



Finance & Operations Committee Meeting Transcript

March 30, 2023

THE CHILDREN'S TRUST
FINANCE AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
(IN PERSON QUORUM WITH SOME VIRTUAL ATTENDANTS)

MEETING MINUTES

**CERTIFIED
ORIGINAL**

The MDC Children's Trust Meeting, Finance and Operations Committee Meeting was held on March 30, 2023, commencing at 9:30 a.m., at 3150 Southwest 3rd Avenue, 8th Floor Training Room, Miami, Florida 33129. The meeting was called to order by Matthew Arsenault, Vice Chair.

AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION

BOARD MEMBER APPEARANCES:

MATTHEW ARSENAULT, Vice Chair

MORRIS COPELAND

JAVIER REYES

KENNETH HOFFMAN, ex-officio

LEIGH KOBRINSKI

1 STAFF MEMBER APPEARANCES:

2 AMANDA GORSKI

3 CAROL BROGAN

4 DANIELLE BARRERAS

5 IMRAN ALI

6 JACQUES BENTOLILA

7 JAMES R. HAJ

8 JUANA LEON

9 LISANNE GAGE

10 LORI HANSON

11 NATALIA ZEA

12 RACHEL SPECTOR

13 TATIANA CANELAS

14 WENDY DUNCOMBE

15 WILLIAM KIRTLAN

16

17 GUEST APPEARANCES

18 FIRST STEP CHAMPIONS, First Step Champions, Inc.

19 IRE DIAZ, Advocacy Network on Disabilities

20 MICHAEL NOZILE, Gang Alternative, Inc.

21 KYESHIA CURTIS, MCM Smart Program

22

23

24

25

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (Thereupon, the following proceedings commenced
3 at 9:31 a.m.)

4 MR. ARSENAULT: Okay, everyone. We're
5 going to go ahead and get started. I guess --
6 apparently we don't have quorum today, so we
7 won't be voting on any items, if I understand
8 that correctly, but we are still -- a lot -- a
9 lot of people are up in Tallahassee in session,
10 and things like that. So, we're going to go
11 through it, I guess, some items will be voted on
12 in the next meeting and others will be taken
13 directly to the board for approval. I guess
14 with that, there's still an opportunity for
15 public comment. Is there any public comment?

16 MRS. LEON: There's no public comment.

17 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you. So, we're --
18 I'm assuming we're going to move -- pass over
19 the approval of the minutes, and that'll be at
20 the next meeting, and we will hand it over to
21 the presentation of our annual conference
22 financial report. Bill (phonetic), do you want
23 to tee it up?

24 MR. KIRTLAND: My pleasure. It's -- it is
25 my pleasure today to have our auditing firm,

1 Marcum and Brandon Lopez, who is our, like,
2 managing member of the entire audit and oversees
3 the staff that has worked so diligently for the
4 fifth and final year of our audit. So, we --
5 with a sad heart have to go out for -- bid for --
6 - to look for potential other audit firms in the
7 coming years, but we have the fortune to have
8 one more presentation of our September 30, 2022,
9 drafted annual comprehensive financial report
10 today.

11 And I'll have a few more comments just to
12 conclude the presentation, but Brandon is going
13 to give us a little walk through of the entirety
14 of this report. With the numerous length and
15 bulk to the report, he's going to try to direct
16 you to maybe what is the substance of the report
17 that you might want to take a look -- take a
18 closer look at. And I'll hand it over to
19 Brandon.

20 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, Bill. Good morning
21 everyone. My name is Brandon Lopez. I'm a
22 director with Marcum and, like Bill mentioned, I
23 serve as a manager on the engagement overseeing
24 team. And we're here today to present the draft
25 of financial statements for September 30, 2022.

1 And like Bill said, it's a very lengthy
2 document, so I'm just going to focus on some key
3 items, highlight them, and if there's any
4 specific questions, we can tackle them together.
5 So, we're going to start off with the most
6 important page, which is Page -- printed Page 1,
7 which is PDF Page 22. Right there; that's the
8 independent auditor's report.

9 One thing I want to mention, it's a little
10 different than past years, if you might remember
11 what last year looked like. And that's because
12 of auditing standards -- they changed the format
13 of the auditor's report. They -- in the past,
14 the opinion that you see was at the end of the
15 report.

