

NIH CHILD CARE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 8, 2006

Building 45 – Conference Room B

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

Janet Austin, Christie Espinoza, Valerie Durrant, Tom Hayden, Lynn Hudson, Richard Morris, Kim Plascjak, Henry Primas, Mary Ellen Savarese, Lisa Strauss, Tracy Waldeck

Members Absent: Monica Ellerbe-Scott, Hilary Fitis, Jayne Lura-Brown, Lynn Hudson, Angela Magliozzi, Juanita Mildenberg,

Liaisons Attending:

POPI: Paulina Alvarado

ECDC: Barbara Acquaviva

CHILDKIND: Jaydah Wilson, Michael Difilippantonio

NIH Work/Life Center: Shirley LaBella

Guest:

Melanie Keller, Division Director (WSDD)

Stephanie Kreider (Mgmt. Intern)

Board Staff: Joy Gaines

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** Board President Janet Austin welcomed attendees.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** Janet asked for a motion to approve the April 2006 Board minutes with minor corrections. All approved and the minutes were accepted into the Board record.
- III. **Child Care Board Charter:** Mary Ellen Savarese reported that the charter was transmitted to Building One, however, Colleen Barros, Deputy Director of Management, requested a redline copy of the original charter in order to review the proposed revisions. In addition, the Office of the Executive Sect. made several recommendations to ORS related to the Charter. The Board drafted a response to these questions for Shirl Eller, Acting Director ORS, to consider in her response. (See Attachment)
- IV. **Work/Life Updates:** Melanie Keller explained the organizational structure of the Human Capital Group, Office of Strategic Management and Planning which includes the NIH Work/Life Center for which she has oversight. Melanie informed the Board that the Resource and Referral Services provided through a contract between the NIH Work/Life Center and Life Work Strategies has been temporarily suspended due to budgetary and procurement restrictions. She reported that she hoped to get it back on line soon. The Board members were astonished and displeased to learn of the suspended child care resource and referral service. They decided to take action by writing a letter to Colleen Barros in order to support a recommendation for funds to re-institute the service immediately.
- V. **NIH Child Care Subsidy Pilot-update:** Mary Ellen reported that ORS had made a decision to request an additional \$98,000 for the subsidy program in FY 06 in order to maintain subsidy levels

for all currently enrolled employees. The alternatives were to end the program during the year, or to reduce subsidy amounts.

The additional funds were provided, as well as an additional \$100,000 for FY 07.

The largest percentages of families served are from households headed by single parents at the 50% reimbursable rate. NIH is the only agency that spent all allocated monies in the pilot phase of their program. This was due in part from the announcement from Dr. Zerhouni and the active publicity of the program.

Mary Ellen reported that two employees who transferred from other HHS agencies to NIH that had they known that the subsidy program did not transfer between agencies, they probably would not have accepted positions at the NIH. Their actions resulted in losing subsidized child care.

- VI. Studies and Benchmarking:** Tom Hayden announced to the Board that the ORS Office of Quality Management is working with the Division of Employee Services on a benchmarking project that will determine the needs of NIH employees as they relate to child care and other employee services.
- VII. NIH Parenting Festival:** Joy reported that the response to the NIH Parenting Festival, based on over 350 exit evaluations, was overwhelmingly positive. A survey of the 20+ exhibitors also indicated that IC's and other services were very pleased with attendance and plan to participate in future.
- VIII. Communications Committee:** Valerie informed the Board that the Council for Excellence in Government Fellows Project has produced a plan to improve the NIH child care website. The project is now slated for completion in September 2006. Valerie Durrant is representing the Board and the Communications Committee. Once the project has concluded, the communications committee will regularly review the website to maintain accuracy and relevance.
- IX. Membership Committee:** Kim reported that four current Board members have applied for reappointment to the Board. Dr. Janet Austin will leave the Board in September 2006 due to work conflicts. Janet will remain on the Board through the summer in order to submit the Annual Report to the Director and Deputy Director, NIH. The committee has received at least 2 applications and expects two more. If all four current members are approved there will be only one vacancy for a voting member. The committee will be meeting and conducting interviews at the end of June.
- Mary Ellen thanked members of all the Board committees. Perfect attendance awards were presented to Janet Austin, Valerie Durrant, and Richard Morris.
- Tom Hayden presented Board members with ORS pedometers in appreciation for their hard work and commitment to the NIH community and their families.
- X. Review, discuss and approve Board Priorities & Recommendations for Annual Report:** Recommendations include: child care subsidy pilot, space for child care facilities, morale and the Tribble amendment. Priorities include: the first four recommendations along with the waiting list, communication plan,

back-up care, studies and benchmarking and attention to special needs children and their families. Lisa Strauss, Valerie Durrant and Janet Austin volunteered to work on writing and editing the annual report before submission.

