



**Lifeline, Inc. Board of Directors
September 15, 2021**

Call to order: Paula Gordos called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Personal moment of silence observed

In Attendance: Melissa Amspaugh, Lenore Collins, Paula Gordos, Pamela Gouldsberry, Stephanie Johnson, Jennilyn Patterson, Christine Shoop, Kate Stein

Excused: Aaron Burko, Sarah Wade, Sarah Welch, Pam Morse, Sean Kramer

Absent/Unexcused: Ryan McGinnis, Robert Weger

Guests: Brittany Sustar, Adam Litke

Staff: Carrie Dotson, Rebekah Jones

Quorum Determination: Quorum Achieved

Additions or amendments to the agenda: None

Approval of Minutes: Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the August 18, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes. Jennilyn Patterson seconded. Melissa Amspaugh abstained. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment/Introduction of Guests: Paula Gordos introduced guest Adam Litke from Geauga and Lake County Public Health and welcomed back Brittany Sustar from UH Geauga Hospital.

Committee Reports:

- **By-laws & membership:**
 - **Brittany Sustar: VOTE:** Paula Gordos called for a vote to elect Brittany Sustar onto Lifeline's Board of Directors as a private sector representative from the UH Geauga Hospital. Pamela Gouldsberry made a motion to vote in Brittany Sustar as a member of the Board. Melissa Amspaugh seconded. **Motion Carried.**
- **Programs & Planning:**
 - **Strategic Planning Retreat Save the Date: November 6 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at a location TBD**
 - Carrie informed the Board that there would be a meeting for the committee forthcoming and that there has been good progress with the 2021 Biennial Community Needs Assessment. She stated that the final Lake County focus group had occurred that day and that the final Geauga County focus group would be held the following week. Carrie stated that the final draft of the needs assessment would be presented to the Board in October or November and hopefully in time for the Strategic Planning Retreat on November 6 with Jeffrey Diver, the Executive Director of SELF.
- **Finance:**
 - Carrie stated that there would be a committee meeting scheduled once dates were received from the auditor. Carrie stated that the audit is nearly finished, and then the committee would review the draft.

Additionally, Carrie informed the Board that moving forward the Finance Report would require Board approval.

- **Fundraising:**

- **Dancing Under the Stars Virtual Raffle Wrap Up:** Carrie offered thanks to those that donated prizes to the Dancing Under the Stars Virtual raffle. Unfortunately, we did not come anywhere near our goal for the raffle. Carrie stated that we raised just shy of \$15,000, which we will split with Signature Health. We typically raise \$115,000, so it will be an adjustment, but we are grateful to those that supported the event. Carrie stated that the committee is planning an in-person event next August, and we will be looking for a chair for that committee, so anyone interested should be referred to Carrie. Carrie stated that there would be more updates regarding venues in the coming months.
- **2021-22 Annual Campaign Kick Off:** Carrie reviewed the goal sheet for the 2020-2021 Annual Campaign. The goal for this year is \$20,000 in donations and mailing out to 500 possible campaign donors. Carrie gave the Board a bullet point list on how each member could help during the campaign. Carrie reviewed the need for a contact list of potential donors and asked that each Board member submit a contact list of persons they are comfortable with being contacted for a donation—either a new list or a revised list. Carrie stated that those on the contact list would get a copy of the Annual Newsletter in mid-October and that there would be Annual Campaign Appeal Letters that would be signed by the Board members and sent out next month. Carrie explained that if letter recipients do not donate by the end of the calendar year, they would also receive a reminder postcard in January. Carrie continued that those who did donate would receive a thank you letter in the mail that would be signed by herself and a Board member. Carrie informed the Board that the campaign typically runs from November 1 – March 31. Carrie encouraged the Board members to talk to their contacts about Lifeline and help them see what we do and give a face to Lifeline. Carrie reminded the Board members to share annual campaign posts on social media and to encourage their contacts to look into whether the company they work for does matching gifts for charity. Carrie stated that she would like to receive the contact lists by Oct 8, to allow time to print and sort the campaign letters that would need to be signed. Carrie reminded the Board that one hundred percent Board participation is key and is a question that is appearing on many grant applications.

