

**Casa de Esperanza
Meeting of the Board of Directors
September 23, 2009**

Minutes

Board members present: Athena Adkins, Yolanda Cotterall, Gloria Fressia (via phone), Nicole McKoin, Ruth Simmons, Karen Smith, and Diana Villella (via phone).

Staff members present: Patti Tototzintle, Sue Saunders, Eva Benavidez, and Nancy Cicero

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm and chaired by Athena Adkins.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Athena welcomed Nicole McKoin, the new board member in attendance.

II. Agenda Review and Call for Any Conflict of Interest Declarations

No conflicts of interest declared.

III. Consent Items

A. Agenda Approval

B. Approval of July Minutes

The board unanimously approved consent agenda items.

IV. Financial Update

Sue presented the FY09 Preliminary Financials and explained that they will not be final until they are audited in October. She reported the Finance Committee has selected a new auditing firm, Mahoney Ulbrich Christiansen Russ. The firm is located in St. Paul, has nonprofit experience, and provided a nonprofit discount. Sue explained that we will put out an RFP for a new auditor every three years.

Sue reviewed the FY09 documents, indicating that the year ended well, as planned. We had a healthy cash balance, reasonable receivables, and a good level of deferred income. She explained that the \$13 net loss on the income statement reflects our rounding system. There were no major variances for the year.

Sue reviewed the July financials, which reflect that we have enough revenue to cover expenses. She explained the highlighted variance for employment costs. Salaries for the first month of the fiscal year reflect a higher percentage than for the overall budget year, but the variance will lessen as the year progresses.

Casa de Esperanza recently received word of two grants that have been approved.

- A grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for \$175,000 over three years. The grant will fund much of our research work. Receiving a grant from this foundation puts us on the "radar screen" for many other national funders.
- OVW funding to the City of Minneapolis for the Minneapolis Police Department to support the Family Violence Unit's collaboration with us and other domestic violence programs. This funding begins in January.

V. Marketing Plan

Eva Benavidez, Marketing Manager, introduced herself, summarized the work she has been doing since coming to Casa de Esperanza at the beginning of July, and provided brief summaries of the Hope Campaign and marketing plan.

- Eva presented the PSA, which Casa de Esperanza has created for the Hope Campaign (funded by Verizon Wireless). It will launch in mid-October.
- The staff is developing the Hope Campaign's pledge for nonviolence and creating an interactive campaign microsite for the Web site. Eva explained that we are working to tie the Hope messaging into the work that Casa de Esperanza is already doing, rather than creating new work.
- Eva recently coordinated a photo shoot with friends and family of Casa de Esperanza staff members. We now have more than nine hundred photos to use in marketing.
- Work has begun on the organizational brochure.

Board members raised questions and made suggestions.

- Are we setting benchmarks now and preparing to evaluate at the end of the Hope Campaign? Do we understand how Verizon Wireless will evaluate the campaign? We want to be sure that we're considered a good partner when they evaluate and plan their future domestic violence work.
- Should we do an RFP to find a social networking agency to take Casa de Esperanza as a *pro bono* client?
- One idea is to hold community forums/open houses/coffee hours when key national figures come to town. We could develop a following of people interested in the work and various issues. Policy and research could be entry points.

Eva distributed a preliminary info sheet on *¡Bailemos!*, the spring fundraiser. The date is currently set for April 3, and the Metropolitan Ballroom is a possibility for the venue. Eva explained that we will need board members to help with obtaining sponsorships, making contacts, and selling tickets. She circulated a sponsorship prospect list, asking board members to indicate connections they may have with the prospects. Perhaps board members will be willing to approach contacts, and the staff will provide whatever support or materials they need. Perhaps board members would prefer making the initial contacts and asking staff members to make the "pitch."

- Stacy Opitz, Fund Raiser, will talk with board members about the connections they noted on the prospect form. Eva asked board members not to take any action until they talk with Stacy about next steps.
- Eva will review the scheduled date, which is spring break in St. Paul.
- The board may decide to do another wine raffle.
- An idea was raised for the future: an online silent auction. It could be done after we build up a following on the Web site.
- Nicole has a friend who is working with online giving at The Saint Paul Foundation. She will connect with her to learn about their strategy.

VI. Fiscal Year 10 Dashboard Indicators Review

Patti pointed out the program revenue indicator. We neglected to indicate that the figure, \$5499 is actually the figure for the end of July rather than August. The August figure is

now available and is \$14,894.50. Patti then walked everyone through the indicators that were created since the last board meeting:

- CEO—National Board-Members
- CEO—National Board-Operating Plan. Patti plans to have a budget and operating plan in place by the February retreat.
- CEER—Policy-Establish national policy advisory council. We are well underway in establishing the council.
- CEER—Policy-Director of Public Policy assumes chair/co-chair positions. Rosie Hidalgo is a member of policy task groups; we want her to chair or co-chair two groups.
- CEER—Research-Obtain IRB approval. This indicator has been accomplished. Casa de Esperanza has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for two research studies: one on Latinas who stay with their abusers and one on Latino youth.

Patti quickly reviewed the other indicators. They are all on track or lagging just a bit. She pointed out that the final FY09 Dashboard Indicators were included in the information packet for the board's reference.

VII. Board Committee Updates

Athena directed everyone's attention to the Board Committee Planning Forms included in the information packet.

- She explained that the Executive Committee's primary tasks are to create meeting agendas and address critical issues between meetings. The committee has been intentional about the entire board handling most issues and decisions rather than having the committee play that role.
- The next Board Development Committee meeting is Friday, October 9, 8 am, in the Casa de Esperanza conference room.
- The Marketing Committee has a busy year ahead, including reviewing the final marketing plan.

Yolanda presented information about the Finance Committee. Their priorities for the year are:

- Selecting a new auditing firm, which has been accomplished
- Successful completion of the FY09 audit
- Revision and development of new financial policies.

VIII. Board Calendar and Priorities Review

Athena reviewed the calendar and priorities for the year.

- The meeting on November 18 will be an extended meeting, 3 – 7 pm.
- The retreat will be February 6, 9 am – 2 pm.
- The 360 review of the executive staff is a priority. Funds have been budgeted for a facilitator. In the past we have begun this process in April in order to deliver the reviews by June 30. Athena asked the board members to send her any contacts they may have for facilitators.
- A review of the co-director model also needs to be completed. There was a commitment to do it during the third year of the Strategic Plan. This review will be discussed at the November board meeting.
- The board will address Strategic Plan Review/Planning at the November meeting. The question is whether we will do an update to the current plan and wait a few years before creating another plan or work to create a new strategic plan at the end of this year. One member commented that it may be better to create a new plan when the new national board members are on board.

- The group discussed a possible board/staff gathering. It was suggested that it be scheduled in mid-winter, after the holidays. Patti suggested that everyone work on a project together, such as a thorough cleaning of *El Refugio*. Yolanda will take the lead and communicate back to the board.

There was general discussion that the board needs a better basic understanding of the national work. Athena said that ongoing understanding of the national work needs to be a priority. She suggested that the next meeting include an explanation of the overall work, and following meetings should include updates. Karen said it should also be a priority that each piece of the national work have a message—phrase or slogan; she had done some work with Stacy Opitz on messages for a media training. Athena added that when Rosie Hidalgo or Julia Perilla are in town, there should be an opportunity for board members to meet them.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm.