Board of Directors Meeting

April 17, 2023
The MDC Children's Trust Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting was held on April 17, 2023, commencing at 4:15 p.m., at 3250 Southwest 3rd Avenue, United Way, Ryder Room, Miami, Florida 33129. The meeting was called to order by Kenneth Hoffman, Chair.

Audio transcription

Board Member Appearances:

Kenneth Hoffman, Chair
Pamela Holligsworth, Vice Chair
Dr. Edward Abraham
Matthew Arsenault
BOARD MEMBER APPEARANCES, Cont.:

DR. DANIEL BAGNER
TA’MYAH BYARS
MORRIS COPELAND
LOURDES DIAZ
MARY DONWORTH
REV. RICHARD DUNN II
GILDA FERRADAZ
HON. NORMAN GERSTEIN
LOURDES GIMENEZ
NICOLE GOMEZ
HON. KEON HARDEMON
NELSON HINCAPIE
ANNE NEASMAN
DR. CLARA LORA OSPINA
JAVIER REYES
SHANIKA GRAVES

STAFF MEMBER APPEARANCES:

AMANDA GORSKI
BEVONE RITCHIE
CAROL BROGAN
DANIELLE BARRERAS
STAFF MEMBER APPEARANCES, Cont.:

FELIX BECERRA
GARNET ESTERS
GRETTEL SUAREZ
IMRAN ALI
JACQUES BENTOLILA
JAMES HAJ
JENNIFER MORENO
JUANA LEON
JULIETTE FABIEN
LISANNE GAGE
LISETE YERO
LORI HANSON
MARIANA HERNANDEZ
NATALIA ZEA
RACHEL SPECTOR
SEBASTIAN DEL MARMOL
SUSAN MARIAN
TATIANA CANELAS
WENDY DUNCOMBE
WILLIAM KIRTLAND
XIMENA NUNEZ
YULIET ALFONSO
GUEST APPEARANCES:

CAMILA GIL
JANICE GRAHAM
SHAWNEAQUA EDWARDS
VERONICA WARD
JOES JACOBI
JENICE ROSADO
JUDIT WILLIAM
MAPI GARCIA
BRANDEN LOPEZ
JOSE MARTINEZ
SANTIANA LEWIS
PROCEEDINGS

(Thereupon, the following proceedings commenced at 4:15 p.m.)

MR. HOFFMAN: Okay. We're still waiting for one more director, but I think before the director arrives, we will go through the administrative and announcements part of the meeting. First of all, I'd like to remind everyone, make sure and turn on your microphones when you speak and off when you're not speaking. In addition, if you need to recuse -- recuse yourself from a resolution, please make sure and state your name, agency, and the reason for recusal.

Looks like -- just stepped out of the room. Tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m., I just want to announce there will be a community announcement and press conference regarding our youth funding development awards. All board members are enti -- are invited and welcome to attend. It will take place at 10:00 a.m. at the Belafonte Tacolcy Community Center, which is at 6161 Northwest 9th Avenue.

Earlier this month -- I just want to tell you about the youth development -- I'm sorry --
the soccer foundation initiatives. Earlier this
month, the Children's Trust joined the US Soccer
Foundation, Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella
Levine Cava, County Commissioner Chairman Oliver
Gilbert, and CEO Kenneth Griffin of Citadel,
LLC, among others, to announce the launch of the
Miami-Dade Soccer Initiative.

Citadel founder and CEO Kenneth Griffin
provided $5,000,000 to fund the development of
50 new mini-pitches in Miami-Dade County by
2026. And the Children's Trust is going to
support the US Soccer Foundation's initiative
through the creation of a local Just Ball
League, which is something that the US Soccer
Foundation has successfully implemented in a few
other cities.

And this league uses mini-pitches and other
community hubs to create opportunities for
league play at the neighborhood level while
removing barriers, such as transportation and
costs, that often prohibit children in under-
served communities from playing the game.

Several of our board officers were present at
the conference. I think Pam, Karen, and Mark; I
don't know if you have anything you'd like to
add?

MS. HOLLINGSWORTH: Thank you, Ken. I just thought it was a great experience. It was very exciting and look forward to the future, providing so many opportunities for children to enjoy the game.

MR. HOFFMAN: Terrific. After our last board meeting, staff surveyed all of our directors on the meeting time, and I just wanted to let you know that this time, or the time we were scheduled to start at 4:00 p.m., was the -- was the winning time on Mondays for our board meetings. So, thank you all for your input. In your board packets in front of you there are two op-eds in there, right? So --

MR. HAJ: In the media packet.

