

Policy Council Meeting Minutes
HSO – 775 Hazen Street, Paw Paw MI, 49079
Wednesday, August 28, 2024, 5:30pm

1. Welcome & Introductions

Members in attendance: Megan Malory (Mattawan), Kahli Lorenz (Cass), Kelsey Warner (Dowagiac), Samantha Litaker (SMC), Sydney Whittker (Watervliet EHS), Sherry Bennet (Community), Mellody Buzalski (Community)

Members in attendance via Zoom: Hailey Marbut (Bangor), Mary-alice Wirick (Niles Bell)

Guests in attendance: Holly Pomranka (HSO), Crystal Hayes (Dowagiac/Decatur), Tiffany Perkins (Watervliet/Bangor), Amanda Raymond (Watervliet), Laura Brugh (New Buffalo), Maureen Ovington (HSO), Laura Burtis (HSO), Chanda Hillman (HSO), Sarah Savage (SH/Mattawan), Trecia Davis (BH-DEC/Millburg), Benny Russell (Gobles/HSO), Juanisha Young (Millburg/BH), Trent LaMonds (Cass/SMC), Eve Alcaraz (Bangor/Paw Paw), Jade Evans (HSO)

Quorum was met.

Sherry Bennet called meeting to order at 5:46pm

2. * Approve Minutes – Joint Meeting

Samantha Litaker motioned; Mellody Buzalski seconded. Motion passed.

3. * Elect Officers

- a. Chair: Kahli Lorenz
- b. Vice Chair: Mary-alice Wirick
- c. Treasurer: Sydney Whittker
- d. Secretary: Hailey Marbut

Samantha Litaker motioned; Megan Mallory seconded. Motion passed.

4. * Directors Report – June/July

Samantha Litaker motioned; Kelsey Warner seconded. Motion passed.

5. * Finance Report – June/July

- Kahli Lorenz asked if there was a clear list of what counts as in kind because she spends a lot of time talking with parents about family committees. Laura Burtis said it counts as In-Kind if it was a formal meeting with minutes.
- Sherry Bennett wants to look at our partnership with Van Buren GSC to see what we can capture as In-Kind.

Samantha Litaker motioned; Kelsey Warner seconded. Motion passed.

6. *Grant Approvals
 - a. Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Grant - \$50,000 for Tuition Based Slots
Kahli Lorenz motioned; Samantha Litaker seconded. Motion passed.
7. *Cass Imagine Center
 - a. Letter of Intent
 - i. To support the Cass Imagine Center Project
Kelsey Warner motioned; Kahli Lorenz seconded. Motion passed.
 - b. Legal Fees
 - i. To create another 501C3 to work for grants for Cass Imagine Center in partnership with
The village of Cassopolis and Cass District Library.
Kelsey Warner motioned; Kahli Lorenz seconded. Motion passed.
8. *5-Year Goals:
 - a. Strategic long-term goals for ensuring programs are responsive to community needs identified
In the community assessment.
Samantha Litaker motioned; Sydney Whittker seconded. Motion passed.
9. *990 Report:
 - a. The organization's 2023 Exempt Organization return.
Samantha Litaker motioned; Kelsey Warner seconded. Motion passed.
10. *PIR
 - a. Provides an overview of the services, staff, children and families served by the program. Required
to be completed annually by the office of Head Start
Samantha Litaker motioned; Sydney Whittker seconded. Motion passed.
11. 401K addendum
 - a. Changing rules for early withdrawal due to hardship to allow vested dollars to be withdrawn.
Samantha Litaker motioned; Sydney Whittker seconded. Motion passed.
12. Education – Grant Cycle:
 - a. Expecting FA1 within the next year
13. Civic Engagement:
 - a. Head Start Funding
 - i. First change of rules since 2016, many policy changes or updates will be coming.
 - b. Universal PreK:
 - i. Still expanding, need space and qualified staff
 - c. Licensing Changes:
 - i. All good changes around health and safety, could have financial implications on the program.
14. Parent Engagement Conference:
 - a. Mary-alice Wirick will be attending the Parent Engagement Conference in December. Discussed how to
send more parents.
15. Report from Centers
16. Report from Great Start Collaboratives:

- a. Sherry Bennett discussed parent café training September 16th and they will be doing the conscious discipline intro in late September.
 - b. Melody Buzalski discussed that September 19th they're hosting the SMC Community fall expo. They will also be doing story trails in the fall for the little acorn.
17. Pleasure of the floor
- a. Jade Evans announced she will be resigning her position at HSO on September 6th to join NHSA.
18. Next Meeting Date – **Wednesday October 23, Cassopolis 725 Center Street, Cassopolis Michigan, 49031**
19. Next Training Date – **Wednesday October 9, HSO, 775 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, 49079**
- a. Still need to attend training
 - i. ~~Efrain Chavez~~
 - ii. Hailey Marbut
 - iii. Kelsey Warner
 - iv. Amanda Simpson
 - v. Mellody Buzalski
 - vi. Sherry Bennet
 - vii. Samatha Litaker
 - viii. Sydney Whittker
20. * Adjournment: Samantha Litaker motioned; Kahli Lorenz seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm.

*Denotes approval needed