- **Human Resources**

- **Job Descriptions:** The job descriptions had been sent to the Board ahead of the meeting to review and Carrie asked if there were any questions regarding the job descriptions. The Board was positive about the revisions; however, there was an inquiry about why every staff member must have a valid driver's license and an insured vehicle. Carrie confirmed that most positions do not just work in the office but also require travel to professional development training, outreach events, home visits, inspections, etc., and it becomes difficult to fulfill these responsibilities if one does not have their own transportation. Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the new job descriptions as presented by the HR Committee. Lenore Collins seconded. **Motion carried.** Pam Gouldsberry thanked the staff and the HR Committee for their work on this project over the last six months—it's a big accomplishment to have them finished.
- **Executive Session: Personnel:** Christine Shoop made a motion to adjourn to the Executive Session at 6:45 PM. to discuss personnel. Pamela Gouldsberry seconded. **Motion Carried.** Staff members and guests were excused for the duration of the Executive Session. Christine Shoop made a motion to resume regular session at 7:20 PM. Pamela Gouldsberry seconded. **Motion Carried.**
- **Executive Director Annual Evaluation: VOTE:** Jennilyn Patterson made a motion to accept the annual evaluation of the Executive Director, Carrie Dotson, as completed and presented by the HR Committee. Stephanie Johnson seconded. **Motion carried.**

- **Executive Director Salary Adjustment:** Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the HR Committee's motion to adjust the Executive Director's salary to \$40.69/hour as long as sustainable grant funding is in place and retroactive to the review date of September 1, 2021. Jennilynn Patterson seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Ad Hoc Facilities Committee:** Carrie stated there are no significant updates from the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee. Dan Smith with Consolidated Investment Group met with his architects and confirmed they are redoing the drawings to allow more space in the proposed building. Once Dan receives the drawings, he can bring cost proposals to the Board, one with Lifeline bringing money to the table upfront and one without said funds. Carrie did speak with Rick, the realtor for the owners at Victoria Place, and he is very interested in showing the committee the space in the basement of the building. Carrie stressed to Rick the basement may not be the best location for Lifeline. Additionally, Rick would like to show the committee the Chicago Title building; however, the committee has toured the space before and found that it needs extensive work. Carrie informed the realtor that we are only interested in looking again if the owners are content to lease instead of sell and are willing to do a build-out considering the condition. Carrie added that once she receives the proposals from Dan Smith that she would reach out to the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee for a meeting.
- **Finance Reports:** Kate Stein made a motion to accept the June 2021 Finance Report. Christine Shoop seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Director's Report:**
 - Carrie stated that in harmony with the updated Wage & Salary Plan, Lifeline has currently boosted the salaries of half of the staff and that the next set of adjustments would come in the next three months. She added that the ADAMHS Board has repeatedly heard from their network of agencies how difficult it is to find and retain qualified staff within their network, especially clinical agencies who are losing licensed staff to Cuyahoga County. To that end, the ADAMHS Board formed a workgroup that includes Carrie and three additional Executive Directors and put together a 25-question survey about agencies' staff size, their portfolio of benefits, etc., to be submitted by the end of the week. Afterward, they asked the Directors to state what was needed in their agency in terms of workforce. Carrie stated that a committee would review the data, and then the ADAMHS Board would be sending out an RFP in October to the agencies for funding. Carrie said she has several ideas that she plans to include in Lifeline's proposal. Carrie expressed her thanks to the ADAMHS Board for both recognizing a system-wide problem and taking steps to help.
 - **IT RFP Project:** Carrie informed the Board that we sent out an RFP for a new IT Service Provider to over 20 local companies. She stated that Lifeline's three-year contract with our current provider will expire shortly, and Lifeline's experience with them has not been satisfactory. Carrie explained that the staff will score the RFP responses, and she will bring the top three or four providers to the Finance Committee for their input. Ultimately, Carrie would like to present that list of providers to the Board in November for approval and a new contract starting January 1.
 - **CSBG National Standards Review:** Carrie updated that we are in the middle of the CSBG National Standards Review. We typically score 100% for that review, but that will not happen this year due to COVID delaying several big projects and making it difficult to fill slots for a full Board. Carrie stated that we would be asked to make an action plan to correct those issues. She stated we are awaiting a final report, and then we will write our response.
 - **Leadership Lake County Reentry Simulation:** Carrie informed the Board that Lifeline was chosen as one of four projects for the Leadership Lake County Class this year. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Lifeline had contracted with Dione DeMitro to develop a Reentry Simulation. The simulation is very similar to the poverty simulation but is geared towards what ex-offenders face when reentering society. Carrie continued that we had planned an event to pilot the simulation in May 2020; however, this was delayed due to COVID-19. Carrie stated it was proposed to Leadership Lake County that one of their teams would take up the project and plan an event to pilot the simulation. Carrie scheduled to meet with the team next Friday to

