

**Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.**  
**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
**October 28, 2021, 3:30 p.m.**  
**Neighborhood Center Card Room/Zoom Conference Call**

**Members present:** Kate Anderson, Dannai Clayborn, Mike Delger, Bruce Day, Andy Hunthausen, Trevor Kirkland, Jerry Loendorf, Bob Mullen, Mary Pat Penley, Daniel Pocha, Eric Schindler, Lois Steinbeck, Paula Wright, Mark Young

**Members absent:** None

**Others present:** Gale Anderson, Joan Anderson, Rod Applegate, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Taya Hovan, Anika Jaeger, Lori Ladas, Jim Marks, Kathy Marks, Claire Marshall, Liz Mogstad, Kara Nelson, Ashley Peña-Larsen

The meeting was called to order at 3:36 p.m. and a quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Lois Steinbeck made the motion to approve the September 30, 2021 Board of Directors minutes and the July 22, 2021 Finance Committee minutes. Daniel Pocha seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Director's Report – Lori Ladas**

Lori introduced Joan Anderson as the newly hired Finance Director for Rocky. Board members were reminded to return their annual Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality forms to Diane Edgar. Lori mentioned that regardless of whether or not Rocky holds its annual holiday party, the social fund basket raffle will continue this year, and asked if the Board would like to prepare a basket to include. Mary Pat Penley offered to coordinate this year's basket, and anyone wishing to donate can bring contributions to Diane Edgar at Rocky. Rocky will be holding a Community Forum at the Neighborhood Center on November 2 at 5:00 p.m., with a Zoom option also available for attendance. Lori also mentioned that the potential for vaccine mandates for Rocky and its various programs is being discussed.

**Approve Corporate Resolutions for Authorized Signers on Rocky Bank Accounts, Loans, and Retirement Plans – Lori Ladas**

Lori explained that the two resolutions brought forward today will remove former Finance Director Chrisy Irej as a signer for Rocky's bank accounts, loans, and retirement plans, and to add newly hired Finance Director Joan Anderson as a signer for all bank accounts, loans, and retirement plans.

**Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the Corporate Resolutions for Authorized Signers on Rocky Bank Accounts, Loans, and Retirement Plans. Andy Hunthausen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Finance Report Update – Joan Anderson**

Cash balance today is \$817,976, and accounts payable is \$45,272.21. Joan reported that staff from Anderson ZurMuehlen attended today's Finance Committee meeting for the audit entrance conference. Field work for the single audit is scheduled for the week of November 15, and the Financial Statement audit will be completed the week of November 29. The programs chosen for the single audit this year are Head Start and the Coronavirus Relief Act Funds. The audit report will be presented at the February Board of Directors meeting. Joan also noted that the fiscal staff will welcome two new employees in the

next month: Rod Applegate, who is transferring to a Budget Analyst position, and Nancy Jones, a new hire. Taya Hovan will be taking over the role of Lead Budget Analyst.

#### **Executive Committee Report – Trever Kirkland**

Trever reported that the Executive Committee met on October 12 to discuss the letter of interest received for the Finance Director position and the recommendation to hire Joan Anderson for that position.

**Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the action of the Executive Committee in regards to hiring Joan Anderson as Finance Director. Daniel Pocha seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Retirement Committee Report**

Lois Steinbeck highlighted a few items from the October 12 Retirement Committee meeting. The year-to-date return on the profit-sharing plan is 9.11%. For the life of the plan, the rate of return is 7.4%. Lois noted that per the retirement plan audit, the total investment income in 2021 was \$822,840. The plan is doing well earning funds and able to pay out benefits as needed. In comparison to the S&P 500, Rocky's plan is not performing as well, which is the expectation since Rocky's plan includes bonds. Rocky's plan, historically, outperforms the S&P 500 when stocks are down.

**Paula Wright made the motion to approve the October 12, 2021 Retirement Committee minutes. Lois Steinbeck seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Lori Ladas provided an overview of the FY2021 Retirement Plan Audit. She thanked Jean Leischner for her extra work in preparation for the audit review. The audit earned a clean opinion. Lori noted the auditor's mention that Rocky's financial statements do not disclose the historical cost of certain nonparticipant-directed investments held by the plan custodian. While this disclosure is required by the Department of Labor, there has been no ramification for non-disclosure of this information in the past. The total combined value of the profit-sharing plan and 401(K) is around \$3.9 million. As Lois noted in per committee report, the plan showed a large investment gain in FY2021. Lori emphasized that the auditor's letter noted no difficulties, uncorrected misstatements or findings in the audit.

**Lois Steinbeck made the motion to approve the FY2021 Retirement Plan Audit. Bruce Day seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Approve Board Committee Lists – Lori Ladas**

Lori referenced the draft committee list included in Board packets. The Head Start Policy Council has named Gary Carey as their chair for the upcoming year, which means he will serve on Rocky's Personnel Committee per Rocky's by-laws. Mark Young was uncertain about whether he will continue to serve on the Rocky Board going forward, so the decision was made to replace his spot on the Executive Committee. Jerry Loendorf offered to fill that role.

**Andy Hunthausen made the motion approve the committee list with the noted modifications. Mark Young seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Head Start Update**

##### **a. Policy Council Update – Mark Young**

Mark Young reported that Policy Council did not have a quorum present today, so they were not able to take action on any items. Mark noted that he made the decision to step down as Policy Council chair and that Gary Carey will fill that role for the upcoming year.

