

**Wake County Smart Start
Board of Directors Meeting
February 23, 2022**

A meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 with WCSS Board Chair, Sherry Heuser presiding. The meeting was held via Zoom conference

Board members present: Christine Alvarado, Maria Cervania, Nikia Coates, Dale Cousins, Veronica Creech, Heather Drennan, Matt Glova, Liz Hamner, Sherry Heuser, Leslie Ann Jackson Tonya Kangkolo, Sharon Loza, Cathy Moore, Kimberly Shaw, Angie Welsh, Joe White and Katherine Williams

Board members absent: Catherine Lassiter, Sharon Loza, Barbara Morales Burke, Antonia Pedroza, Charlotte Turpin and Mike Wasilick

Staff members present: Phyllis Barbour, Gary Carr, Joan Crutchfield, Sasha Gomez, Gayle E. Headen, Alex Livas-Dlott, Bryce McClamroch, Nancy Peck and Lynn Policastro

Guest present: Susan Evans

Call to Order/Announcements

At 9:10 AM, Board Chair, Sherry Heuser recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order. Ms. Heuser announced WCSS is adopting a new procedure of a separate log-in to the virtual Board meeting from the preceding NC Pre-K committee meeting to mark the division between the two entities, clarify meeting participants and ensure clearer note taking for documentation of actions. She also announced the meeting is being recorded for the purpose of accurate note taking and the presence of Commissioner Susan Evans and staff as non-board member meeting participants. Ms. Heuser gave the floor to Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen, who presented the "mission moment" with a PowerPoint presentation focusing on Early Literacy Initiatives work, how the programs are deployed and outcomes, including a highlight of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL). During the presentation, board members had the opportunity to watch a pre-production video illustrating the impact of the Imagination Library featuring interviews with WCSS board member, Dale Cousins, retired Wake County Public Libraries Head Librarian and parents of children enrolled in the program. Following comments and questions on the presentation, Liz Hamner moved to adopt the agenda. Katherine Williams seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and with none opposed, the vote was unanimous. (2-22-52)

The Board reviewed items on the consent agenda. Dale Cousins moved to approve items on the consent agenda including: minutes from the December 1, 2021 Board meeting, December 2021 financial reports, January 2022 financial reports, commercial insurance package renewal, personnel budget for FY22-23, Temporary COVID-19 leave policy and an amendment to the office space lease agreement. Christine Alvarado seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (2-22-53)


Committee Reports

Advancement Committee

Committee Chair, Liz Hamner provided a recommendation for a change to the 25th Anniversary culminating event. Ms. Hamner said with the ticketing date of March 1 quickly approaching and uncertainty in the community about attending live events due to current COVID conditions, the 25th Anniversary workgroup considered pivoting to a virtual vs. in-person event. They concluded that networking and fundraising goals would not be met through a virtual experience and suggested postponement of the in-person event to Advancement Committee who supported the recommendation. Ms. Hamner remarked on the loss of a \$1,000 deposit with Raleigh Convention Center, otherwise there will be no negative impacts from postponement.

If the recommendation is approved, Advancement will work to maintain momentum and continue to engage the Host Committee to retain interest. The anniversary website page would stay up, along with logos on website, except for the section for the main event until re-launch. Re-launch would occur in January of 2023.

Gayle E. Headen said that PNC has agreed to remain the Presenting Sponsor.

 Initial 5/9/2022 | 5:06 PM EDT Date

After comments and questions, a motion was made by Advancement Committee to approve postponement of the 25th Anniversary's main event originally scheduled for May 14, 2022 at Raleigh Convention Center, to May 13, 2023 at the same venue. Calling for a vote and hearing no opposition, the motion carried. (02-22-54)

Board Governance Committee

In the absence of Committee Chair, Barbara Morales Burke Welsh, Katherine Williams informed the Board that two candidates from the BoardLead program were vetted through interviews by a 3-person Board Governance interview team and their nomination is supported by the full Board Governance Committee. She commented that the nominees fulfill HR, Finance and expertise priorities and have strong alignment with WCSS's racial equity focus. Ms. Williams noted the BoardLead program requires candidates to be notified if elected by April 15, however the term may be deferred until start of the next fiscal year.