16 At the end of the day, the most important
17 section of this entire report, is the opinion,
18 so auditing standards changed it to move it up
19 to the front. The first thing that you see
20 there, and this opinion is called an unmodified
21 opinion. It's a clean -- it's really the only
22 opinion you, as a finance committee and as an
23 organization, want to be associated with, so
24 we're very happy to let the committee know that
25 they did receive an unmodified, clean opinion

1 that -- September 30, 2022.

2 Continuing along, we're going to get into -
3 - just one thing I want to mention briefly on --
4 on Page 25, management's discussion and acts.
5 Like I mentioned, it's a very lengthy document,
6 but there's always one section that if you want
7 to read in detail, I always mention this
8 section. It's about ten or so pages, and what
9 it does is, it gives the reader essentially an
10 overview of the financial statements current
11 year as compared to prior. And it gives some
12 explanations of what caused some of the changes,
13 kind of what was the activity during the year,
14 and that's put together by management. So, I
15 always mention, if you're going to read anything
16 in detail, this is a good synopsis of the entire
17 report and basically the organization at the
18 year. So, we're going to continue along and
19 we're going to go to printed -- printed Page 22,
20 which is PDF Page 42, and -- scroll down a
21 little bit more -- sorry, keep going down, right
22 here, yeah, Page 46.

23 MRS. LEON: 47.

24 MR. LOPEZ: Go down a little bit more.

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You want the schedule?

1 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah.

2 MR. KIRTLAND: Okay.

3 MR. LOPEZ: Exactly. One more down. Okay.
4 Thank you. So, this is the statement of net
5 pension. One thing I want to mention, the
6 numbers that you see here are the same numbers
7 that were presented to you back in the September
8 meeting. There were no auditor adjustments and
9 -- sorry Bill and Wendy (phonetic) do a great
10 job. One thing I'll mention a little bit later
11 is the relationship we have with the -- the
12 finance team, it's not just a couple of months,
13 it's really throughout the year. Whenever
14 there's questions, whenever there's something a
15 little bit different that might be occurring,
16 they always give us a call. They want to make
17 sure we're doing things the right way.

18 So, that's why when it comes time for the
19 audit, there's no significant auditor
20 adjustments because they've already done the
21 work ahead of time. We're all on the same page.
22 So, the numbers you see here, are the ones that
23 have been presented. The one thing I want to
24 mention and highlight is, you might remember
25 last year when it comes to FRS and the net

1 pension liability, there is a significant
2 decrease last year compared to other years. And
3 that was due to the overall market performance
4 as of September 30, 2021. And we had a great
5 year in the market, great returns, so that
6 decreased that overall liability.

7 This year, a year later, we know how the
8 market performed, so we kind of went back to a -
9 - a balance in that net pension liability, which
10 is more consistent with the prior years. It's
11 still an improvement from where we were in the
12 past, obviously a way higher number than what --
13 what we saw last year. And that's not a concern
14 or an issue because we're seeing that across the
15 board in all pension plans and all -- so it's
16 just something to highlight there.

17 The following page, printed Page 23, is the
18 statement of activities, essentially it's your
19 P&L. It shows you what -- the inflows, your
20 revenues, your outflows, your expenses during
21 the year, and the overall change in that
22 position. The last few years, we've seen an
23 overall increase in that position, which was in
24 accordance with the -- the organization's plan,
25 right, to use up that fund balance for the

1 programs also, and so we've seen that progress
2 and that -- that plan being implemented. So,
3 this year we did see that -- a positive change
4 in that position.

5 The next section I want to go to is printed
6 Page 69, which is in PDF Page 96 in your file.
7 This is -- sorry go up one page, and what --
8 sorry, to -- and one more. Okay. So, this page
9 this shows you, and this is why I wanted to
10 mention this -- this isn't -- when it comes to
11 the FRS pension, there's a -- a requirement that
12 the organization must, you know, contribute to
13 the -- of percentage of what's determined by the
14 actuary.

15 And this schedule, it lets the reader know
16 what is the contractually required contribution,
17 and then what did the organization contribute to
18 the finances. As you can see, every year
19 they're meeting that contribution requirement,
20 which is a great thing because if there was an
21 issue, we would have to report that in our --
22 report, which we'll get into a little bit later,
23 but no issues in that aspect of that. We're
24 going to go up one more page, and here is where
25 you see that -- that change in that overall

1 liability.

