



**Lifeline, Inc. Board of Directors
November 17, 2021**

Call to order: Paula Gordos called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Personal moment of silence observed

In Attendance: Aaron Burko, Lenore Collins, Paula Gordos, Pamela Gouldsberry, Stephanie Johnson, Sean Kramer, Adam Litke, Ryan McGinnis, Jennilynn Patterson, Christine Shoop, Kate Stein, Brittany Sustar

Excused: Melissa Amspaugh, Pam Morse, Sarah Wade, Sarah Welch

Absent/Unexcused: Robert Weger

Guests: Matt Maier

Staff: Carrie Dotson, Jennie Best, Rebekah Jones

Quorum Determination: Quorum Achieved

Additions or amendments to the agenda: None

Approval of Minutes – October 20, 2021: Sean Kramer noted an error of the October 20, 2021 Board minutes that stated the incorrect date of March 18, 2021, for the Reentry Simulation when it should read March 18, 2022. Pamela Gouldsberry made a motion to accept the October 20, 2021 Board meeting minutes with the adjustment noted by Sean Kramer. Kate Stein seconded. Jennilynn Patterson and Christine Shoop abstained. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment/Introduction of Guests: Paula Gordos introduced Matt Maier as a representative for Laketran.

Committee Reports:

• **Committee Reports:**

• **Finance:**

- **FY 2020 990 Filing:** Carrie referred the Board to their Board packets for the FY 2020 990 tax filing. She stated that the filing mirrored the FY 2020 audit reviewed by Snodgrass, N.E. Ohio, Inc. at last month's meeting. No questions were presented. The FY 2020 990 has been filed and requires Board approval. Sean Kramer made a motion to approve the FY 2020 990 filing. Christine Shoop seconded. **Motion Carried.**

• **Human Resources:**

- **New Employee Handbook: Vote:** Pamela Gouldsberry thanked Jennie and Carrie for their tremendous effort in the updated employee handbook. She stated that they reviewed sixty sections with the HR consultant Jackie Valek, and included diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in the latest revision. She continued that the attorneys did a complete legal review, and the HR committee added a couple of the policies like the retirement adjustment and the quarantine policy. She stated that the subsequent result was fantastic.

Carrie stated that she thought the staff would be happy with the clarity and generosity of the latest revision and that there would be an all-staff meeting on December 8 where the handbook would be

presented to the staff and they would be able to ask any question before it goes into effect January 1, 2022. The biggest change is the conversion from the previous leave system to PTO and the creation of the short-term health bank. The staff will sign an acknowledgement form stating that they have received and reviewed the handbook. Adam Litke made a motion to approve the 2022 Employee Handbook. Jennilynn Patterson seconded. **Motion carried.**

- **Fundraising:** Carrie informed the Board that the annual campaign update was in their Board packets and contained a list of campaign donors to date. As of November 16, the campaign exceeded \$1,000 in donations. She thanked the Board for their participation and asked that they continue to spread the word about the campaign. Carrie stated that Dancing Under the Stars is still moving along, and they visited a couple of potential venues for the event. The committee thinks they have a venue, though no contracts have been signed yet. She continued that the next step will be a chair for the fundraiser, and the committee intends to reach out to a prospective candidate the following day.
- **Programs & Planning:** Carrie thanked the Board members that came to the strategic planning retreat, completed the Board survey, or participated in Lifeline's strategic planning in some way. She stated that she has not yet received an update from Jeffrey Diver, the Executive Director of SELF, but that it was still early, and she expected to see a draft later this month or early December. Once the draft is received, the Board will be able to review it and see if they would like to make any revisions. Carrie continued that as we move into the New Year, once the strategic plan is approved, the committee would prioritize what is to be accomplished in each of the three years and which committee would be assigned certain responsibilities.
- **By-Laws & Membership:** Paula Gordos called for a vote to elect Matt Maier onto Lifeline's Board of Directors as a representative of low-income populations as recommended by Laketran. Ryan McGinnis made a motion to vote in Matt Maier as a member of the Board. Christine Shoop seconded. **Motion Carried.**
- **Ad Hoc Facilities Committee:** Carrie shared with the Board that within a week, Lifeline experienced a fire caused by the landlord's workmanship, and then part of the roof caved in over one of the staff's desks and flooded their workspace and equipment. The landlord's response was not satisfactory, and they sent us a bill for the repair work that caused the fire. Carrie shared that flooding has been a constant issue within this building and that the landlord's resolution of the problem has been greatly lacking. Carrie contacted the landlord about these issues, informed them that the staff do not feel safe coming into work, and stated that if our safety continues to be compromised, we cannot stay any later. The landlord's response was that if we were not willing to move to the basement long-term, then Lifeline would only receive a six-month extension on our lease, to which Carrie agreed. She continued that Lifeline can remain through June 30, 2022, in the current suite and that she included a ninety-day exit clause to enable Lifeline to leave sooner if a suitable temporary home is located.

