

**Meeting of the Board of Directors of  
Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, Inc. - CAPLP  
March 21, 2024**

**Board Member Attendance**

	<b>Board Member Name</b>	<b>Attended In Person</b>	<b>Attended Zoom</b>	<b>Absent Excused</b>	<b>Absent Unexcused</b>
1	Cani Aden				X
2	Cyndee Thormodson	X			
3	Eloisa Pigeon	X			
4	Jenny Mongeau	X			
5	Jonathan Green		X		
6	LaRae Kuhfal			X	
7	LeRoy Turner			X	
8	Loren Ingebretsen	X			
9	Michelle Werner	X			
10	Nicole Flick		X		
11	Paul Krabbenhoft	X			
12	Rachel Stone		X		
13	Renee Charon			X	
14	Tiffany Ross	X			
	Vacant – Public Official				
	PC Liaison Helan Khalil		X		

**Employees and Others Present:** Lori Schwartz, Executive Director; Cassie Christianson, Finance Director; Stephanie Thompson, Human Resources Director; and Colleen Murray, Operations Director (Via Zoom).

**Call to Order:** Tiffany Ross called the Governing Board meeting to order at 6:05 pm at 891 Belsly Blvd Moorhead and via Zoom Video Conference. There was a quorum present. Tiffany Ross requested the addition of 2 agenda items – Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation Grant and Elected Public Official Seat. Jenny Mongeau made a motion to add the amendments. Second by Eloisa. Motion carried.

**Promise of Community Action:** The board recited the Promise of Community Action.

**Code of Ethics Review –** The board reviewed the following NCAP Code of Ethic - Be Outspoken Advocates and Educators. Actively inform the community and decision-makers about issues affecting those with lower-incomes. Courageously confront and dismantle myths about social and economic inequality. Participate in promoting policies that support social and economic mobility, which reinforce the values of an equitable society.

**Spotlight:** Introduction to Stephanie Thompson, new Human Resources Director.

**Consent Agenda:** Paul Krabbenhoft made a motion to approve the consent agenda including the February 2024 Board Meeting Minutes and the February 2024 Treasurer’s Report. Second by Michelle Werner. Motion Carried.

**Finance Committee Report.** Cassie Christianson provided a report from the Finance Committee. February was the end of the fiscal year. Our revenue was higher than originally budgeted. Contract services increased significantly, which was because we had more sub-grantees than anticipated. Cassie is currently working on updating the financials for the audit. The Head Start in person review is scheduled in April. Our new AP/AR Manager Ryan started this week which is freeing up Cassie’s time to work on bigger picture items. Michelle Werner made a motion to approve the Finance Committee Report. Second by Jonathan Green. Discussion took place regarding actual vs budget changes historically compared to the current year, and what impacts the changes throughout the year. Motion carried.

**Requests for Approval:**

**A. Policy 204.3 Background Studies-** CAPLP would like to adopt a formal policy on the Background Study process. This process and procedure will ensure that all CAPLP employees will adhere to the same process for background studies. Anyone paid for employment by CAPLP must complete a MN Department of Human Services background study prior to training, providing services, or in direct contact with persons served by the program. All employees must complete a new background study every 5 years. The policy also outlines supervision requirements for employees who receive a “More Time Needed” or “More Time Needed with Supervision” letter as well as procedures for employees who receive a “Disqualification” notice. Loren Ingebretsen made a motion to approve Policy 204.3 Background Studies. The board makes a recommendation to add that background studies

are required for the Board Chair and Board Treasurer added to the Board Bylaws for the April meeting as well. Second by Jenny Mongeau. Motion carried.

**B. Policy 703.3 Pregnancy and Parental Leave-** The policy needs to be updated to be consistent with other leave policies. Employees are not entitled to accrue earned time during non-compensated pregnancy and parental leave. Michelle Werner made a motion to approve the update to Policy 703.3 Pregnancy and Parental Leave. Second by Nicole Flick. Motion carried.

