



**July 14, 2021 (4:00 - 6:00 PM)**

**Microsoft Teams**

## **BOARD MINUTES**

### **Board Members:**

Brendan Clark, Brian Arnold, Carla Respects Nothing, Eugene Wade, Jennifer Biess, Jenna Hansen, John Feeney-Coyle, Kelli Barker, Michael Malloy

### **MDHI Staff:**

Jamie Rife, Julie Winkowski, Layla Said, Matt Meyer, Rebecca Mayer

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The staff left so the Board could break into executive session.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

*Michael asked if we could have a motion to approve the consent agenda.*

**Vote - John motioned to approve the consent agenda, Carla approved,**

### **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS (JOHN)**

John said this is something that we have talked about at several meetings. He said almost everyone filled out the online survey, but not everyone has chosen a committee that they would like to be on. He wanted to reiterate the importance of the Board committees and make a request.

The finance committee, governance committee, and continuum activities committee are chaired by Brendan, John, and Carla, respectively. The 3 chairs make up the executive committee along with Brian, the immediate past president, and Mike, the current president. These committees are essential to the functioning of the Board, which is why we need everyone to serve on at least 1 board committee. He thinks everyone responded to the survey but not everyone identified a committee they would like to serve on. John said he hopes that everyone can put in the chat at least one of the committees they are willing to serve on. He said that if someone does not type a committee in the chat, Jenna or John will have to assign them to a committee. This is essential to the board's operations, and now that our Board is much smaller, everyone must serve on a committee. The third committee is Continuum Activities, which is chaired by Carla.

Jennifer asked if Continuum Activities was a new committee. John mentioned Layla did not include it in the email. John said it was previously chaired by Elissa and Alix. He asked Carla or Matt to correct him. Matt said Continuum Activities wasn't in the bylaws as an official committee, but we had talked about the head of all councils forming the committee of continuum activities. Frankly, that role wasn't very well-defined in the bylaws. It is something that whoever is in that role will need other Board support to make sure whatever is happening between the committees and councils will feed up to the board. This year as we re-envision the councils and committees, this committee will be very important.

Jennifer asked to clarify, and said it sounds like we still want Board participation on each of the councils and committees. If you are chairing a council, then you are a de facto part of the continuum activities committee. Matt said that is

correct, although we just need some people to join right now. He doesn't think anyone on the Board needs to chair a council to be on that committee.

Jennifer would like to be a part of the Continuum Activities committee and would like to tighten up the language in the bylaws. This way it is codified so people are aware of the expectations when they join.

John added that those who are not in the meeting will just be assigned to a committee.

### **BOARD RECRUITMENT (JOHN)**

John said that every meeting, he tries to give a call out for us to recruit more board members. He hoped this meeting we could have a more substantive discussion about what that looks like. He emphasized how important recruitment is to the role of a Board member, especially since we reduced the size of the Board. He said Eugene and Ken's term end at the end of the year. Our bylaws state we can have between 9-13 members. We will be at our minimum come the end of the year, and he thinks it is imperative for us to be recruiting members from our respective communities to apply to the Board. The Bylaws say that only the chairs of the governance and continuum activities are responsible for board recruitment. However, he thinks that is unfair to those two individuals and not really efficient for the Board. It also doesn't serve our diversity policy to only have 2 individuals responsible for recruitment. He asked to have a discussion about what our goals are. He proposed a change to the bylaws at a future meeting to require all board members to engage in recruitment. This is standard for most nonprofit boards. He asked if anyone had questions.

Kelli said she likes the concept in general, but she thinks it's important how we define 'engaged.' John said that leads into something he wanted to talk about. The first topic is, practically speaking, what does it look like to require board members to recruit? It might be unfair to require everyone to recruit 2 applicants every year. We don't want to create an unnecessary violation of the bylaws. Instead of requiring each board member to recruit, we could require each committee to recruit 2 members per cycle. If our committees are fully staffed as they should be, then it is the responsibility of the group to recruit the members of that cycle. He is certainly open to other thoughts.

Mike said it would be easiest to operate within the committee framework. He thinks it is important for board members to get out there and recruit for the Board. John added that individual members could still recruit people outside of their committee. Jennifer said that the group expectation could be helpful and provide a framework for people to check-in. She asked if there are ways to make this very actionable. If we are asking people to reflect on their network each month, how can we break it down for people to be easier to do. She believes that if we can get some common language about what that looks like, it might help move this process forward.

Brendan said he agrees with Jennifer's point. He said, personally speaking, he thinks it would be helpful if we talked more in depth. What types of people are we recruiting? Is there a certain committee we are trying to staff? He said with his recruitment, he didn't have any experience in this space. He acknowledged that he really has a financial background and, while that's okay, he hears weekly from people in this space that we need better representation from the community. Any tips on how to do this would be helpful. John said, if not an actual strategy, what communities are we trying to recruit from? Obviously, we have a diversity policy that calls for better racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. But we also want professional diversity, such as backgrounds in law enforcement, development, and education. HE acknowledged that during his time on the Board, it has been heavily staffed with service providers. We have to be careful because this creates a conflict of interest, and we don't want to conflict ourselves out from making any decisions.