discuss the project and a venue and that Leadership Lake County would handle registration and promotion. Carrie conveyed that this would be a wonderful opportunity to spotlight the Reentry Program, and it was exciting to have been chosen.

- **OHFA Utilities Plus Program: VOTE:** Carrie informed the Board that this program is moving forward. Lifeline was allocated \$100,000, \$90,000 for direct assistance for homeowners, and \$10,000 to pay Lifeline staff to operate the program. This program will help COVID-impacted families with utilities, HOA fees and property taxes. This grant requires Board approval. Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the OHFA Utilities Plus Program. Jennilynn Patterson seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Commctrl Contract: VOTE:** Carrie referred the Board to the Commctrl contract within their packets and shared that since hiring the Special Projects Coordinator, one of the main projects he has been working on is our phone system at Lifeline. Carrie stated that the phone system was purchased in 2010, and since then, we have added on to the system as the agency has grown; however, the system has become antiquated, and few companies are providing affordable customer service for the system. Carrie stated that we would like to utilize stimulus funding to hire Commctrl for \$5,500 to do a complete evaluation of our phone system and provide us proposals for systems that would be better suited for our organization. Bob is contracted with Ohio AIRS, the state association for 2-1-1, and as our primary concern is making sure we have all the functions needed by a call center, he and Commctrl are a good fit. Carrie stated that we would like to get this moving and completed before the stimulus funds expire in 2022. Jennilynn Patterson made a motion to approve the Commctrl Contract. Pamela Gouldsberry seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Program Report:**
 - **ODMHAS—Quality Assurance Activities:** No report.
 - **Client Rights Activities/Grievances:** No report.
 - **Program Updates:**
 - Carrie stated that the Coronavirus Relief Funds are still busy being distributed, and we are approaching \$3,000,000 spent.
 - Carrie continued that the HEAP Summer Crisis season wraps up this month and that the new air conditioner vendor for the program has been amazing.
 - During the August Board meeting, Carrie mentioned that we are exploring the option of working with Lakeland and Cathy Bush on piloting a 2-1-1 Navigator on the Lakeland Campus who would help students that are struggling and connect them to resources. Carrie informed the Board that Lakeland has a \$58,000 grant, and we proposed a subcontract of \$48,000 so that we can hire a 2-1-1 Navigator that will work thirty hours a week at Lakeland and ten hours a week in the Lifeline office. If the pilot is successful, we can keep the staff member long-term. Carrie confirmed that the proposal was sent to Cathy Bush at Lakeland, and we are awaiting the MOU.

Old Business: No report.

New Business: No report.

General Board Discussion:

- **Lake Geauga Fast Track 50:** Paula Gordos informed the Board that Lifeline won the Non-Profit of the Year Award from Lake Geauga Fast Track 50. Carrie stated that the awards ceremony will take place on November 4 and several staff members will be attending. Board members are encouraged to attend, as well!

Adjournment: Lenore Collins made a motion to adjourn at 7:41 PM. Christine Shoop seconded. **Motion Carried.**