



## **The Hope Center for Autism, Inc.**

### **Board Meeting Minutes**

Monday, April 30, 2018; 3:45 PM

1695 SE Indian Street, Stuart, FL 34997

**Board Members Present:** Jim Applegate, George Koester, Susan Maxwell, Linda Peirce, Michele Drake (via phone)

**Board Member Absent:** Mark Murray, Nina Ferraro

**Others Present:** Executive Director Joanne Sweazey

Meeting called to order at 3:45 PM by President, Jim Applegate

Approval of agenda / additions or deletions – approved as emailed and provided at meeting

Approval of minutes from last meeting – approved as emailed and provided at meeting

#### **Proceedings:**

Building of New School: Decision was made to delay the moving of the school with modular to 2019-2020 school year. Jim Applegate stressed the need for a professional fundraiser.

- o Joanne shared that she had met with leaders (Brian Foss and Pat Williams – see information below) from the Martin County Community Foundation as part of the leadership cohort.

**Pat Williams**, President, and Founder of Pat Williams & Associates, is an entrepreneur and communications professional specializing in campaigns that promote her clients as “first, best and different.” A native of the Chicago area, Pat managed her family’s entertainment and event business, which received the honor of being designated as Illinois Family Business of the Year. In her Florida-based public relations and marketing firm, she searches for breakthrough opportunities for her clients in the legal, health, education, small business, and non-profit sectors. Her work has won awards from the Advertising Federation of American and the Florida Public Relations Golden Image Awards program. Among Pat’s most successful projects has been the launch of Luminaries, a weekly publication for Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, which has been widely regarded as a national model for social and philanthropic news coverage. Before establishing her own firm, she was Vice President for Boston-based Regan Communications, managing the firm’s Florida public relations and marketing operations. Pat is active in many arts and culture entities in the Martin County area, where she has served as a board member for the Elliott Museum, the Arts Council of Martin County, the Women’s Club of Stuart, and The Pine School. Pat is a founding member of Women Supporting the Arts and of Impact 100 Martin.

**Brian Foss** brings more than 40 years of executive positions with national and regional organizations to his consulting work. Based in Washington, DC until moving to Florida, he served as Vice President of Independent Sector during Brian O’Connell’s leadership, a decade as National Executive Vice President of the national office of The National Conference for Community and Justice, and educational organizations including Presidential Classroom, American University, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Brian’s consulting focuses on working directly with CEOs of nonprofit organizations as a “confidential strategic thinking partner” to ensure that an organization’s mission, programs, and services are being effectively delivered. He recognizes that CEOs often do not have an experienced colleague to turn to for “behind the scenes” help in resolving the major challenges facing today’s nonprofits.

Among the areas of his focus are helping a CEO to strengthen relationships with the board; aligning the board for the organization’s needs; resolving difficult staffing situations; budget preparation and monitoring; strategic positioning of the organization for its’

future, and linking a CEO with resources across the country. Equally important, he works with nonprofits that are in terrific shape, financially healthy, and with good boards and staff. He assists the CEO in preparing the organization for its next levels of achievement, and to ensure that the organization remains strong. His approach is to build capacity of the CEO and strengthen the CEO’s standing with the board, staff, and community.



Brian recently completed three books on governance and management of nonprofit organizations on behalf of the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans: *Investing in People and Communities*, *Governing Effective Nonprofits in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, and *Ten Traits That Make Nonprofits Great*.

Budget Discussion:

- Less expensive modulars are not fire rated and would only allow for 6 modulars to be placed on the property to allow for fire code needs
- 8 units and admin building that are fire rated and they can fit on the site are more expensive
- The team is moving forward with site plan approval
  - Site plan will allow us to move into modular in 30 days
  - Will require another \$100,000 for moving/utilities/parking, etc. in addition to the \$111,000 required by the modular company
  - A determination will be made when final numbers are available following the site plan approval, but at this time we will plan on remaining at the current location
- SAC Accreditation look into it - \$20,000
  - Joanne/Marilyn will send board members a 1-page document on accreditation process and the fees involved
- Jim shared an expansion funding plan and asked for input
- Around 2 million dollars per building for construction costs but does not include site work, parking lots, utilities, fencing, landscaping (about another million) – completed by a contractor with experience building schools
- Michele and George will review the budget and make a recommendation to the board
  - Is the board willing to use the building fund to address the one-time costs?
  - Only duplicate costs is site prep and utility costs for modular – all other costs (parking lot, fencing, etc..) would be permanent
- Need the property tax waved – Joanne will look into it
- Joanne shared that there may be security costs to comply with new legislation – she will participate in several webinars in the near future that may provide information
- A motion was made to approve 3<sup>rd</sup> column budget and seek SAC accreditation
- The budget will be revisited if money issues change

Executive Director's Report: Joanne Sweazey will be utilizing the lottery to select an additional 5 students, primarily PreK. No summer camps this summer. Suggestion made that Instructional Coach becomes the Assistant Director.

Information Items: There were no information items discussed.

Action Items: There were no action items discussed.

New Business: There was no new business.

Old Business: There was no old business.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Peirce