Carrie stated that she had a meeting with Cathy Bieterman from the City of Painesville, and has spoken with Dan Smith of Consolidated Investment Group regarding potential temporary Lifeline offices. Carrie stated that these options might result in the office being broken into pieces for a few months, and while not ideal, she believes Lifeline could manage it. Carrie stated that as soon as she has more solid information, a committee meeting would be scheduled to start looking at new options and that they would continue to keep the Board updated. Carrie added that the Telegraph building is still up in the air, the architect is still working on the changes we asked for, but she did learn that they would not have to go back through zoning, which will save time. Once the cost proposals are ready from Dan Smith, the Board will be able to decide if that is an appropriate decision long-term.

- **Nominating Committee:** Carrie stated that in January, there would be officer elections for the four officers of the Board, and the nominating committee would put the slate together for whom they are recommending for those offices. Christine Shoop volunteered to chair the committee, Sean Kramer and Aaron Burko volunteered as members of the committee.

- Finance Report:** Carrie informed the Board that we are currently behind on the normal finance reports given to the Board due to the hours required to calculate the report and break everything down by program. Carrie stated that the report that the Board received this month is the final general agency-wide revenue and expenditure report that was run on October 31. While it does not have a breakdown by program, Carrie stated that she would give the Board this report every month and the programmatic breakdown report quarterly. As of October 31, 2021, Lifeline has had revenues of just under \$6,000,000 and expenditures of just over \$4,200,000. While the Board normally would vote on the finance report, Carrie stated that she sent an email to the state to ask if the Board can vote quarterly for the programmatic report and monthly on the agency-wide report and she is awaiting their response. The question was raised of why such a significant gap between Lifeline revenue versus expenditures exists. Carrie confirmed that this was likely due to COVID Relief and HEAP funds. She continued that HEAP gives a sizeable advance that we work through first before requesting reimbursement. Carrie stated that the bulk is likely due to the county ERAP grant that gave \$1,500,000 upfront. The county ERAP grant is set to expire in September 2022, as are most of the COVID grants.
- Director's Report:**

 - Director's Updates:** Carrie shared the plaque and program from the Fast Track 50 Awards banquet for those of the Board that could not attend. She continued that the primary update was that Lifeline was contacted by ODOD, and they will be coming out at the beginning of March 2022 to begin the three-year Lifeline audit. She stated that we completed our yearly independent audit last month, but Lifeline also undergoes a state audit every three years. She continued that the auditors would be here at the beginning of March to complete an audit for FY 2019 - FY 2021. She stated that she would keep the Board informed of any updates. Carrie informed the Board that the CSBG grants were not included in the meeting's agenda because the grants are not ready. Carrie stated that the CSBG grant and the presentation on the 2021 Needs Assessment would be brought to December's Board meeting, as it is important for the Board to hear those together.
 - IT MSP Contract Proposals:** Carrie informed the Board that Lifeline's IT contract is ending on December 31, 2021, and we are looking forward to changing providers. Carrie stated that an IT RFP was sent out to close to twenty IT companies in the area, and seven sent back proposals that Cameron, our Special Projects Coordinator, reviewed thoroughly. Afterward, he met with Jennie and Carrie and presented his top three choices and they completed the vetting process. Carrie presented a one-year IT contract with Neothink to the Board, with whom we are already contracted for our email services. Carrie stated that we would like to switch to Neothink and bring our maintenance, security, email services, etc. under one umbrella to simplify the process. The contact at Neothink is Steve DeBlock, with whom we have worked for close to twenty years and who is well acquainted with Lifeline's operations. Carrie stated that we have had many positive experiences with Neothink and this bolstered the decision along with the cost savings of several thousands of dollars. Carrie stated that the only service that would need to be contracted elsewhere was the service of our copiers and that this would be addressed at the December Board meeting. Carrie continued that there is a one-time cost of \$2,687 to transition to Neothink, but the monthly bill will be \$1,610 a month. Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the IT MSP Contract Proposals. Sean Kramer seconded. **Motion carried.**
 - ADAMHS Workforce Grant Proposal: VOTE:** Carrie shared with the Board that the ADAMHS Board had heard from several of their agencies how difficult it was to hire and retain staff and how the morale at many agencies is low. In response, the ADAMHS Board pulled together a committee of three executive directors who met with the ADAMHS Board staff and brainstormed what the issues were and what could be done to help. Carrie continued that the ADAMHS Board sent out a survey to all their agencies regarding their specific issues, concerns, and possible solutions. The ADAMHS Board took that data and opened a one-time workforce grant to help with any of the issues. Carrie stated that it is a broad proposal and is currently one-time funding though they are hopeful to roll it into allocations to some degree in the spring. Carrie continued that the grant is restricted to programs that the ADAMHS Board funds and to those that completed the survey. Lifeline will ask for no more than \$30,000 and would work in harmony with the Wage & Salary Plan and the significant wage adjustments that we're making as a result of our recent revision. Carrie stated that the grant runs from January 2022 through June 2022 and that Lifeline is proposing that the ADAMHS Board fund the