MR. HOFFMAN: Okay. In the media packet, sorry. The first, which is co-authored by David Lawrence, our CEO Jim Hodge, and yours truly, celebrates the Children's Trust's 20 years of accomplishments. The second, written by a member of the community, advocates for renaming the Children's Trust in honor of David Lawrence. This is not being presented to the board, nor is
David Lawrence in favor of having the Children's Trust renamed in his honor. So, I just wanted you to know that in case you saw that at editorial.

I wanted to take this opportunity to welcome to our board Commissioner Keon Hardemon as a representative of the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, as appointed by the commission chair. Welcome, Commissioner. He is currently, not only the -- on the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners, he also serves on the Miami-Dade County Aviation and Economic Development Committee and chairman of the Tour -- Tourist Development Council. Welcome; we look forward to your input, and you're welcome to say something as well.

MR. HARDEMON: Well, of course, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I -- I appreciate your greetings, and I just want to get some clarity on what you just said. So, the Children's Trust is not in favor of naming it after --

MR. HOFFMAN: We haven't brought the matter before the board. It was -- it was mentioned in an editorial, and again, I just wanted to mention it to the board because, I mean, it was
not an initiative of this board, and Dave has
him -- himself expressed that he's not in favor
of that.

MR. HARDEMON: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. HOFFMAN: Okay. With that, I think we
will move to public -- I have several for this
meeting. I'd first like to call on Camila Gil
of the Armour Dance Theatre.

MS. GRAVES: Mr. Chair, we should wait
until we have a quorum.

MR. HOFFMAN: I'm sorry?

MS. GRAVES: Quorum.

MR. HOFFMAN: Oh, we don't have a quorum?
I thought we do. I saw our director joined,
yeah. Is Ms. Gil --

MS. GIL: Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

MR. HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GIL: Good. Thank you, members of the
board and Mr. Hodge. My name is Camila Gil, and
I am the executive director of Armour Dance
Theatre. For over three decades, Armour Dance
has used dance as a vehicle for success. Even
though the words dance and theater may bring an
image of pink fluffy tutus, our goal is to
empower students with life skills that help them
reach their full potential, regardless of the career path they choose.

Since 2011, the Children's Trust has supported our organization and has made it possible for us to expand our four community programs to include academic, social-emotional learning, homework assistance, and parenting components. Through this comprehensive arts education model, students develop skills like resilience, delayed gratification, and a growth mindset to help them master their craft, do well academically, and succeed in life through high school and beyond.

With the help of the Children's Trust, we have seen thousands of students gain placement into magnet schools, graduate high school, and pursue careers in a vast variety of fields. One of the many examples is Destiny Delancy, whose story was featured in the Children's Trust 20th anniversary campaign.

This new round of funding will allow us to continue using the art of dance as a tool for social transformation. It will allow us to expand our reach by 75 students, offer additional academic support, hire a social
worker to further assist our families in need of
access to the resources they deserve, and
continue to employ over 60 staff members. We
are grateful to be a part of the wonderful
Children's Trust community and look forward to
many more years of partnership. Thank you.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Thank you for
your comment.

Next, we have Jonathan Spikes from
Affirming YOUth Foundation, Inc. And when you
address, please state your address as well as
the organization for the record. Okay --

MR. SPIKES: Okay. Sorry about that. I
was looking for the mute -- unmute. Thank you,
Children's Trust board and Mr. Hodge. Since
2011, Affirming YOUth Foundation has been
delivering social-ecological services to
children within the Liberty City corridor. And
20 -- and Affirming YOUth was also part of the
small community-based program that was funded by
the trust that allowed us to become an
accredited agency and CARF for mental health
services and case management services.

And so, being awarded -- or being
recommended for this award for this program that
we're speaking of today, the Youth Development Program, shows that the investment that the Children's Trust has put into this organization has been beneficial and has allowed us to grow our capacity and our reach in order to provide evidence-based services to the children and families of Liberty City and hopefully within Miami Gardens. Thank you for that.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Next, we have Janice Graham.

MS. GRAHAM: Can you hear me?

MR. HOFFMAN: Yes.