**C. Executive Director Performance Review and Compensation Recommendation –** The Executive Director is evaluated on performance annually gathered from the CAPLP Board as well as the Leadership Team. The performance review and salary compensation information were reviewed by the HR committee on March 4, 2024. A copy of the Performance Review will be available for all board members to review at the board meeting. The average score of the review was “Outstanding” at 4.67 on a scale of 1-5. In recognition of the quality of the Executive Director’s performance during the past year, and the consideration of the Executive Director salary schedule as compared to the MN Council of Nonprofits Salary Survey, the HR committee unanimously recommends a 4.5% merit increase for the Executive Director effective 5/16/24. Salary recommendations are based on the current CAPLP Salary Scale as well as the MN Council of Nonprofits Salary Survey. All CAPLP positions are evaluated for Wage Comparability in comparison to this survey to ensure that wages are in line with comparable positions across the state for similar organizations. The CAPLP Finance Director has reviewed the budgetary impacts of this recommendation and assures the board that we have the funds available to cover the cost. Jenny Mongeau made a motion to go into closed session to discuss the Executive Director Performance Review and compensation. Second by Paul Krabbenhoft. Motion carried. Paul Krabbenhoft made a motion to re-open the meeting. Second by Cyndee Thormodson. Motion carried. Michelle Werner made a motion to approve the Executive Director Performance Review as well as a 5% Merit Increase due to exceptional performance. Second by Loren Ingebretsen. Motion carried.

**D. Out of State Travel Request: 2024 NAEYC Leadership Institute Conference –** Child Care Connections would like the opportunity to send 3 team members to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) leadership Institute to further our knowledge and support our professional development as leaders in the Early Childhood field. The sessions we include but are not limited to Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) in Early Childhood (EC), Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP), Community Partnerships, the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and advocacy for Early Childhood. We would bring the knowledge we gain back to our positions as the leadership of the NDQRIS coaching and assessing team and work to further quality early childhood in North Dakota. Cyndee Thormodson made a motion to approve the Out of State Travel Request for the NAEYC Leadership Institute Conference. Second by Jonathan Green. Motion carried.

**E. Out of State Travel Request: Environmental Rating Scales Anchor Training –** Child Care Connections would like to send 2 team members to Environmental Rating Scales Anchor Training. We use the ECERS tool in our observations with programs for step 1, it is our responsibility to maintain reliability at 85% and every other year attend anchor training to maintain that reliability. This training will allow us to dig into the tool, gain knowledge and perform reliability with the authors of the tool. Jenny Mongeau made a motion to approve the Out of State Travel Request for the NAEYC Leadership Institute Conference. Second by Paul Krabbenhoft. Motion carried.

**F. Head Start Self-Assessment Timeline and Plan –** CAPLP Head Start has planned our annual Self-Assessment. We conduct Self-Assessment each year to help us assess the progress we are making on our goals, objectives and to identify staff, parent, child or community needs, determine areas of growth and to consider new innovations. We are seeking approval of the Self-Assessment Timeline and Plan. Michelle Werner made a motion to approve the Head Start Self-Assessment Plan and Timeline. Second by Rachel Stone. Motion carried.

**G. 2024-2025 Succession Plan -** Succession Planning is the process that an organization uses to identify and prepare candidates for high-level management positions that become vacant due to retirement, resignation, death or new business opportunities. CAPLP has established a succession plan that includes both a short-term leave or an extended leave or termination to provide continuity in leadership and avoid extended and costly vacancies in key positions. The plan has been updated and changes are highlighted in the plan. Paul Krabbenhoft made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Succession Plan. Second by Jonathan Green. Motion carried.

**H. Healthy Start Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN Foundation Grant Application –** CAPLP is seeking approval to submit a grant application to the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of MN to support our Flourishing Families (Whole Family) program. This proposal would support an additional coach for the program to provide targeted support for Head Start families. Loren Ingebretsen made a motion to approve the BCBS Foundation Grant. Second by Eloisa Pigeon. Motion carried.