2 That second line item, as you can see in
3 2020, there's about \$6.2 million liability. We
4 went all the way down to \$1.1 in 2021 due to the
5 overall market performance, and then we went
6 back up to about \$5.8 in 2022. So, we're
7 actually consistent with how the market is
8 performing and what the liability should be.
9 That last year was such -- such a decrease.
10 That's very unusual, it's just how the market
11 was performing as of that point in time.

12 Okay. So, we're going to move along to the
13 compliance, which is printed Page 98, PDF Page
14 125, maybe. Okay. Yeah, right there, 120.
15 That one, right there. Okay.

16 So, one thing I always like to mention,
17 when we do this audit, there's two aspects that
18 we're looking at. We're looking at the
19 financial statements, we're doing a financial
20 statement audit, where we're looking at the
21 numbers to make sure they're materially correct,
22 but then we're also doing a compliance audit.
23 Given that the entity is a governmental amenity,
24 we're required to follow what's called
25 government auditing standards, and that's what

1 triggers that compliance audit. And this letter
2 goes over the internal control over financial
3 reporting and compliance with those matters.
4 And in this letter, it -- it explains, you know
5 what is considered a deficiency in internal
6 control and the different levels of those
7 deficiencies.

8 On the following page, it lets the reader
9 know that based on the procedures we performed,
10 there were no issues in internal control over
11 financial reporting. So, again, that's a very
12 good thing to see, and it's consistent with the
13 operation that we see in the past. No issues
14 this year were -- were determined. The
15 following page is the management letter in
16 accordance with the rules of the Auditor
17 General.

18 So, this is a -- a report that goes into
19 the different sort of statutes that the
20 organization is required to follow, and it talks
21 about if there were any prior audit findings you
22 have to follow, and then there were no such
23 issues in the financial condition assessment.
24 Okay, the next page.

25 We're required to also take a look at the

1 organization and compare it to the previous
2 years, and also compare it to its peers, to see
3 if there's anything that would come up that
4 would determine where the entity has an issue, a
5 going concern, or they're -- they're not able to
6 fund their -- their liabilities and operations.
7 But based on this here, no such issues were
8 identified.

9 And then the last part of the letter just
10 goes into some specific information about the
11 special districts and the mileage rate that just
12 needs to be reported to the Auditor General.
13 But again, no issues were identified in this --
14 this report. And then the last compliance
15 report we have is specifically with Section
16 218415 of first statute, which is in relation to
17 the investment policy. And we have to perform
18 specific procedures to ensure that the
19 organization is in compliance with those
20 -- those policies. And if there are any issues,
21 we would have to describe it in this report, but
22 no such issues were identified. The
23 organization is in compliance with their --
24 their investment policy.

25 So, that covers kind of the highlights that

1 I wanted to mention. I don't know if there was
2 any specific questions that you have for myself
3 or the report.

4 MR. KIRTLAND: Maybe I should specify a
5 couple of the technicalities, I guess, of our
6 review of the report today, as well, in case it
7 generates any additional questions. We are
8 reviewing a draft of the financials. We would
9 not issue these reports until following this
10 committee meeting, the approval or the
11 acceptance of this report, and after it
12 completely vets at -- at -- at the Marcum
13 management stage. So, we've had -- we've had
14 obviously management review this document.
15 We've had --

16 MR. LOPEZ: So --

17 MR. KIRTLAND: Yeah. Go ahead.

18 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah, to -- to Bill's point.
19 So, the document, it has gone through the
20 preliminary management part of review, so now
21 we're waiting for the final QC review.

22 However, we -- because it's gone through
23 this part at this point, we don't expect any
24 significant changes or any changes to the
25 numbers, any changes to the for -- anything that

1 might happen, might be some minor formatting
2 changes, which will obviously go through
3 management before any changes made. But again,
4 this document you see here, we're comfortable
5 with the numbers that are there and the -- the
6 financial statement disclosures that are there.