A motion came from Board Governance Committee to approve the election of Colleen Roache to the WCSS Board to serve a 3-year term beginning July 2022 and expiring in 2025. Calling for a vote and hearing none in opposition, the motion passed. (02-22-55)

Board Governance Committee moved to approve the election of Mickey Holt to the WCSS Board to serve a 3-year term beginning July 2022 and expiring in 2025. Calling for a vote and hearing none in opposition, the motion passed. (02-22-56)

Ms. Williams provided the following updates from committee meetings in January and February

- January: The committee reviewed recruitment process steps and timeline, developed a general outline of interview questions for candidates, formed a three-member team to conduct interviews and agreed on three priority areas of expertise needs for new board members in FY22-23: Legal, Racial Equity and community connections.
- February: The committee discussed ideas for additional candidates and identified as necessary representation from Telamon Head Start to satisfy NCPC/NC Pre-K requirements, potential recruitment channels, recruitment strategies to enhance Board diversity and support of WCSS's racial equity work. The committee also discussed board engagement and strategies for improving new member onboarding experience. A subcommittee was formed to develop a draft of a board member satisfaction survey.


Ms. Williams concluded her report with a comment on Board Governance commitment to ensuring diverse lived experience reflective of the community is represented on the Board as well as on committees.

Finance Committee

Finance Committee Chair, Joe White presented a committee recommendation for adding four full-time staff positions to enhance community support and departmental work capacity. He provided highlights of core responsibilities for each of the four proposed positions. Mr. White noted the total personnel cost of \$280,000 for the additional positions will be covered by the expansion of recurring Smart Start funding. Following comments and questions, a motion coming from Finance Committee was brought to approve the addition of the following full time staff positions to increase capacity and community support: Program Coordinator – Program Coordination and Evaluation (PCE); Family Engagement and Leadership Specialist – Systems Integration and Public Engagement (SIPE); Quality Enhancement Specialist – Quality Enhancement Initiative; Communications Coordinator – Administration. Calling for a vote, and hearing no objections, the vote was unanimous. (2-22-57)

Chair's Report

Chair, Sherry Heuser announced as part of the development of an overall Strategic Planning process, the formation of two Strategic Plan Ad Hoc committees: 1) an RFP committee to develop the Request for Proposals for a Strategic Planning consultant and 2) a Planning committee to work with the consultant in developing a draft of the strategic plan. Ms. Heuser said the two committees are in the early stages of development and updates may be expected at a later date.

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Date

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Gayle E. Headen provided updates on the following topics:

- Meeting recording procedure: Ms. Headen reported WCSS has updated written meeting procedures for Board and Board committees. Over the past two years meeting practices during virtual meetings have included recording of Board meetings and some committee meetings for the purpose of generating accurate minutes. The recording serves as process material for backing up the minutes until they are reviewed and approved at which point the recording is deleted. To ensure documentation of the process, the practice is now formalized as a written procedure.
- Office Reopening: Ms. Headen reported demolition of the space formerly occupied by Pizza Hut will begin 1st week of March. Staff is meeting weekly with construction team and permits have been issued by the City of Raleigh. The current office space will reopen to the public on March 1 in a phased approach. The office will be available for system navigation appointments beginning March 14, then be open by appointment for families applying for Wake ThreeSchool. Staff will be out in the community at various locations on Tuesdays and at Wake Up and Read on Thursdays for NC Pre-K application events. The renovation of office space is expected to be completed by July 1, 2022.
- Racial Equity: WCSS is continuing staff dialogue circles to grow in their personal work as well as improve the organization; information from the Racial Equity assessment report is being used and already impacting changes in Allocations, Strategic Plan and Board Governance committees. WCSS is continuing engagement with CounterPart who will continue to provide technical assistance to the Board and staff and helping to develop the Racial Equity point of view. The Board will determine which committees will best benefit from their technical assistance.

Chair, Sherry Heuser thanked board members for their time and deep discussion. With no other business to discuss, Cathy Moore moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:04 am. Dale Cousins seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the vote passed. (02-22-58)

DocuSigned by:

Leslie Ann Jackson

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Secretary

5/9/2022 | 5:06 PM EDT

Date