MS. GRAHAM: Hi. Good afternoon, everyone. It's such a pleasure to see all of you. My name is Janice Graham. I am the executive director for a nonprofit, Casa Valentina. We pride ourselves on helping youth who have aged out of foster care and have nowhere to go. We pride ourselves on the residential program that we have that exposes them to, you know, the -- the adulthood that they need -- or the adulting that they need in order to be responsible people in our community. We deliver life skills in the areas of financial literacy, in the area of education, and all that requires
or is required for youth who have reached that ripe age, I guess, of 18 and need some help.

In our storied partnership with the Children's Trust, we found ourselves fitting into a predetermined template within this nonprofit world, where the focus is typically, of course, on young children. Casa Valentina's program is a little bit different in that we work with youth who have aged out of foster care and have reached that age of 18. So, our category is typically in that 18- to 23-year-old range. Because of that target population, it's been a little difficult in the past to -- but still successful, to fit into that template.

But this particular RFP has made us feel quite seen. It expanded the parameters to better include the full range of the work that we do with our youth, to include providing mental health resources and, of course, academic support. I'm so happy to report that we now fit in a lot more comfortably, and that's thanks to all of you. As we gear up for this new cycle, we now feel that our mission and our scope is better aligned with the work that we do here at
Casa Valentina. Thank you, and I mean this, thank you for listening to our needs, and I am confident that moving forward, this change will allow us to better serve the unique needs of the system-involved youth. Thank you.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Next up is Shaniqua Edwards (phonetic).

MS. EDWARDS: Hello, board of directors and Mr. Chairperson. My name is Shaniqua Edwards, and I am an evaluation associate at Behavioral Science Research Institute, better known as BSRI in the community. I participated as a community reviewer for the youth development grant, and I just want to say thanks to you guys for taking the time out of this meeting to hear about my overall experience as a grant reviewer. I think before I provide my overall experience, I think it’s best that I provide some brief context on the process onto becoming a community reviewer.

So, upon the request to become a community volunteer reviewer, I submitted an application and after being accepted as a reviewer, there was a required training, in addition to a virtual training that was two-and-a-half hours long going over guidelines for community
reviewers, the reviewer process, as well as the
scoring guidelines. We were assigned an
internal reviewer, sort of as a group leader,
from inside the trust who answered questions
concerning the RFP.

At the end of the individual review process
for the grant reviewer meeting, we went through
a debriefing process that went through the
scoring, and we had discussions on reviewer
scores and the basis of that -- of that score
for scores that varied over 0.5 difference. I
thought the debriefing process was very
informative and detailed for applicants to hear
and understand the reasoning behind certain
scores, as well as being able to hear reviewers
coming to agreeance or non-agreeance on some of
the scoring processes.

So, overall the process prior to reviewing
the application was thorough. I felt well
equipped to review applications after reviewing
the RFP and going through the training process.
I would also add there was a level of integrity
that was expected, and it was communicated that
reviewers maintained and operated in that level
of integrity while reviewing applications.
I really did enjoy being a community reviewer. I found it to be very rewarding -- a rewarding process, and I really felt that the -- the process was very streamlined and thorough, which made it thus more rewarding for me. So, I'm just thankful for the opportunity to volunteer, and thank you again for taking the time out for me to share my experience as a community grant reviewer.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. We -- we appreciate both your service and your feedback, thanks. Finally, we have a Veronica Ward.

MS. WARD: Yes. Good afternoon. My name is Veronica Ward. I am the owner and director of Promised Land Academy. Promised Land Academy is a specialized school that serves a very specific population, children with special needs. Our main core value is to provide exceptional education, doing everything with excellence. This also means that we love, teach, guide, and educate students with various exceptionalities.

We serve students with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, seizures and anxiety disorders, varied learning disabilities, and
more. Our ratio is three to one, including therapists, teachers, and assistants. Our system, or our methodology of teaching, is one-on-one, specifically in the areas of reading, language, and math, and most importantly, life skills, living skills, and socialization.

We begin teaching the students at the level where they are, and we continue building and encouraging with an incessant goal of bringing our kids to the level they could be compared to their peers or reaching a safe level of independence. To be able to accomplish our mission and stay true to our core values, is for our students and teachers to be on campus.

Our students learn best when they have a close relationship with their teachers and therapists. We're not willing to compromise our standards in the face of adversity. This is when we press on as a school and as a ministry. We have safely navigated the seriousness of the pandemic by being safe, resourceful, and creative. We have served the Goulds, Princeton, and Homestead areas since 2007.