##### **b. Director's Program and Budget Report – Ashley Peña-Larsen**

Ashley reported that three Head Start classrooms needed to close this week due to COVID exposure, and she's hoping all will be re-opened by November 1. She noted that Policy Council is considering alternate times for their meetings in order to increase attendance. Head Start's CACFP application was recently completed. The program is completing licenses for each of its sites at this time. Rocky Head Start is the only Head Start program at a STAR 5 level, and all Rocky Head Start sites are STAR 5. The program is guaranteed to remain STAR 5 for another year, as no assessments will be completed this year. Ashley reported that Head Start is gearing up for grants, and she requested Board representation for the committee preparing for grant work. Lois Steinbeck, Kate Anderson, and Mark Young all expressed interest in participating. Ashley referenced the four budgets included in Board packets, one for the Head Start grant and three for COVID funding. The second and third COVID grants are 2-year grants.

**Mark Young made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program and Budget Report. Eric Schindler seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**c. School Readiness Plan - Ashley Peña-Larsen**

Ashley referenced the draft School Readiness Plan included in Board packets. She explained that document includes the program's Kindergarten Transition plan for Head Start families and various ways the program engages with its families. Ashley spoke about the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) observation tool and how it's used by Head Start. Ashley then briefly reviewed the goals in each area of learning, along with the objectives within each goal area. She specifically mentioned the gross motor skills objective, noting a decline in these skills among children during the pandemic. Updates to this plan will be provided in December, and the plan is reviewed by program administration three times per year. Ashley noted that Policy Council had not yet approved due to having to cancel the meeting. Policy Council will review in November.

**Paula Wright made the motion to approve the School Readiness Plan as presented. Kate Anderson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Rocky's Agency on Aging Program Presentation – Jim Marks**

Jim provided an overview of Rocky's Agency on Aging, noting that Rocky's agency is one of 10 statewide, and one of only two housed within an HRDC in Montana. The program is guided by the Older Americans Act, and most of the funding for operations is federal. Rocky's agency serves a six county area surrounding Helena and Bozeman. Jim spoke about the most recent census numbers, noting that Bozeman's population increased 43% and Belgrade's, 42%. That community is now the third largest community in the state, behind Billings and Missoula. Broadwater County showed a 21% population increase, reflective of their housing boom and increased growth as a "bedroom community" for the Bozeman area. Lewis & Clark County had a 14% increase in population.

Jim spoke about the impact of the pandemic on Montana's seniors, and social isolation is one area of the biggest impact. Rocky's Long Term Care Ombudsman in Helena and Bozeman were directly impacted by closures to long term care facilities, and residents in those facilities faced isolation when visitors were not allowed to enter. Though those facilities have opened again, staff shortages and illnesses continue to cause pockets of social isolation. Rocky's Agency on Aging funds 14 senior nutrition programs in the six-county area. While one of these programs serves more people now than pre-COVID, the rest are all serving smaller crowds. The people visiting the senior centers are a different group than prior to the pandemic, and some of the new attendees are younger in age than typically seen in the past.

A variety of programs were offered by the Agency on Aging to combat social isolation. The program purchased iPads with Verizon plans, to provide the opportunity for seniors to attend virtual programming.

A few more may be purchased in the future. Weekly telephone check-ins were offered, for social visiting with seniors who may have been homebound. A system was put in place for grocery and pharmacy deliveries, though those businesses adapted and offered such options on their own, so Rocky's system was not as needed as anticipated. Robotic companion pets were provided for interested individuals. Rocky's Agency on Aging, along with Rocky's front office staff and several volunteers, also assisted Lewis & Clark County with nearly 1,500 COVID vaccination registrations when the vaccine was first provided in the area.

Jim concluded by discussing the program's name and mission change. Previously known as Area IV Agency on Aging, the program will now use the name Rocky's Agency on Aging. This change aligns the program to its parent organization, Rocky Mountain Development Council, along with a nod to the geographic characteristic of mountains prevalent in the six-county area. The mission statement has been updated to the following: Rocky's Agency on Aging builds choice, dignity, and engagement of older adults in partnership with the communities of our six-county area of service.

#### **Other Business**

Lori Ladas provided an update on the potential sale of the Jackson Street Center. As noted in her Director's Report, Rocky met with Roger Baltz and Jim McCormick with Lewis & Clark County on October 12. After hearing Rocky's counter-offer, the county countered back with an offer of \$706,000, with a 3-year commitment from Rocky to continue to lease space in the building. The county is required to charge market rent rates, but did discuss reducing the amount of common space which would adjust the rental cost. The county would also request assistance to secure long-term parking. Lori spoke with Rocky's realtor, who feels that if the property is aggressively marketed, Rocky could realistically expect to receive around \$850,000 from a buyer. After discussion, the Board agreed that Lori could continue negotiations with the county by asking for the realtor's estimate of \$850,000. If the County is unwilling to meet that asking price, Rocky will plan to pursue marketing the property to others.

**Lois Steinbeck made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Young seconded.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar  
Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board of Directors:

  
Eric Schindler, Secretary/Treasurer

12/7/21  
Date