7 MR. LOPEZ: I don't expect any significant
8 changes. If we have any substantive changes,
9 then we would bring back the report with the
10 disclosures or explaining what any of the
11 substantive changes would be at the time of the
12 board meeting, and we would not issue this
13 report in between the committee meeting today
14 and the board meeting later this month. But if
15 there's -- if it's determined that there's no
16 substantive changes and is to be just quality
17 control formatting adjustments, I think that the
18 determination would be made that it is okay to
19 go ahead and issue an additional communication
20 would be made with the current members in that
21 event.

22 MR. ARSENAULT: You know, I -- one of the
23 things -- first of all, great job, you know, all
24 -- all -- all of the work for this report, and
25 one of the things that I -- I ask people about

1 in that just understanding, maybe speak to the
2 idea of our deposits, the trust deposits in
3 banking institutions. I know that's a big
4 concern --

5 MR. LOPEZ: Absolutely. So --

6 MR. ARSENAULT: -- these days, so I -- I
7 was wondering if you -- if you could just, I
8 guess, speak to maybe the audit procedures
9 around that --

10 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

11 MR. ARSENAULT: -- this and the notes and -
12 - and the how.

13 MR. LOPEZ: That's a -- that's a great
14 point, especially with, you know, the current
15 environment that we're in. And specific to
16 Florida and Florida statute requirements, all
17 governmental entities are required to bank with
18 specific organizations that are following the
19 QPD program and that are certified in this
20 forum, which essentially covers all of your --
21 your assets and cash that are sitting with that
22 bank.

23 Every year, the entity is required to
24 submit a report to the Auditor General, which
25 certifies that our banking institutions, and you

1 list them, are part of this program, and it gets
2 submitted to the Florida General. So, every
3 year, we take a look at number one, did you
4 submit that report, and make sure that we're in
5 compliance with that. And number two, we also
6 get a report from the Auditor General. As of
7 September of 2022, as of the date of the audit
8 report -- of the financial statements, is that
9 bank still part of that program?

10 Because some years they might be, some
11 years they might not. So, every year we re --
12 re-examine it and take a look at that. So, as
13 of 9/30/2022, the organization is banking with
14 organizations that are certified as the QPD
15 program.

16 MS. KOBRINSKI: As you're probably already
17 familiar in previous discussions, we primarily
18 bank with TD Bank and City National Bank, but we
19 do hold some long-term notes, whether it's 30,
20 60, 90 days, potentially six months in a year.
21 Both of these banks are part of the QPD program.
22 There's a little bit more information on PDF
23 Page 56, it would be Page 33. If you want to
24 read the cash investments footnote. It explains
25 a lot of the same information Brandon just

1 mentioned.

2 MR. ARSENAULT: Okay.

3 MS. KOBRINSKI: Because it said sunshine
4 meeting -- right. So, this is just a sunshine
5 meeting because we don't have a forum so this is
6 just a discussion. There won't be any vote.

7 MR. LOPEZ: And just one last thing I want
8 to mention, like -- mention, this is our, you
9 know, fifth and final year, but it's -- it's
10 been a pleasure working with the trust and the
11 organization, with Bill and Wendy (phonetic) and
12 their team. It's -- it's been a pleasure.

13 We're

14 -- we're here today to discuss this report is
15 because of the hard work that they put in
16 throughout the audit.

17 Whenever there's a -- especially in the
18 last couple years when things have changed in
19 kind of how we do these audits and things are
20 more virtual, whenever there's a request,
21 whenever there's support that's needed, you
22 know, it's always provided on a timely basis and
23 the information is there. So, it's -- we're
24 here because of the work that they do. So, I
25 want to make sure I give credit where credit is

1 due.

2 MR. KIRTLAND: Thank you, Brandon. I'll
3 just piggyback off of that. As you know, the
4 audit staffing can be fluid every year as you
5 have, like, your support and maybe even your
6 engagement partners, or who you work with. But
7 Brandon's been with us for all five years of
8 this audit, so it's made the year to year
9 transitions smooth, no headaches in just
10 explaining our operational changes from year to
11 year, our strategic plan.

12 He's always -- always understood what we're
13 doing and where we're going. It's really
14 helpful to assist them, I think, and -- and us
15 in preparing for each audit. So, it's almost as
16 if we're not being audited when we're being
17 audited. And so it's been -- but just because
18 of how seamless the process has been and their
19 ability to work with our systems and records,
20 and which is -- which is a testament to also our
21 staff and Wendy Ducone, our controller, sitting
22 very -- in the corner over here, very quietly.