We began as a speech and occupational therapy center and rapidly grew into a
specialized school. The need in our community is great and continues to grow, leaving special needs students left out of specialized programs. A large number of our students are greatly affected by their diagnosis. Many wear diapers into their teen years.

They're non-verbal, with major levels of frustration and behavior challenges like biting, pulling hair, self-harm, throwing furniture, hitting their head on the wall or the floor. For this reason, we work with a very small teacher to student ratio to preserve a safe, secure environment for our students and teachers.

We have highly qualified and experienced teachers, assistants, and therapists that guide, love, train, and treat their students with dignity and respect. Promised Land Academy already offers a quality after school and summer camp program that is intentionally designed to provide engaging activities that are sequenced, aligned with program goals, and are taught by trained, dedicated program staff who work effectively with all children.

Our summer camp goal is for all kids within
the same family to attend camp together with
their special needs family member. This reduces
the stress of parents and finding transportation
to different camps. Whe -- when children attend
regularly, quality after school programs and
summer camps, it increases school attendance,
improved academic performance, decreases risky
behavior, prevents summer learning loss, and
supports working families.

However, summer programs and after school
care are not included in the scholarships the
students normally receive, and some families
already have to pay out of pocket for tuition as
the scholarships are not enough. With the
children's trust grant, it is going to
specifically sp -- help those families that,
until now, were not able to afford these
specialized programs. And we are very grateful
for this opportunity, very grateful what you
will offer in our community.

We extend an invitation to you to come and
visit our school where we can fali -- facilitate
a tour and answer all your questions. Our
community would be blessed to receive the
children's trust grant in order to serve more
families. And we thank you for this opportunity.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you for your comments. With that, we'll move to the formal part of the meeting. I'm going to turn it over to Karen Weller, our secretary for the approval of the March 13 Board of Directors minutes. Karen's not here? Okay. The minutes are in your packet. Has everybody had an opportunity to review them? Is there a motion to approve the minutes? Second?

MR. BAGNER: Dr. Bagner.

MR. HOFFMAN: Second, Dr. Bagner. All those in favor, aye. Any opposed? Motion carries. And I'll turn it over to the Chair of our Program Services and Childhood Health Committee.

MS. HOLLINGSWORTH: Thank you, Ken. Good afternoon, everyone. The Program Services and Childhood Health Committee met on Thursday, March 30, to consider the resolutions brought before you today. And for the reading of the first resolution, I'm going to pass the mic to Mary Donworth. Please.

MS. DONWORTH: Thank you. Resolution 2023-
38. Authorization to negotiate and execute contracts with 143 providers identified herein to deliver high quality after school programming for 17,413 elementary, middle, high school age children and youth, and two, summer programming for 18,597 elementary middle and high school age children and youth in a total amount not to exceed $76,662,000.

For year-round and school year programs, the contract term will be 12 months, commencing August 15th, 2023, and ending August 14th, 2024. And for summer only programs, the contract term will be a term of six months, commencing March 1st, 2024, and ending August 31st, 2024. Each with four remaining annual renewals subject to annual funding appropriations.

Is there a motion to approve? Thank you. Is there a second? Thank you. Are there any recusals?


MR. BAGNER: Recusal. Bagner, employed by FIU.

MS. DONWORTH: Any others?
MR. HARDEMON: Can we state the recusal policy so that I'm aware.

MS. GRAVES: Commissioner -- the Commission on Ethics gives the recusal policy. I would say looking at the reason that Ms. Hollingsworth recused, and it came from the Ethics Commission, that in an abundance of caution, that you should recuse from this one, and then the Ethics Commission will issue an opinion for each subsequent item.

MR. HARDEMON: Recusal. Keon Hardemon.

MS. DONWORTH: Thank you. Question? Oh, recu -- okay. All right. So, before I turn it over to Jim (phonetic), who's going to give us a brief presentation, I also want to point out that this resolution was also taken to both the finance and program committees for their approval as well. So, Jim?

MR. HODGE: Mary, thank you. A quick presentation. I know we went through this presentation at committee meetings. I kind of condensed it somewhat. But I just want to give you a brief -- a -- a brief background. So, it's been two years in the making that we've got to this point. So, this is really huge for the
trust and to this community.

So, upon -- if the board approves, this is a five-year supporting 36,000 children and -- and summer and after school programs throughout Miami-Dade. So, as you know, the last three board retreats have been talking about this initiative and -- and other initiatives as well as we reached out to all the stakeholders. We had a parent survey with over 2,000 parents involved. We had a provider input session with over 500 providers giving us input.

