None. John moved to nominate Allison as Secretary. Madison to second. Ayes = All, Nays = None.

• Draft FY 21-22 Strategic Plan

Jeanne identified her areas of focus and welcomed initial feedback. Items in red are identified as part of the plan but not to the point of being able to finalize the wording. This is a marathon, not a sprint. Sam reminded the June goals should be 2022 not 2021. Jessica appreciated the focus on our employees. John is happy to help with IT security as it is a strong part of his background. Madison wanted to hear more about CR and the placement experiences. Jeanne received a call from the head of the Social Work department at CR. They are looking to set up placement experience for a class they have where students have to put in approximately 150 hours each semester. This person had been an advocate themselves and wanted to think creatively about a partnership. This will hopefully be Spring 2022 but at the latest Fall 2022. This is also an option for HSU. Madison asked for clarification on the role students would play – advocate or another role? Jeanne said, anything. Initially it was advocates, but for those getting their master's, something like program development may be a choice. There are plenty of opportunities. When we can implement strong tracking of our advocacy data we can get more support and write more grants and expand what we're doing. Students can be a great way to make that happen. The time commitment will be important when considering the partnership with the students. Madison asked if we have any MSW's currently employed. Jeanne said no. Jeanne would like to hire a licensed case supervisor so we have someone on staff who can also help with the process of the internship. Sam and Allison both have MSW's so could also provide that necessity. Allison asked about our presence in the Native communities as it was discussed last month but not on the strategic plan. Sam said it could be added to the collaborations we're looking to do. Jeanne had a meeting with the program manager of the Yurok Tribe's judicial court. They are looking to formalize their program and part of that is having a relationship with CASA programs (Humboldt and Del Norte). Madison asked about the process of qualifying a child for an advocate. Jeanne said from what she's been learning, each county court, CASA, and child welfare determine what that is. It isn't pushed down, but determined locally. Our issue now is building up our advocate

Sam
Jeanne

<p><i>base. Jeanne is working on what our criteria should be. Jessica mentioned historically children removed from the home depending on abuse and who they were staying with played into qualification. Jeanne mentioned children in multiple systems are on the list for priority. Sam said Cal CASA was working on an implementation guideline. Jeanne said she'd heard this and we're looking out to 2024 on that. Jason asked what about the mission she wanted to tackle. Jeanne said our vision and mission statement needs some work. Our vision/mission statement should be more powerful. Jason was glad to see it in there and read the National CASA statement. He felt it lacked humanity and doesn't rise to the occasion of what we're really doing here. It doesn't drum up advocates or really say what we do.</i></p> <p><i>Jeanne asked logistics on how to get the plan finalized. Sam said the board doesn't need to approve things, but need to stay apprised. John said he'd like to see this updated and another review, then a quarterly update on the progress. Jeanne would also like to bring a monthly dashboard with metrics to inform the board on the things that are the most important. Jason said in the past we had regular updates on how many advocates we had and children being served. He would like information on where we are at know where resources need to be allocated. This give the board more of a regular scorecard to also measure ourselves to know if we're spending our time on the right things. Maddie would like to centralize some of this information electronically to access at any point. Jason also brought up we get asked: if we were to write a check, what would CASA do with it? Being able to answer that question is important. If we can't answer it, we won't get it. Maddie has had success in her professional life and the marketing tactics to show people we're soliciting for donations – "this many dollars helps this many kids", etc. Jessica agreed we need updated statistics and gave examples. Madison asked the level of communication between CWS and CASA. Jeanne said there is some work to do there.</i></p>	
<p>CLOSING</p> <p><i>Sam will send out an invite to the officers to have an Executive team meeting. Next month we may discuss committees. Jeanne said a data committee would be good.</i></p> <p><i>Next meeting is September 28th.</i></p>	Sam
<p>QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS</p>	Sam
<p>BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS</p>	Sam
<p>PUBLIC COMMENT MAY BE LIMITED BY THE CHAIR</p>	Sam
<p>ADJOURNMENT</p> <p><i>Meeting adjourned at 6:59.</i></p>	Sam

CASA of Humboldt

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July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

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