23 Everything has always been tediously, very
24 carefully prepared, and I think gift-wrapped it
25 for our auditors over here, so I wanted to

1 commend her and the staff that support her and
2 all the finance staff that support the audit
3 processes. The entire staff, as I mentioned,
4 that we have total buy-in from all staff members
5 who abide by operational financial and
6 procedures. Operational procedures all
7 supporting our financial procedures as well, and
8 the court members as well just providing, like
9 I've mentioned before, the cultural environment
10 to support adherence to these practices and
11 principles.

12 So, thank you for everybody that's been
13 involved for the past five years. We will miss
14 Marcum greatly.

15 MR. LOPEZ: Hopefully, we'll be back one
16 day.

17 MR. KIRTLAND: Any other questions on the
18 report? There will be an opportunity in case
19 you want to continue to review this report and
20 look at it at home. We will be presenting one
21 more time for the board meeting late this month.

22 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, Brandon.

23 MR. KIRTLAND: Thank you.

24 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you so much, Brandon.

25 MR. HAJ: Ready for the --

1 MR. TROWBRIDGE: Next, we'll move on to the
2 -- thank you all, everybody, it's -- it's a big
3 -- people can underestimate. As a former
4 controller, right, this is a lot of work that
5 goes into this every year. So, I appreciate it.
6 Thank you for all your work for --

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 1: My pleasure.

8 MR. TROWBRIDGE: You're the man, so thank
9 you. Moving on to the fund balance forecast.

10 MR. HAJ: So, Chair, thank you. We just
11 wanted to -- as we're wrapping up the next re --
12 the next res that you will -- the res you'll be
13 seeing after this is the release or the approval
14 for the next five-year cycle. But we want to
15 take a moment to show you the past five-year
16 cycle as we're coming to an end, where the fund
17 balance landed. We've talked about this
18 repeatedly. That what the finance committee
19 came up with the plans five, six years ago.

20 We've been monitoring a plan and what the
21 results are in front of you is just all the work
22 that we've done over the years and where we
23 landed and -- and it was, it works. I mean, the
24 plan that -- the plan that that was developed
25 five years, tweaked slightly throughout the

1 years, got us to where we needed to be now. So,
2 kick it over to Bill kind of to explain the
3 chart, and I know many of you've seen this over
4 and over for the last three years, but this is
5 now the final year. I think Bill --

6 MR. KIRTLAND: Sure. It's a dangerous
7 thing, handing the microphone back over to me
8 again, Jim. Like, I can start rambling on
9 because I love this stuff. This forecast, as
10 Jim mentioned, is something we've looked at in
11 persistence, and I've seen many, many times over
12 the past five years. And I'm looking forward to
13 looking at a brand new projection in the next
14 five years as we go into a new cycle of new
15 awards.

16 Piggybacking a little bit off of the ACFR
17 report, Brandon mentioned a bit about our net
18 position and how we actually increased our net
19 position by approximately \$2 million just to put
20 a slight bit more in our reserve. But as you
21 see, that kind of correlated with what our floor
22 we wanted to match was and what is a recommended
23 floor for our -- for our reserves. And it's --
24 and it's based upon a practice that the GFOA
25 recommends, which is 15 percent of your

1 operating budget.

2 We're just -- we're just a bit above what
3 that balance it is compared to our budget, but
4 we still feel like it was a -- it was a safe
5 practice and maybe a prudent practice as we
6 prepared to enter into our new funding cycle of
7 what our discussions have been with the board
8 and their priorities and what we want to be
9 prepared to support the next funding cycle.

10 So, when the ACFR report is presented, we
11 look at the government wide financials versus
12 our general government fund. We primarily plan
13 as a committee and as a board discussing the
14 governmental fund. As Brandon also mentioned,
15 our -- our government wide financials can
16 include fluctuating long-term liabilities and
17 capitalization issues that we don't necessarily
18 look at in the short-term, like -- and then
19 within our budgeting practices, like the
20 government fund, generally allows us to plan on
21 a year-to-year basis.

