



**Lifeline, Inc. Board of Directors
June 16, 2021 via Zoom!**

Call to order: Paula Gordos called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Personal moment of silence observed

In Attendance: Melissa Amspaugh, Paula Gordos, Pam Gouldsberry, Stephanie Johnson, Sean Kramer, Ryan McGinnis, Julie Novak, Jennilynn Patterson, Christine Shoop, Kate Stein, Sarah Welch.

Excused: Tom Quade, Sarah Wade, Aaron Burko

Absent/Unexcused: Lenore Collins, Pam Morse, Robert Weger

Guests:

Staff: Carrie Dotson, Jennie Best, Rebekah Jones

Quorum Determination: Quorum Achieved

Additions or amendments to the agenda: None

Approval of Minutes – May 12, 2021: Kate Stein noted two errors in the May minutes. First, that when Carrie is discussing the possible new construction and lease at Victoria Place a person's name is mentioned, but not where he is from and who he is; second, that the word 'they' is used in the same paragraph, but there should be an indication of who 'they' are. Christine Shoop made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 12, 2021 Board meeting with the two amendments offered by Kate Stein. Sean Kramer seconded. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment/Introduction of Guests:

Committee Reports:

• **Human Resources:**

- **Wage & Salary Plan:** Pam Gouldsberry discussed the HR Committee's recent efforts for updating the Wage & Salary Plan. By researching three empirical studies, it was discovered that for Lake and Geauga County the established living wage is \$13.48 – this wage covers housing, medical, transportation, and food for a single adult with no children. Pam stated that if the committee continued with the previous practice of adding a 6% increase to the prior Wage & Salary Plan every other year, the lowest wage on Lifeline's pay scale would be \$11.17, which is a disparity of 20%. The HR Committee believes that the Lifeline staff deserves more. The HR Committee recommended a baseline at the living wage of \$13.48 for the Wage & Salary Plan. Carrie stated that if the plan is approved it would not go into effect immediately; rather, the implementation would proceed in phases, department by department, and would be written into grants based upon budget schedules. If approved, it is expected that everyone can be in alignment with the living wage scale as soon as January or at the very least within a year. Christine Shoop and the Board reviewed the proposed Wage & Salary Plan and discussed the offered changes. Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the 2022-2023 Wage & Salary Plan based on the Living Wage Scale. Jennilynn Patterson seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Personnel Policies/HR Consultant Update:** Carrie stated that as was discussed in the May 12 Board meeting, there are several HR projects underway, and to avoid being overwhelmed and to ensure the highest quality of

work an HR consultant was hired to assist in the Personnel Policies revision. Carrie stated that the consultant is enthusiastic about the project and they have already covered two sections of the policy handbook. Carrie and Jennie will continue to meet with the consultant most Wednesdays for the rest of the summer. Carrie anticipates a final product for Board approval by October in order to implement in January 2022.

- **Management Succession Plan:** Pam Gouldsberry stated that the Management Succession Plan was last revised in 2014. During the May 15, 2021 HR Committee meeting, it was agreed that the plan should be reviewed every three years instead of just periodically. The current document was reviewed and two revisions recommended. First, the change to a three-year review cycle. Also, the HR Committee proposes that should the need for new management arise temporary authority could be granted to the Board to hire a consultant to fill the position provisionally until a permanent replacement could be secured. Julie Novak made a motion to approve the updated Management Succession Plan. Christine Shoop seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **PTO Conversion/Leave Payout:** Pam Gouldsberry informed the Board that Jennie, Carrie and the HR Consultant have been meeting to discuss plans for adjusting the current traditional leave system to a PTO system at Lifeline in the new personnel policies. Pam continued that Carrie Dotson has accumulated 980 hours of sick leave over the course of her 20 years as a Lifeline employee. To reduce Lifeline's liability, the HR Committee would like to recommend two payouts from Carrie's sick leave. To this end, the HR Committee recommends two payouts of 200 hours each totaling \$7,448 each. The sick leave payouts would be issued in June and August and would bring Carrie's sick leave bank down to 580 hours that could be better managed in the future. Julie Novak made a motion to approve the Leave Payout. Kate Stein seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Programs & Planning:**
 - **Community Needs Assessment:** Carrie informed the Board that Jennie is beginning the process for the 2021 Needs Assessment. Jennie has the goal of completing the focus groups and client surveys by the end of August so that Carrie can begin writing the Needs Assessment in September for both Lake and Geauga Counties. Carrie is hopeful to have the project ready for Board approval at the October Board meeting.
 - **Strategic Planning Retreat:** Carrie also confirmed that she sent out a Doodle poll for the Strategic Planning Retreat and asked that the Board members vote based on their availability so that the majority may be present. Whichever day the Board decides, Carrie confirmed that the staff would have their Strategic Planning Retreat the day before.
 - **Pathways Community HUB Project:** Carrie stated that the Pathways Community HUB project is moving quickly. The consultants that have been engaged for the project met last week with Lieutenant Governor Husted and the Lt. Governor is very enthusiastic about the project. He recommended that the consultants meet with Lydia Mihalik, who is the Director of the Ohio Development Services Agency, and that meeting has been scheduled for this week. Carrie stated that we are confident of support for the HUB, and this could happen as soon as the end of July. This would benefit Lake, Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage County. For Lifeline, this will require hiring four staff members: a supervisor and three community health workers. Carrie stated that our goal is to be up and running by the end of the year.
- **Finance:**
 - **Endowment Update:** Carrie distributed the quarterly endowment statement with Board packets. We did well in the 2nd quarter—we invested \$25,000, earned \$11,683.38 and ended at March 31 with a net asset of \$324,587.14.
- **Fundraising:**
 - **DUTS Virtual Raffle Updates:** Carrie reminded the Board that the Dancing Under the Stars Virtual Raffle is rapidly approaching. Lifeline has been working closely with the volunteer committee to solicit donations. Currently, we have secured theater tickets, a Cleveland Browns package, possibly a villa in Italy for two