Matt said he wanted to echo much of what John said. He proposed that the Board develop a recruitment strategy. He likes that Jennifer was bringing up having a cadence to regularly discuss recruitment. How does the accountability work? A lot of inclusivity of different communities could be helpful. He said Brendan was a great example, as we found ourselves needing someone with a strong financial background on the Board. He said with the absence of Ben, we no longer have an attorney to consult with us on the Board, as John is largely conflicted out due to his job. Doing this by committee does to some extent target some diverse professional communities. For example, not everyone on the finance committee will have a financial background. On the governance side, it is helpful to have a law and policy background, and we can tap into our network of people with those professions. He suggested that a good way to go

forward would be to have a discussion at each board meeting about who each committee has discussed so we can hold the committees accountable to that work.

Kelli said she concurs with a recruitment strategy that is clear and transparent with the recruitment goals we have discussed. She thinks everything should be written down. She can see there being a problem in the future when someone who a committee recommended applies to the board but isn't selected. If it were written down, then we could say that that person didn't fit into our recruitment goals.

John said, for example, let's say someone that Continuum Activities recommended to apply was rejected. It's up to the Board to then talk about why they were rejected. Maybe we had too many service providers, or they weren't a good fit for our board. By discussing, this way the committee knows how to better target individuals for recruitment.

Carla said that that public interaction and communication is a lot easier as people come back into the workspace, versus having to chase them down to see if they're still interested. It has been hard to keep that communication open throughout the pandemic.

John said that Layla had extended an invitation for someone from the YALC to apply. Layla said that Tyler will be applying. She added that he has been a part of the group for a few years and has grown tremendously throughout that time. She would love for him to continue his work on the YALC throughout the end of the year and then start his board term in January. She thinks he would benefit a lot from the professional development opportunities that are now available to the group.

John asked if we had previously had someone from the youth committee officially on the Board of directors. Matt said we have had a formal voting Board member. He added that it is a position written into the Bylaws, and that we need someone from the youth community to have a seat on the board. He is thrilled that Tyler is applying.

John proposes that we make it an agenda item to talk about during our committee meetings next month to keep talking about this and get some reports back. John gave an example about how we do this on the governance committee. This year, the committee has solicited 5 applications from the Development and Education space. There is a restorative justice coordinator at a local high school who is very interested, but they haven't had a chance to meet. The Housing development people were either not a good fit or not interested at this time. But those are two communities we've tried to identify. Another comment is more of a timing thing. Our current recruitment cycles for new members are in June and January. In years past, we only did recruitment around those cycles. What we decided a few months ago was to do recruitment year-round. But we have to keep those start dates for consistency's sake. John added that specific to this year, we have our retreat/training for our policy governance model that we are transitioning to in early November. It would be great to have new Board member attend that retreat, even if they don't start in January. We have identified at least 2 people that can attend and begin their time in January.

Jenna agreed with the idea of integrating recruitment in the committee structure. She thinks we should have a recruitment strategy. She doesn't think it's clear, and while she has had a direct conversation with Matt about what our recruitment goals are, she thinks it needs to be an open conversation with the entire Board.

Jamie said she works closely with some McKinney-Vento liaisons that would be amazing additions to the Board. John is still in contact with the restorative justice coordinator, but welcomes the idea of Jamie recruiting from her network.

Jennifer added that it would be great to agree on how often we update that recruitment strategy. She thinks we should update it annually and have marching orders year by year, or maybe every 6 months. She thinks this would help from an agenda and expectations perspective. John agreed and said it would be great to have that conversation at the beginning or end of each cycle.

John asked that everyone speak about this at their next committee meeting. He said they can talk about putting some of this in writing at the next governance committee meeting, since we might have to make some bylaw changes. Mike wanted to confirm if this is something that we include at every Board meeting. John said it could be a part of the committee update or it's own standing agenda item. He doesn't think it needs to be discussed every month.

## **OPEN FORUM FOR STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS**

Matt asked how we want to go about posting these meetings publicly. He said he believes we let people know on our website. He asked Jamie to confirm. Jamie said she wasn't sure since we launched a new website 2 weeks ago, and asked Layla to confirm. Layla said that she has created a contact form on the website where the public can ask to attend the board meeting, which links directly to her inbox. Matt added that on only 1 occasion did the public attend, and it was members of the press.

John asked about meeting in the Mile High United Way (MHUW) office. Matt said they are willing to host our group, but members of the public would have to be virtual. He said they plan on updating the video capabilities in the room so that we can pursue a hybrid model. He still has to check about the capacity. He knows they set an intention to update the technology, but he doesn't know if there are explicit plans and deadlines.

Mike wanted to acknowledge last week that the KP foundation awarded a grant to Community Solutions, which amounts to use being able to add an extra improvement advisor. He asked for a motion to adjourn.

John motioned to adjourn. Eugene seconded. All were in favor.