We had 27 focus groups with parents and youth. And we also -- this new initiative with our at-risk youth, opportunity youth, we've had a focus group with that as well. So, we plan for two years and then prior -- I know this has been a commitment to the trust the last six or seven years is, they get out to the community and let them know that the RFP is coming. So, if we can go to the next slide.

So, we had -- we had 37 different collaborator meetings with the community to let them know we're coming. Anyone who wanted to speak to us, anyone who had an audience for us, we made it a point for the last two years to get
out there and let them know that it was coming.

And we did our best bef

-- prior to the cone of silence being issued to
get out and speak to anyone who wanted to speak
to us.

We also put a media blast through eBlast,
ads -- ads in the Herald, the Global Herald,
Miami Times, Love Floridian, and our radio,
WLRN, BSS, WMBM. Next slide, please.

And this is special. They -- one -- one of
our publi -- public speakers spoke to this.

This

-- this -- we've talked about this for years,
that our program's exceptional. We meet the
kids where they're at, but there are kids that
are in and out of the juvenile justice system or
foster care, the welfare system.

And we wanted to meet tho -- those
children's needs, those youth's need and give
the providers flexibility that they don't
necessarily fit into our box, but that we can
great -- create flexibility and meet those kids
where they're at. We met with an army of
parents, teens, experts in the juvenile system,
psychologists, DCF, and experts with foster care
youth for the last year, prior to re--
releasing this RFP. The listening sessions
really informed it. Again, I think the -- the
public speaker spoke to that we are listening
and met the needs of this community. Next
slide, please.

In the solicitation process, it has been
quite a bit of lift from this board, from staff,
and from our external reviewers. We have -- so,
for every individual organization who puts in
for the RFP, there was two internal reviewers
and one external reviewers. So, we had an
enhanced training system. As we know, the last
five years, we also had a turnover of staff.

So, we had a -- the last six months,
training for our team with internal/external
reviewer training, six sessions for our internal
reviewers over three months, training videos,
in-person sessions with homework assignments,
and practice sessions, as well as evaluations.
We have more than 460 separate reviews and
conducted -- were conducted over the 154
applications that were submitted.

And we trained our entire staff. Because
youth development is one RFP that's in front of
you. But as you know, with the cone of silence being issued to you, we have ten RFPs on the street. So, there's going to be other RFPs and other reviewers. So, we are working with our internal and external reviewers to develop a pool that will serve us well for the next six months.

So, here are some of the highlights. Agencies with a successful history of delivering trust programming continue to have a strong success rate. Many years ago when we -- when we started this to look at the success of getting a children's trust application, it wasn't a -- yet a grant writer, it wasn't small or large. What it was is, the barrier to entry was being new to the initiative. So, we pushed to -- to develop our CBO capacity building and to let -- to help others become subcontractors and to become contractors with our initiative.

So, our success rate. This cycle, we had a 78 percent success rate, 24 new programs into our ecosystem. That is up from 59 percent the last cycle and 8 percent prior to that. In addition, we -- we increase success by new agencies as lead applicants. We know that 88
percent of applicants that were previously funded through subcontractors as a subcontractor are now successful applicants to the trust system. And finally note, it was mentioned about our small CBO by Jonathan Spikes, those who -- from the CBO who applied, had 100 percent success rate getting into this youth development cycle.

And then the geographic expansion. Part of our YD planning included geographic analysis of where kids live, where they are experiencing poverty, and where our current program slots are distributed. As a result, the RFP called out several census designated places for expansion.

Our goal through the -- station to ensure services are being available throughout Miami-Dade -- Dade County. And if you can see -- I know we just lost a slide, but there is a map of where we are and the huge footprint we have from Florida City to the county line, and from the -- from the Everglades to -- to the ocean.

The recommendation before you represents an overall increase of total programming for after school and summer sites from 484 programs last cycle to 682. That's including a 41 percent
expansion to the identified priority areas. And the maps -- and you see the dots, this -- this -- the dots are correlated to the number of slots being recommended at those sites.

And just a thank you to all those involved. Again, it's been two years in the making. Upon this approval -- if the Board approves these recommendations, we have a provider meeting on May 3rd, to start going over contracting supports and process to get new contracts in place. And giving the high number of new agencies being recommended, we're also going to be providing additional support for the new agencies.

And a couple of quick facts. This is the largest investment in youth development in the Children's Trust history. We have over 36,000 slots that will be for after school and summer programs for the next five years. And I want to thank the board, staff, and external reviewers. The reason why we've had such great success and great public support for this youth development is transparency, honesty, and openness of the staff.
We have met for the last three or four months with all organizations. Not have been -- we're releasing -- we're asking for 76 million approval; we had close to 150 million in ask. So, not everybody received what they wanted. Not everybody was happy. But we did meet with everybody to explain our process, to explain where we're at. And I think that is what has brought -- brought us to this point where we hope that we can execute contracts and support this community for the next five years. Thank you, Mr. Chair -- or thank you, Mary.

MS. DONWORTH: Thank you, Jim. Before we move to a vote, is there any discussion? Thank you. Any other comments? Okay. We have a motion to approve and a second. All those in favor say aye. Aye. All those opposed. So, the ayes have it. The motion carries. Thank you.

MS. FERRADAZ: Thank you, Mary. Resolution 2023-39. Authorization to negotiate and execute a final contract renewal with Florida International University Board of Trustees, FIU, for reading enhancement services, in a total amount not to exceed $945,752 for a term of 12
months, commencing October 1, 2023, and ending September 30, 2024. May I have a motion, please. Thank you. And a second. Are there any recusals?

MR. BAGNER: Recusal, Bagner, employed by FIU.

MS. FERRADAZ: Further recusals? Hearing none. Moving to discussion. Reading Explorers serves existing Trust-funded after-school and summer programs along with Trust-affiliated early education programs, delivering literacy interventions directly to young children during the summer and on -- during the summer, and on-site coaching and support during the school year, with summer services being the most intensive. This contract renewal considers the additional funding added in the 2022-2023 contract by way of an amendment to support increased staffing costs and teacher quality. Discussion, comments from directors, please? Hearing none. All those in favor? Are there any opposed? The resolution carries.

And our final resolution for today, Resolution 2023-40. Authorization to negotiate and execute a contract with Florida Introduces
Physical Activity and Nutrition to Youth,

FLIPANY, for after-school snacks and meals in a total amount not to exceed $600,000 for a term of 12 months, commencing October 1, 2023, and ending September 30, 2024, with two remaining contract renewals.

May I have a motion, please? Thank you. And a second? Thank you. Are there any recusals? Hearing none, let's move into discussion.

You will note that the Trust requires all after school and summer programs to provide participating children with food that meets USDA nutritional program requirements. FLIPANY is the after school snack and meal provider for programs not located in a Miami-Dade County public school or a licensed childcare center since those locations are already served through separate programs.

FLIPANY does provide nutritious lunches, snacks, and suppers to 91 Trust-funded after school sites for children and youth in grades K-12 and also offers administrative services to these agencies to help them meet the requirements of the after school meals program.
funded by the Florida Department of Agriculture
and administered by the Florida Department --
oh.

Comments, feedback from the Board? Hearing
none. All those in favor? Are there any
opposed? This resolution also carries. Back to
you.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. The committee met
and reviewed the -- we -- we're handing it out
now to the folks at Marcum, Brandon Lopez, and
will -- to go over the comprehensive annual
financial report.

MR. BILL: I guess I'll just jump in and
add some context before kicking it over to
Brandon Lopez, who is the assigned managing
accountant, I should say our auditor on our job
with associated through Marcum this year. I
just wanted to add some context to the entire
report that Brandon's going to provide more of a
summary overview of, because I'm sure everybody
reviewed all 139 pages of this report when we
sent it out last week, right?

So I just wanted to say that we have -- in
our previous board meeting, we mentioned that we
submitted this -- the annual comprehensive
financial report last year and received notification that it was an awarded report for 10 years consecutive. And now that this report's been issued, it meets similar standards to reports that we've issued in the previous 10 years where there's been no material findings or concerns or management letter comments.

And we've submitted the financials as of September 30th, 2022, for the same consideration for the Certificate of Achievement, which is issued by the Government Finance Officers Association. So, I was just going to mention that about this report before -- now, Brandon, you can add some of the details. And I might circle around for a couple more comments when you're done.

