

First 8 Memphis Board Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2019

8:30am – 10:30am

Board Members Present: Kathy Buckman-Gibson, Antonio Burt, Tanya Hart, Tomeka Hart (T), Amber Huett-Garcia, Mary McDaniel, Yvonne Madlock, Alex Smith, and Michael Whaley

Board Member(s) Absent: Jim Boyd, Marion Hare, Carol Johnson-Dean, Patrice Robinson, and Rebecca Yeung

Staff Present: Jamilica Burke, LeAmber Hill, Mark Sturgis, Regina Walker, and LaDora Watkins

Visitors: Mike Carpenter-Tennesseans for Quality Early Education (T), Cedric Gray-Shelby County Government, Ronda Hughey-Hughey's Debits and Credits, Jacintha Jones-Chalkbeat, and Blair Taylor-Tennesseans for Quality Early Education

(T) – Telephone

Call to Order

Chairman Buckman Gibson called the meeting to order at 8:48 a.m. with a welcome to all in attendance. The agenda for the day was referenced. Members notes the memo of proposed quarterly meeting dates for 2020: February 11th, May 12th, July 14th, and October 13th. Buckman Gibson shared a congratulatory announcement regarding Tanya Hart. Ms. Hart has been named one of the "The Network Journal 25 Influential Black Women in Business". A formal announcement is expected in March 2020 as the ceremony nears. It will be held in New York City.

Attendees viewed the First 8 Memphis Video which was shared at the November launch of First 8 Memphis. They also participated in a data walk to view data information from 2019 Fall Pre-K. The dashboards showed portfolio level data for financed and non-financed classrooms, enrollment, attendance, and istation completion for Q1 and through December 6th, and visualized for all classrooms, non-financed classrooms, and financed classrooms.

Review of October 15, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the October 15th First 8 Memphis Board Meeting Minutes was made by Tanya Hart and Mary McDaniel seconded.

Local and State Policy Updates

Chairman Buckman Gibson welcomed staff and Blair Taylor with Tennesseans for Quality Early Education to share 2020 local and state policy updates.

Ms. Taylor provided a brief overview of TQEE and the statewide board structure that includes West TN, Middle TN, and East TN representation. Tennesseans for Quality Early Education gathered information from the Vanderbilt study and, realizing the necessity of investments in the early years, developed strategies to focus on quality through the creation of the Pre-K Quality Act. It was a successful effort that resulted in a shift at the state level from being a formula grant, to one based on an application process that targets quality performance and execution.

There is an annual allocation of \$190 million dollars of which a fraction is spent yearly in TANF, which is a federal funding stream. \$120 million dollar has been left each year, currently totaling \$700 million in

First 8 Memphis Board Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2019

8:30am – 10:30am

surplus. These funds could fund Pre-K, transportation, wraparound services and more. Plans are underway to give this surplus of dollars to those who need it most through economic investments. Locally, one of the current investments being made that could be funded by TANF dollars is a nurse pilot program with Shelby County Schools and The Urban Child Institute in which five schools will get nurses in the schools. Nursing services in the system has a long and rich history, but the District is working diligently to ensure the job is appealing and competitive. It was suggested that Ms. Madlock be called upon as a resource and conduit due to her expertise and history in the health care field. There is also work being done related to professional development for teachers.

Optimistic conversations around funding for literacy coaches at the state level are happening. Funding could be split and paid half by the State and half by the school district. This would support professional development for early educators.

Ms. Taylor asked her colleague, Director of TQEE, Mike Carpenter, who was present via phone, to speak to the current agenda items for TQEE. Mr. Carpenter described plans to add staff positions that will focus on lobbying actively for investments in home visitation and childcare. TQEE's strategies also include immediate recommendations for the use of TANF funds to fill funding gaps in these areas, along with recommendations for investments in wraparound services, internships/subsidized employment, housing, and transportation. TQEE's longer-term recommendations for consideration at the state level include appointing a working group to develop a strategic plan for TANF, CCDF and other public assistance funds with specific goals for each to boost economic mobility and poverty reduction. Attendees were encouraged to visit the TQEE website often to stay updated.