Announcements:

- Lisa Strauss shared her experience as a presenter for career day at local schools. She finds it to be very rewarding and encouraged other Board members to go to schools to talk about the work they do at the NIH.
- Mary Ellen reminded the Board members to review and approve the proposed meeting dates for the next Board term. All present approved.

Meeting adjourned at noon.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2006

Prepared by: Joy P. Gaines 06/12/06

Attachment

**NIH Child Care Board Charter Revisions:
Board Response to ORS
June 8, 2006**

NIH Recommendation #1:

Child Care programs and work/life programs associated with child care are all under the purview of the NIH Deputy Director for Management. We recommend that this Board advise the NIH Deputy Director for Management, not the NIH Director directly.

Board Response:

The original Board Charter was created and approved by Dr. Bernadine Healy, NIH Director, in 1992, and specifically addressed the need to serve the entire NIH community. The Board has experienced a rich and supportive relationship with each of the NIH Directors since the charter was put in place. This Board, unlike others, represents the interests of all who work at NIH (employees and supervisors, researchers, contractors) who have a stake in child care. A critical contributor to the high morale and well-being of those who work at NIH, child care is an issue which properly resides only at the highest level of NIH leadership. The Board continues to receive direct communication from the NIH Director and just recently joined with him in announcing the pilot subsidy program. Therefore, unless informed by the NIH Director himself, the Board feels this recommendation does not represent the best interests of the NIH child care community. The Board would be pleased to send reports, minutes, etc. to the Deputy Director for Management. The Board recommends that the current reporting structure remain in place.

NIH Recommendation #2:

The Board's purpose is to provide objectivity as an employer-sponsored board. Yet, ORS retains control of the group's composition and what guidance/reporting moves forward to Dr. Zerhouni. We recommend change in the Appointment process, such that the current Chair of the Board forwards nominations to the Deputy Director for Management (DDM) who can review/accept nominations.

Board Response:

The Board currently appoints a Membership Committee each year to solicit new members, interview candidates and make recommendations to the full Board. The recommendation of the Board is forwarded to the ORS Director in order to generate an appointment letter which verifies Board participation as an "approved activity" with appropriate notification to the member's NIH supervisor. The Board would be pleased to have the DDM serve in this capacity.

Would the DDM also send a non-voting liaison to the Board, as ORS does currently?

Would ORS continue to have a non-voting liaison as well?

Would ORS continue to provide support for Board activities?

NIH Recommendation #3:

By having the Board advise the Deputy Director for Management, it will ensure that the DDM is kept informed of activities and recommended changes for programs within her span of control, so she can make informed decisions regarding programs and resources.

NIH Concern:

"It is important to note that the newly revised charter significantly broadens the scope of the board into new areas that the board did not have responsibility for in the past."

"The way that the language in the new language expands the charter, coupled with the first concern regarding ORS control of the board, there is a potential for the board to impact Work/Life Center programs and services without going through proper organizational channels. The Work/Life Center does have a standing membership on the board, however it is non-voting. ORS/DOES maintains executive secretary duties, correspondence and reports, often submitted without comment opportunity."

Board Response:

The Board's review of the current and proposed charter suggests that changes in the charter are minor and do not significantly affect the scope of the Board's work. Most changes were intended to clarify the Board's interest in supporting and facilitating the work of NIH communities and offices that relate to parents and guardians as the primary caregivers of their children and provide resources for quality, affordable, and accessible child care for all who work at NIH, including the Work/Life Center and ORS/DOES. Although the executive secretary, correspondence, and reporting duties for the Board reside in ORS/DOES, the Board's discussions, correspondence, and actions are independent and the Child Care Board

has worked hard to be an inclusive body that welcomes broad participation and regularly requests input and feedback. The participation of the DDM in approving Board membership, as discussed above, will provide another formal mechanism for facilitating communication and collaboration.