

WACOSA Board of Directors Meeting
October 9, 2023
5:30 PM

Members Present:

Jeff Benveniste
Peggy Bayer
Jennifer Johnson
Laura Krueger
Joe Perske
Lindsey Rennie

Members Absent:

Ron Brandenburg
Matt DesJardins
Curt Gainsforth
Molly Garden
Thad Olsen

Herb Trenz
Sandie Westergren

Staff Present:

Nancy Betts
Maggie Dilks
Pat Flicker
Julie Haag
Ann Kennedy
Traci McKinnon
Mary Rothstein
Lynn Welle

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Review of agenda, with no quorum accepted as presented.

2. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Amended the consent agenda to reflect the August financial report and will move items E & F from the Executive Director report to the Executive Session at the next board meeting. No MTA; no quorum.

3. FINANCE COMMITTEE

August 2023 Financial Report presented by Traci M.

Revenue

- Program revenue over budget by approximately \$247k, reflecting a shift of Extended Employment clients to Medical Assistance waiver funding as the county has been reporting to us. This may lead to an EE grant reduction in years to come as we look to increase client participation in the program. The grant is authorized for \$140k from July 1st through June 30th of the following year, however we are earning only 49% of the grant due to this county funding switch. Program revenue increased almost \$945k compared to where we were last year January-August, reflecting a portion of the increase is the transportation rate we negotiated. Went from \$5.50 to \$16.79 per trip, and we budgeted about half of what it might be. The increase is also due to admitting several new clients and adjusting schedules in our various programs.

- The Vocational revenue is over budget by approximately \$45k, which is an increase of approximately \$116k compared to last year. This is due to consistent community crews, shred and in-house production.
- Donation revenue is under budget by about \$156K. The majority of this is due to APH donations not being received as of this date.
- Investments are doing well, with \$101k at this point over budget of zero, due to the market volatility over the last few years.

Expenses

- Staff wages under budget by about \$510k due to ongoing open positions. As of October 1st staff received a pay increase as budgeted. We would like to do an increase to \$60k distribution this year, that we normally do in December. The board approved amount have had is \$50k.
- Healthcare expense was under budget by approximately \$80k. However, with staff reaching their out of pocket limit, we could see increases soon.
- Client wages under budget by about \$16k.
- Building and equipment under budget by about \$17k. Have put off a lot of projects that need to get done.
- Transportation and fuel under budget, due to fuel costs being lower than anticipated.
- Our bottom line change in net assets from January-August is at \$451k, compared to an expected -\$375k. If we remove unusual items like investment revenue that are gains and our unspent designated donations the budget would reflect a \$121k. vs a predicted -\$835k.

Joe P. asked about potentially increasing our vehicle fleet with the funds, however we cannot get needed vehicles because of the supply chain issues in the auto market.

- Our leased vehicles are coming off lease and we will own them outright. Our 5310 grant bus is scheduled to arrive at the end of this year, with one more in the pipeline for 2024. The future of the 5310 program changes may make it easier to apply for smaller wheelchair accessible vans that meet our current needs. Busses tend to not be needed as much with the changes in service design. We anticipate needs for smaller vehicles, wheelchair accessible vehicles to accommodate community activities in smaller groups in the future.
- Sue Siemers, Project Manager through MNDOT has informed us that MNDOT is soliciting organizations for a one-time grant opportunity that we will apply for. MNDOT got permission from FTA to use unspent coronavirus relief dollars to reimburse 5310 providers for all the maintenance costs incurred for a 3-year period during COVID-19 in Minnesota. The grant will pay for all of the maintenance in a three-year period, after receipts are submitted.

4. FUND DEVELOPMENT

Pat F. presented the fund development report.

- Pat distributed Give to the Max matching funds letter to board members. The board gifted \$4k last year to be used for matching funds as it proved to be a good motivator for our donors.
- We will be hosting the 1st WACOSA Legacy Society luncheon in November. The WLS membership coming is around 17 people.
- As an update to our 2024 annual fundraiser, Backshed Brewing feels we were too large and we won't be holding our fundraiser in this location next year. We are researching another venue that will accommodate the number of people WACOSA draws.

5. PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Lynn W. presented the program committee report.

- Client satisfaction survey results are on the portal. Similar to last year, no notable change from stakeholders or clients.
- The Waite Park programs are collaborating with Minnesota Diversified Industries to offer several client cohorts self-advocacy training skills. We have completed three classes so far and plan on continuing as long as clients are interested. The clients work on their soft skills to work on in the community, professionalism, exploring job preferences, and practicing public speaking.
- We have completed two classes with Cow Tipping Press. In the summer of 2024 we will do another one at the Library and at the Whitney Senior Center.
- We are partnering with Ambassadors for Respect in late October, or early November. In this program we're partnering with 4th graders in District 742. Our clients will go into classrooms communicating with them on how to include others, use person first language, and how to advocate for self and others. When they are in the classrooms with the students they'll get paid through Peacemaker MN. This collaboration is sponsored through the MN Governor's Council on Disabilities.

6. HR COMMITTEE

Maggie D. presented the HR report.

- Employee engagement survey results are on the portal. Maggie is working with the administrative team to plan on how to address some of the different areas identified. Using multiple incentives and sending out the questions prior to the survey for staff to review, we increased our participation rate 15%. While we did see more participation, we did see a little more of a drop in satisfaction, attributing it to more general stress on staffing levels.
- At the last board meeting, we brainstormed ways to get participation up and did implement almost everything we could, which helped increase participants and gather more information. Staff retention strategies remain a top priority for continued emphasis.
- One measure we could take for retention was Nancy asking the board to consider a larger year end distribution. Anything above the 50k would be appreciated and show our gratitude for all the hard work they've done for the last year.

7. SALES & MARKETING COMMITTEE

Ann K. presented the sales and marketing report.

Satisfaction survey outside customers including DocuShred, ThriftWorks, in-house production results.

- Overall satisfaction 98.31%, which is down 1% from last year. The entire 14 years Ann has been doing these has been 98% or above. We continue to provide strong services to our customers.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nancy B. reported.

Update on 2024 MOHR Legislative Actions

- In 2025 when paid FMLA leave is required for all workers, our clients are included so we will be strategizing how we'll implement these new changes.
- WACOSA received its 2-year renewal of the 14C DOL certificate. We continue to strategize how we are preparing our clients and stakeholders for the changes taking place over the coming years. WACOSA can continue to offer work and job coaching to our customers, however, who will continue to work on these contracts will change based on their individual production standards or potential to reach and sustain the required production standards of each job. The end result will be some clients will be unemployed, so the program activities offered are more important than ever for client satisfaction. We will spend the rest of this year figuring out the best work production matrix based upon data that is fair and equitable so that we can support these changes for both clients and family members.
- Lindsey inquired what Coborns leadership could do to help get the word out. Nancy feels would be impactful if area employers could work together to stress the important labor services that we provide them and their business. If employers banded together and said there is room for all different models of this and we support all different models, think that might help make a change.
- Lindsey thought the MN Grocers Association might be a good group to reach out to in order to start some discussions and bring new voices to the table. Nancy asked everyone to send her contact information for any other groups to contact about making something happen for the future of work for our clients.
- Joe asked if the target was for them to earn minimum wage and if there were any tax credits for hiring the individuals we serve. Yes, our job coaches routinely help employers understand their benefits and walk them through the process.
- The new MN Extended safe and sick time law goes into effect January 1, 2024, and includes all staff and working clients. We are working to get that implemented.
- The 2024 budget process has started and probably the bulk of what most of the next board meeting will be.

Update on IT Server Upgrade

- Nancy gave an update on the progress of implementing our new network and servers. The process has been long, as we are rebuilding everything from scratch, and this is

setting us up for the next 4 years. We have added more security and migrated to Office 365.

General Reminders:

- Board Openings Close of 2023 – no one at the end of their 3rd term.
- Reminder of board term renewals. If Sandie hasn't contacted you, she will be to ask about staying on for another term.
- Sandie is requesting that new committee and/or board member discussions and ED annual review be handled at the next board meeting and there will be a closed Executive Session at the end of the board meeting.

Reminder of Annual Board Self-Review

- Board self-review will be sent out and handled by Maggie and Sandie.

Reminder of Annual Disclosures

- Please turn in your annual disclosures by next meeting.
- Suggested 2024 Board Meeting Dates
- February 26
- May 6
- August 26
- October 7
- November 18

9. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

- All actionable items will be added to the consent agenda for next month's meeting.

10. ADJOURN THE BOARD MEETING.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Next Meeting: November 27, 2023

Ron Brandenburg, Board Secretary

Date