MR. LOPEZ: -- So, I'm going to stick to some of the highlights. -- We're going to start off with independent audit, which is link Page 1, and on PDF Page 123. The independent audit, it looks a little bit different this year, when you compare that to the previous, that was really the change in the accounting and auditing standards. The extension the most important part of this report is that maybe in the past --
unmodified. There you go. Unmodified, clean opinion. Like Bill mentioned, there were no significant deficiencies, no material weaknesses identified based on the procedures performed.

The next section I just want to touch on is what's called management's discussion and analysis. That's on PDF Page 27, printed Page 4. So, if there's one section you're going to read of this entire document, I always mention this part of it management's discussion analysis is a great overview. Because what it does is it gives the reader information of the current year compared to the prior year. And it lets them know what some of those changes, what some of those variances were, what caused them. It gives you a really good overview of the entire year in general. So, it's about 15 to 20 pages of this entire document, which is about 130. That gives you a really good overview of the year. So, if there's one section you read, I always mention this is a good one to start with.

We're going to continue along and go to printed Page 22, which is PDF Page 46. And here we get into the statement of net position. So, this is where the actual financial statements
start. Right? The numbers. And one thing I just want to mention and highlight is there are no significant auditor adjustments during the audit. So, the numbers that you see here are consistent with those that are being presented in the monthly meeting. So, no auditor adjustments were presented and identified. There was one accounting standard that was implemented during the year that changed a little bit in regards to how to record and present leases but no true significant impact on the Trust. Nothing that would alter the opinion or the reading of these financial statements.

So, we continue along, and we're going to go to the compliance section, which is PDF Page 125, printed Page 98. So, one thing I always like to mention as part of the audit, it's kind of a two-fold audit. We're doing a financial statement audit, we're looking at the numbers, but because the entity is a governmental entity, it's required to be audited under what's called Government Auditing Standards, Yellow Book. And that brings in another component of it, which is the compliance part of this audit.

So, this report here is the independent
The next compliance report, which is on PDF Page 127, is the management letter in accordance with the rules of the Auditor General of the State of Florida. Not only do we have to follow Yellow Book, but we also have to follow Florida Statutes. And in this letter, there's certain things that the audit general requires us to disclose. If there was any prior year audit findings.

What's the follow up? There were no such findings, so there is no follow up there. Were there any issues with the financial condition
and management, right? During this process, we have to take a look at the entity, the health of that entity, and we not only compare it on a five-year trend, but historically, but we also compare it to your peers, right? The other CSCs. And based on the procedures we performed, there were no such issues that we would have to disclose in this letter. Any going concerns, nothing like that.

The last part of that report is on Page -- printed Page 102 which is exactly followed down. And it's just some information that needs to be disclosed in that letter that talks about the millage rate, talks about the ad valorem taxes collected, things of that nature which are consistent with the financial statements. And then the last compliance report is on PDF Page 130, printed Page 103. And this one is a compliance report in accordance with Section 218415 of the Florida Statute, which essentially is in regards to the investments. As we're well aware, the money of the organization isn't money that can be invested in any types of investments.

At the end of the day, these are the money
from, right, the constituents, the people that
live in the city, in the county, to be spent for
programs and things of that nature. So, there's
very strict guidelines on what types of
investments governmental entities can invest in.
So, as part of our testing, we take a look at
the investment policy to ensure that the
organization is following those procedures. And
we were required to report any issues if they
were identified. But this letter states no such
issues were identified when taking a look at the
investment and the investment policies.

One thing I want to mention, it's -- this
is our fifth year auditing on the entity, it's
our last year of the contract, and it's just
been a pleasure being a service to the trust.
We're here today because of the hard work that
Bill, Wendy, and their team put into this. It's
-- this relationship that we have isn't just you
know, a couple of months during the audit and I
see you next year. It's really an ongoing
relationship.

Whenever there's a new standard that's
going in to be implemented, there's a new
transaction that just looks a little bit
different. They do a great job of reaching out to us, just getting our opinion, because at the end of the day, we want to be on the same page. The more information we have ahead of time, when it comes time for your audit, it's a lot smoother process. So, the hard work that they put in deserves credit, so I want to make sure I mentioned that.

So, that covers the highlights of the report. I don't know if there are any specific questions that the board had for myself. All right. Thank you very much.

MR. BILL: Thank you, Brandon. I was just going to --

MR. LOPEZ: Go ahead, Bill.