22 So, you might not always see that these
23 numbers reconcile on this chart to our
24 government wide financial statements as much as
25 they do to the government fund financial

1 statements in the ACFR report. So, what you're
2 looking at here is the completion from the
3 fiscal year 2021, so the '21/'22.

4 That is an audited number that our
5 government fund is completed in that -- in -- as
6 of 9/30/2022 at an amount of 37,791,567. Now,
7 our green line is our forecast to complete our
8 current fiscal year that we're in, which we're
9 now about halfway through the year. Let's today
10 -- is tomorrow the exact halfway through the
11 year? So, we are estimating that we finish the
12 year at 47,423,738.

13 This has been planned. We knew that the
14 fund balance would grow in our final year of the
15 funding cycle, as when we adopted the half
16 millage rate to complete the cycle year. As we
17 anticipated, there would be an influx of
18 requests. We've had previous discussions about
19 programs and their high needs, even to finish
20 our current cycle and additional costs so we
21 knew that this application window would include
22 programs with higher costs than five years ago
23 and new programs that we had the opportunity to
24 fund.

25 So, we started to build back up the fund

1 balance, knowing that these additional requests
2 may come in. And we feel confident that we'll
3 hit on this forecast within the tolerable and
4 reasonable range because we're very proud of our
5 forecasting of this prior year because we
6 adopted a budget of expenditures for the fiscal
7 year '22 that was -- or we forecasted a budget
8 year of expenditures of \$162.3 million.

9 We spent \$163.3 million, so we slightly
10 spent more than our projection, so that variance
11 is just over a million dollars of what we
12 expected. So, that is just -- that was
13 essentially that \$37.7 million of fund balance
14 was where we thought we would end when we did
15 this projection last year. We do expect
16 improvement in spending this last year. So,
17 that forecast takes that into account because
18 there's some more expenditures put into our
19 budget this year.

20 And as we expect program performance to
21 improve each year, as it has, we think more of
22 our contracts -- contracts will utilize their
23 existing budgets, and our utilization last year
24 was one of our best. It was underspent by 8.6
25 percent and this was a trend that we saw

1 approving each year from the beginning of the
2 funding cycle. So, we're going to build these
3 principles into this plan that we develop next
4 cycle, knowing that there might be some contract
5 utilization issued early and it'll improve each
6 year.

7 It'll make our forecast better each year.
8 And I know that the plan that we've at least
9 begun to discuss for the next cycle, is very
10 much similar to the one that we've implemented
11 for this cycle. So, we're taking all of our
12 lessons learned essentially into next cycle.
13 And with that, I'll kick it back over to you.

14 MR. HAJ: Bill, thank you. And so next
15 month when we start -- start getting to the next
16 year's trend discussion, this similar graph will
17 come in front of you for the next five-year
18 cycle. We'll start talking about how -- how we
19 are we going to manage the next five-year cycle
20 as well as we did the last five-year cycle.
21 Thank you.

22 Mr. Chair?

23 MR. ARSENAULT: And that -- so which
24 meeting are we going to see the revision, that's
25 the next meeting?

1 MR. HAJ: Next meeting.

2 MR. ARSENALT: Next meeting, okay. Thank
3 you. So, the -- the next agenda item is the
4 resolution, which is that even up for discussion
5 at this point, or is there a presentation on it
6 just for discussion, or is that waiting,
7 pending?

8 MR. HAJ: We'd like to present and no vote
9 on this, but be able to discuss this. This is -
10 - this is it. We've spent the last few years
11 coming to this point. A lot of work, three
12 board retreats, a lot of staff time to release
13 and take care of children or families for the
14 next five years. So, the reso's in front of
15 you, and I'll read through the reso, but we have
16 a quick presentation. And just for your
17 knowledge, this reso, we also wanted to put --
18 it's going to programs committee, too, for a
19 poll vote.

20 So, we wanted all the committee members to
21 see it before it goes to the poll board. We
22 want as much discussion as possible because this
23 has been a lot of time and effort and a lot of
24 money that will be released to support the
25 community. So, we have a youth development

1 PowerPoint, which I'll try to find here, there
2 we go.

3 So, over the -- the past -- the past
4 several years, we've been leading up to this as
5 we spoke about. It's been three board retreats,
6 several other subcommittees throughout the last
7 couple years, and staff has worked tirelessly
8 the last two years, and especially the last six
9 months, to get ready for this release. We also
10 not only prepared, we went out to the community
11 and asked the community what -- what do they
12 need in youth development and parenting.