weeks, and perhaps a condominium in Florida for a week as well. Our former celebrities have been incredibly supportive! Carrie stated that the goal is to get the raffle items turned in by the end of June to have time to prepare the photos and descriptions to upload everything onto the website. Carrie confirmed that we are continuing to look for sponsorships, and remain hopeful to get \$10,000 in sponsorship.

- **By-laws & membership:** Carrie announced to the Board that Julie Novak will be leaving the Board August 1 because she's been promoted within UH and offered Julie congratulations on her new position. Julie thanked the Board for the experience. She will work with UH to find a new Board recommendation and will let Carrie know.
- **Ad Hoc Facilities Committee:** Carrie said that she received an email from Consolidated Investment Group's attorney stating that they are ready to move forward with the renovation project now that COVID is over, and that Lifeline could take possession of the office space a year from now. Carrie explained that while Board approval was previously given for the project, at this time, the Lifeline staff has outgrown the previous plan -- seven staff members would be without offices in the current design. As the lease was at the top of our budget at \$12,000 monthly, Carrie does not expect that this location remains an option for Lifeline. The Board discussed multiple location alternatives and agreed that further discussions will be necessary, but at this time, the lease previously agreed to, but as of yet unsigned would no longer be feasible. Christine Shoop made a motion to rescind approval of the lease the Board had approved in September 2020 as it no longer meets our needs. Pam Gouldsberry seconded. **Motion carried.**

Finance Reports: Carrie stated that March and April's reports were in the Board packet and invited any questions from the Board. The Board had no questions.

Director's Report: Carrie stated that Lifeline's CSBG national standards review will begin mid-July and will wrap up in August. Due to COVID-19, the state decided to do remote monitoring. Lifeline will have an exit interview on August 31, and we will receive a letter with any recommendations and/or findings in September.

- Carrie affirmed that Lifeline would be receiving OHFA COVID-19 Grant funds for Utilities Plus, which will include electric, gas, sewer, garbage pickup, etc., specifically for homeowners. OHFA has contracted Community Action Agencies for the Utilities Plus grant and Lifeline will be receiving \$100,000 in July to be shared between Lake and Geauga County.
- Carrie informed the Board that she was appointed to the City of Painesville Electric Committee. On the committee, Carrie will assist in the review of everything from operating procedures to electric rates. Carrie feels that it is a good opportunity to advocate for Lifeline clients.
- Carrie informed the Board that the budget for the Lake County ERAP Program was originally submitted at \$5,800,000; however, Carrie renegotiated the budget to \$6,000,000, with some of the additional funds for 2-1-1 operating costs, as they will now be the primary point of contact for the program. The remainder will go towards housing stability costs—most likely attorney fees to help prevent formal evictions. The Commissioners will be voting on this on June 18, 2021, and it is likely to be approved. Carrie requested Board approval for the revision to \$6,000,000. Jennilynn Patterson made a motion to approve the revised budget. Sarah Welch seconded. **Motion carried.**

Program Reports:

- **OMHAS—Quality Assurance Activities:** No report.
- **Client Rights Activities/Grievances:** No report.
- **Program Updates:** Carrie stated that the HEAP Summer Crisis program begins July 1. The grant award for this year was \$80,000; however, if we run out of funds we can likely request more. Carrie said that Lifeline is ordering 80 air conditioners as the previous year there was an issue with our vendor, and Lifeline was unable to

give out any units—we expect demand to be high for this reason. This year we have a new vendor, Grainger, who will be shipping the units directly to clients, and Lifeline will receive an invoice upon delivery. Carrie expects this to be a much-improved system for our community. Carrie added that the Summer Crisis program would also be in person; however, the staff will continue to follow the COVID protocol of sanitizing in-between customer visits. In addition, the staff will be visiting several senior centers to take applications for the program. Over the phone intake will be an option, as well, as needed.

Old Business: No report.

New Business: No report.

General Board Discussion:

- **Reminder – there will be no July Board meeting! Happy Summer Break!**
- Carrie reminded the Board members to check their spam folder for their Board packets as some did not receive theirs. She recommended adding her email as a contact to avoid this in the future.
- Carrie repeated to the Board that she hopes has to be back to in-person Board meetings in August.

Adjournment: Christine Shoop made a motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:10 PM. **Motion carried.**