MR. BILL: All right. I just wanted to piggy back up what Brandon was saying because of, as he mentioned, per our bylaws, we are required to consider auditor rotation every five years. So, alongside the programs that we're considering for that have been released through solicitation, and we're going into a new five-year cycle considering all of our Program Ag services, we're also having to engage in the same type of RFP process for a new audit firm.
So, we are sadly saying goodbye to Marcum. It has been a, honestly, a very quick five years. It felt like we were just doing this recently. So, we've had a very beneficial relationship working with Marcum and their team. Brandon has been assigned to this audit all five years. And like he mentioned, we have ongoing calls throughout the year how to better our process and how to consider better accounting practices and operational practices so that we can have this kind of result every year with the audit report.

So, I just wanted to thank Marcum, Brandon, and the team. I know we've seen many faces throughout the years, but we've always seen Brandon. I wanted to thank the board and the committees that support the culture that help us do our job and ensuring compliance and accurate financial reporting. And the staff as well. Everybody's bought in to supporting this report through all of the operations that we engage in throughout the year. So, I just wanted to thank everybody really in the room, I suppose. Thank you.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you, Brandon.
MR. LOPEZ: Thank you very much.

MR. HOFFMAN: And we do appreciate the collaborative effort you've had with the Trust staff to give us this excellent report and -- turn it back to you.

MR. HODGE: Brandon, I just want to thank you and Marcum. It has been a great five years, great partnership. I also want to thank Bill and the team. Ten years, we've had the GFOA Certificate of Achievement. It's hard one year, 10 years reoccurring and, Bill, just that we're submitting, part of your performance plan is getting it for the 11th straight year. But it is -- and also with just the finance committee and their leadership of the finance committee and this board, we are stewards of taxpayer money. We take it very seriously and the work that we have done and will continue to do. It really is impressive, the work at the finance and that I mentioned Bill, but it really is all the execs and all the individuals at the Trust who make this happen day in and day out. Thank you.

MR. KIRTLAND: Echoing that. Well, Wendy, control, I don't know if Wendy's here but
congratulations and, Brandon, thank you for the
service of Marcum. With that, I'm going to
terent us for a motion of acceptance of the
annual comprehensive financial report for the
fiscal year ended September 30th, 2022, and the
unmodified opinion of the external auditors
that's contained therein.

Any discussion? Okay. All in favor say
aye. -- Aye -- Opposed? Okay, the aye's have
it. Thank you.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Thanks. I'll
turn it over now to Gilder Ferradaz to give us a
Human Resources Committee report.

MS. FERRADAZ: Good afternoon, everyone.
The Human Resources Committee met on April 5th
to discuss revisions to the employee handbook.
There's a number of revisions with -- I think
you received. The committee discussed at length
the revisions and also made a couple of minor
recommendations to add to the revisions that
were there. And the committee passed the
revisions that were recommended and amended.

And so I will ask for a motion to accept
the revisions to the employee handbook. Thank
you. Any discussion or questions? Hearing
none. All those in favor, aye. -- Aye -- Any opposed? The motion carries. Thank you.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. And over to Jim, the CEO, for your report.

MR. HODGE: Mr. Chair, thank you.

Quarterly CEO reports on Page 27, 28. You have immediate highlights which Ken mentioned we have three out beds that are in front of you, but we send you the electronic version because it has the links of all the stuff that's happening in the community each month. So, please, when we send you immediate highlight, there's a lot of great work going on in the community. Lot of great things that we do that we're -- we are a part of in the community. So, we attach the live links when we do e-mail it to you.

Financial disclosure forms are due by July 1st. Champions for Children, April 27. I'm proud to say we are sold out. We are at 1,200 and we have to stop sales, so we shut it down except to the board. I think we still have a couple of board members who are not RSVPed, please do so because it is that time of the -- as we lead up to the next two weeks, everybody's calling for a seat and so we want to know how
many seats we have available. And then Young Talent, Big Dreams, where we showcase the talent of students throughout Miami-Dade County. The finals are on Saturday, May 13th, at 7:00 at the Miracle Theater. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you, everybody here, for helping approve the youth development resolutions. I think the community has been waiting for this anxiously and look forward to seeing those of you who can attend the press conference tomorrow. With that, we're adjourned. Thank you.

(Thereupon, the meeting was concluded at 5:04 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTION

The above and foregoing transcript is a true and correct typed copy of the contents of the file, which was digitally recorded in the proceeding identified at the beginning of the transcript, to the best of my ability, knowledge and belief.

Cecil Clark

Cecil Clark, Transcriber

April 18, 2023