13 We had parent surveys. We received -- more
14 than 2,000 parents gave us feedback on our -- on
15 this list station you see in front of us. We
16 conducted 27 focus groups with parents and focus
17 groups with youth that -- who attend trust
18 camps, and also 28 youth who are not actively in
19 school or working. That's another area that
20 we're working on, for the what we call the
21 opportunity youth, who may be coming in and out
22 of the juvenile system and not in a school. So,
23 we reached out to that group as well.

24 And then of course, we brought all our
25 providers together, with over 500 providers, to

1 give us feedback and -- on the solicitation
2 process and things that we should add, things
3 that we should delete, and we took all these to
4 the town, which led us to the RFP that was being
5 released. And then once -- as we were building
6 it, the -- but the Board has always followed
7 this, the last six years since I've been here,
8 we need to let the community know these are --
9 So, there's a huge community engagement, push
10 throughout the community, or -- our ecosystem
11 knows us; they get our Eblasts.

12 But how do we get the people who may not be
13 in our ecosystem? There's direct engagement
14 with the new -- new providers. We -- we
15 specifically deal with youth development
16 solicitation, met at 37 different collaborative
17 meetings across the community. The community
18 engagement team also supported the program's
19 scheme of providing presentations for anyone who
20 requested them, and many people did request them
21 before the signage went up. And then we pushed
22 out to media. There was Eblasts, there were ads
23 in the Herald, El Nuevo Herald, Miami Times, El
24 Floridian (phonetic). And on the radio, WLRN,
25 BSS, WMBM, and every avenue that we can, we've

1 pushed out the announcements that this
2 solicitation is coming and, you know, dealing
3 with our solicitations, two people need to start
4 preparing months in advance, they can't do a
5 week before, so we're out there, a year -- year-
6 plus trying to get out into the community and
7 let everybody know that it's coming.

8 One of the areas that we've talked about
9 for years, and that this Board directed us a
10 couple of years ago, is to look at the
11 opportunity of these kids who may not be in
12 school, these kids who are in and out of
13 juvenile justice system that don't fit in our
14 traditional program, that will not come to our
15 three-day programs a week or five-day programs a
16 week. How do we build a model that can support
17 these kids, give the provider the flexibility
18 they need to reach these kids where they need to
19 be reached? In addition to the 27 focus groups
20 we talked about, with this group, we also met
21 with two dozen leaders in their respective
22 fields, ranging from faith-based community
23 leaders, leaders of CBOs who have reached these
24 students, grassroots community organizers, an
25 army of parents, experts in the juvenile justice

1 system, psychologists, and experts related to
2 how best to serve -- youth, as well as DCF.

3 These listening and learning sessions
4 informed us the spec for the youth development
5 RFP and the programing needed to give -- to give
6 and build in increase flexibility for working
7 with youth that these providers will need. Oh,
8 there we go.

9 The Reimagine grant review --

10 MR. HOFFMAN: Can we jump in?

11 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah -- yeah, of course.

12 MR. HOFFMAN: In terms of that population
13 is there -- there a certain number of
14 individuals that you guys are planning on
15 connecting with in terms of --

16 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah, you'll see it in the
17 reso, we have six providers. There are six
18 providers throughout the community at different
19 geographic locations that will, if the board
20 approves, that they will be funded to serve
21 these -- this population. And it's listed, the
22 providers are listed in the -- in the reso
23 (phonetic).

24 So, Reimagine grants writing. So, when we
25 moved to a five -- five-year cycle, it was -- it

1 went exceptionally well for the providers, for
2 the trust staff, but we've had a lot of turnover
3 in staff over the years. So trying to prepare
4 to make sure that our internal staff was trained
5 as reviewers and trained to review the RFP. So,
6 every RFP that comes, you have three reviewers;
7 you have two internal and one external.

8 So, we have spent the last several months
9 training our staff and giving them -- go to six
10 different training sessions, homework
11 assignments, feedback on those homework
12 assignments, and getting up to speed, as well as
13 external reviewers. And we've got to thank the
14 external -- people who give up their time to
15 come in and spend weeks training and then sit
16 through the solicitation process, sit through
17 the debriefing.