**I. Board Member Election-Public Official -** Seeking approval to seat new Public Official representative to the CAPLP Board of Directors to replace Heather Keeler. The position has been advertised and we received an application from Minnesota Senator Rob Kupec for the open position on the board. Nicole Flick made a motion to seat Rob Kupec as the new public official seat on the board. Second by Rachel Stone. Discussion took place regarding expectations surrounding meeting attendance and engagement during legislative session. Motion carried.

**Informational Items:**

**Executive Director's Report:** Lori Schwartz reported that she and Tiffany Ross are reviewing attendance each month when they meet prior to the board meeting. We are very excited to bring Stephanie Thompson on board as our new HR Director. We have also been able to fill the AP/AR Manager position in the fiscal department. At this time, we will keep Payroll and Benefits within the HR Department and re-evaluate after some time to see if we need to fill the HR Manager position that was vacated when Kim Trautman resigned. We have also added two excellent team members to the administrative team, Bri Glenn and Becky Berkley. Lori also reported that she has been working with Lori Shultz on their committee assignments and appointments for the MinnCAP Board of Directors and working on staffing within MinnCAP as well. A group attended MinnCAP Day on the Hill a few weeks ago and visited with Senator Kupec and Representative Joy. Our Child Care Connections Division also won a Promising Practices Award through MinnCAP for our Shared Services Alliance project which is a pilot project that provides a substitute pool for family child care providers. Lori was in DC all last week for the National Community Action Foundation Conference and MACAA Board Meeting. Tiffany Ross and Maria Steen also attended. They visited with team members from Senator Tina Smith, Senator Amy Klobuchar and Representative Michelle Fischbach's offices. The conference was excellent and included a presentation from a former Freedom Rider as well as a debate panel. David Bradley sent an email today that there is a bill on the house floor to authorize CSBG funding at the current level and keep eligibility for services at 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines and he expects this bill to pass. We have been accepted into the NCAP Whole Family Advanced Cohort and will be part of this learning cohort for the next two years. This year is the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Community Action and there will be a big conference this summer in Duluth. We have two team members that are taking the Certified Community Action Professional exam in April. The Head Start Federal Review team will be on site from April 29<sup>th</sup>-May 3<sup>rd</sup>, and they have Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> from 2:30-3:00 scheduled for a virtual meeting with the board. It will be critical for the Tiffany Ross as Board Chair, Cyndee Thormodson as Treasurer and financial expert, Nicole Flick as Policy Council Liaison and Early Childhood expert and Jonathan Green or Renee Charon as our legal experts. Lori and Kristin will meet with those that will attend the meeting to discuss the review tool and prepare for the meeting.

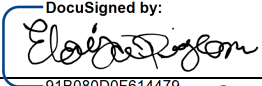
**Report Backs:**

- A. Head Start Policy Council** –Nicole Flick Reported that the Policy Council met voted in a new Chair as Helan Khalil has decided to step down as Policy Council Chair. Helan will continue to serve as the Policy Council Liaison to the Board. They also prepared for the upcoming Federal Review.
- B. Housing Advisory Board** – No report.

**Public Official Check-In:** Jenny Mongeau reported that they have been busy working to advocate this legislative session. Paul Krabbenhoft added that they had a good with the HRA regarding the partnership with CAPLP and Churches United regarding housing. Loren Ingebretsen reported that he was re-elected to his position on the Township Board and that their township voted in the tax levy to build a new town hall. Jonathan Green reported that Wilkin County continues to struggle with employee retention as some long-term employees are retiring and new hires are not staying as long.

**Next Board Meeting:** Thursday April 18, 2024- Annual Meeting and dinner at TAK center in Dilworth, 5:30pm. Please RSVP with Becky Bergley by emailing [beckyb@caplp.org](mailto:beckyb@caplp.org) or calling or texting 218-512-1500. If you do not RSVP, you will be marked with an unexcused absence.

**Adjournment:** Tiffany Ross adjourned the meeting at 8:28 pm.

DocuSigned by:  
  
Eloisa Pigeon, Secretary

General Bank Account, Payroll Bank Account and Elan Credit Card Statements were received via USPS and reviewed \_\_\_