salary increase in harmony with the Wage & Salary Plan for the four programs that they fund. Carrie stated that the hope is that we can write these increases in the allocations for next year. Carrie stated that there is also a small allocation for employee morale events. Christine Shoop made a motion to approve the ADAMHS Workforce Grant Proposal that is not to exceed \$30,000. Adam Litke seconded. **Motion carried.**

- **LIH Water Assistance Grant:** Carrie stated that the Low-Income Housing Water Assistance Program is a new one-time program designed to be identical to the HEAP program, but is for clients that are in disconnect or are delinquent on their water or wastewater bills. The allocation for this program is \$572,962. Eighty percent was allocated for direct client assistance, and twenty percent was allocated for the operating and admin costs of additional Intake Specialists as well as a few of the current HEAP staff. Carrie stated that the funding goes through August 31, 2022, with a grant closeout period of mid-October 2022. Jennilyn Patterson made a motion to approve the LIH Water Assistance Grant. Aaron Burko seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **PIPP Grant: Vote:** Carrie informed the Board that the PIPP Grant is for \$21,968, which is a small increase over last year and is used entirely for part-time staff to manage PIPP re-verifications and enrollment as a part of the HEAP program. Pamela Gouldsberry made a motion to approve the PIPP grant. Christine Shoop seconded. **Motion carried.**
- **Program Reports:**
 - **ODMHAS—Quality Assurance Activities:** No report
 - **Client Rights Activities/Grievances:** No report
 - **Program Updates:** Carrie informed the Board that HEAP currently has 71 applications and 46 approvals, with the rest being pending and awaiting documents. Currently, clients can apply for HEAP assistance online and mail their documents in, but they still have to come in and sign paperwork. The process has been slow, and the staff is eager to return to regular business operations, as the program has been quite busy.

Carrie shared with the Board that we are looking for VITA volunteers if anyone knows someone who would like to volunteer. Lifeline will be doing taxes here in Painesville, Perry, Wickliffe, and Newbury, which will start in January 2022.

Carrie stated that the COVID Relief program is going strong and that the 2-1-1 database has been cleaned up thanks to a 2-1-1 consultant that was hired with the ODH funds.

Carrie informed the Board that we are making good progress on the Representative Payee Program and that we expect to hear from Mr. Martell from the Social Security Administration any day now. Carrie continued that she and Jennie went to interview with Mr. Martell last week, that the program should be up and running by the first of the year, and that Lifeline would work closely with the Social Security Administration to meet program requirements.

- **Old Business:** No report

New Business: Jennie informed the Board of some signs made available by the ADAMHS Board for their campaign on suicide prevention if anyone would like to take one.

General Board Discussion: No report

Adjournment: Christine Shoop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 PM. Pamela Gouldsberry seconded. **Motion Carried.**