Committee Reports

Chairman Buckman Gibson advised that from the last board meeting, committees had been formed. the Nominating and Governance Committee and the Finance Committee. The Nominating and Governance Committee will meet in February of 2020. Chairman Buckman Gibson asked the Finance Committee Chair to provide a report out. Commissioner Michael Whaley asked that Ronda Hughey, accountant for First 8 Memphis, present an overview of the meeting held on December 10th. Ms. Hughey stated that the meeting was held to set the tone and to determine how the financials will be presented.

The Committee recommended approval of the financial statements. Commissioner Whaley seconded. After review and discussion, with a roll call vote, motion to approve recommended financial statements passed.

The board members discussed changing First 8's fiscal year to July, which would result in an audited short year and a second audit after June. A July-June fiscal year would better reflect First 8's funding streams and classrooms and how they operate. Motion to adopt a new fiscal year was made by Commissioner Whaley and seconded by Mary McDaniel. After a roll call vote, the motion passed.

The committee was tasked with discussing and reporting on several items at the February board meeting. They will propose financial procedures, transfers made to accounts, and an audit firm recommendation. They will also investigate other agencies with similar procedures to ensure that First 8 has clear accountable financial controls. Attendees were asked to send suggestions to the Finance Committee and

First 8 Memphis Board Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2019

8:30am – 10:30am

Chairman Buckman Gibson. The committee is scheduled to meet on the second Thursday of each month preceding board meetings.

Executive Director Search

Chief Alex Smith provided an update to the board members regarding the status of the Executive Director search. Carrington and Carrington was the firm contracted to complete the executive director search. Of 40 eligible applicants, several have been screened, and the top 6 selected. The firm, however, is continuing the search and will send the top 3-6 candidates by the end of January for initial screening. Of the top six candidates, three have PhD credentials, three are Master's degrees, and three are local. There has been great interest in the director role. Additional information is needed around the total compensation and relationship between First8 Memphis and Seeding Success. Members were asked to hold February 10th and February 11th to have the two final candidates brought in for final interviews. The interviews will be conducted by panels with a focus on certain competencies such as leadership, education, and fundraising. After each candidate has completed all three panels, the panels will gather together to discuss the strengths of each candidate.

Motion to approve firm recommendation was made by Ms. Tanya Hart with a second by Ms. Mary McDaniel.

Status of Pre-K

LeAmber Hill provided an update of the first quarterly report that was presented to Shelby County Commission and board members had opportunity to ask questions about enrollment, wraparound services, expansion, and engagement.

First 8 Memphis convenes the Early Childhood Consortium which is comprised of all operators. The operators can share best practices and First 8 is able to share data to support improved practices and promote a standard for quality across operators.

Contract negotiations with the Achievement School District have stalled but connections have been made in Nashville recently that should move the conversations forward. Local staff are actively involved but the administrative authority resides with the state and is stagnant. ASD has said that their intent is to partner with First 8 Memphis but there are some technical and adaptive challenges.

Public meetings and Records Policies

First 8 Memphis staff provided updates on the public meeting guidelines policy and the public records policy. The open records policy mirrors that of the City. Records requests can be made via the First 8 email address. The City and the County want to revisit the process and staff will lead setting up the meeting. Motion to approve the public meetings policy was made by Tomeka Hart with a second by Mary McDaniel. Quorum was not present to vote on this item so it will be carried over to the next board meeting.

Regarding the public records policy, Ms. Hart asked that the language be revisited regarding any two board members discussing an item that board would vote on. Staff will revisit the policy and present a

First 8 Memphis Board Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2019

8:30am – 10:30am

revision at the next board meeting. Training will also be provided by staff to help everyone understand the operational procedures and compliance requirements better.

Adjournment

Chairman Buckman Gibson encouraged the members of the board to think about one thing that they would like to know more about regarding the work of First 8 Memphis. The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.