18 So, just so you're familiar, once everybody
19 colle -- individually rates, they come together
20 collectively in a debriefing meeting. And this
21 debriefing is open to the public. The providers
22 come in, they hear the conversation, they hear
23 the scores, and then these scores are populated.
24 But there has -- there was a huge effort in
25 training everyone. We had the data points on

1 the next page, but 20 -- so 20-plus teams --
2 here we go.

3 Let me give -- we continued -- we have more
4 than 460 separate reviews that were conducted
5 out of 154 applications submitted. We recruited
6 a large number of interested volunteer reviewers
7 that we'll continue to draw upon for other RFPs.
8 So -- let me just go back a second, internally,
9 we train everyone, the entire staff. We didn't
10 use the entire staff in youth development, but
11 we also have parenting going after school right
12 now, and then we have five RFPs borrowed back
13 in, and four going out, so we're going to need
14 reviewers throughout the year. Internally, we
15 did -- externally, we did the same thing, a
16 large -- a large group to review. Some we --
17 we've developed and some we will be using now
18 for parenting, as well as the other RFPs.

19 The time investment of staff and volunteers
20 was over a six- to eight-week period to complete
21 the 462 reviews, 32 debriefing meetings, and 43
22 applicant reviews. We've provided agency-- so
23 when funding go -- funding goes out, sometimes
24 there is an appeal process. We have -- we have
25 three, four, or five appeals. Those appeals

1 were denied. The appeals have to be procedural.
2 But we also told the providers there's another
3 link, to come in and meet with us. Because many
4 people just want to have a discussion on how
5 they did, whether it's a budget aspect or just
6 feedback as to how they can do better next time,
7 and we had 27 review meetings.

8 So 27 organizations came in to meet with
9 us. Some of those organizations came in more
10 than once, so they came -- so the last couple of
11 weeks, staff has been meeting -- the last three
12 weeks, staff has been meeting Monday through
13 Friday, throughout the day, meeting with these
14 groups. And our -- our intentional efforts in
15 this -- have paid off.

16 Agencies in the trust ecosystem continue to
17 successfully deliver the great work, and this
18 cycle new agency -- so years ago when we started
19 taking a deep dive into new -- how can we do
20 things better at the trust -- the real barrier
21 to entry at the trust was new providers had a
22 hard time getting in -- into the ecosystem.

23 So years ago when we first started this,
24 there was only 8 percent of new providers got
25 into the system. Our last -- our last

1 solicitation, that went up to 59 percent, and
2 I'm pleased to say at this time it's 78 percent
3 for the ones that are in front of you -- new
4 providers entering our system. In addition --
5 in addition to the overall increase in new
6 agencies, we also have 88 percent of applicants
7 that were previously funded through subcontract
8 agreements, are now successfully directly
9 applying by themselves for funding.

10 And finally, I think we've been very proud
11 over the years as the Board came out to create
12 the small CBO capacity building initiative. And
13 those CBO members who applied for YP had 100
14 percent success rate. So, all that effort
15 building capacity in the small business supply
16 have -- have paid off.

17 And I just want to show the geographic
18 footprint, so with the geographic footprint --
19 as a result of RP, it called out several census
20 -- census-designated places for expansion. And
21 these places -- these are places we want a
22 larger footprint to support more children,
23 especially with youth living in poverty.

24 Our goal through the competitive
25 solicitations is to ensure that services

1 continue to be available throughout Miami-Dade,
2 from Florida City to the Broward Line, and from
3 east to west. This line shows our current YD
4 after slow summer footprint. The yellow dots
5 with the purple background highlights are those
6 designated for expansion.

7 These maps and listings are part of YD RFP
8 for applicants to consider. And the
9 recommendation before you represents the overall
10 increase of total programming for after school
11 summer sites. We went from 484 to 682 sites,
12 including a 41 percent expansion in the
13 identified target areas. The map shows the
14 expansion areas in yellow, includes after school
15 summer and full-time time frames, and the size
16 of the dots relate to the number of slots
17 recommended.

18 I just -- I just want to -- the last slide
19 is just a thank you to the Board for -- for two
20 years of work, to the staff who have killed
21 themselves. You know, we have 80 folks here,
22 and you talk about everybody working together.
23 Everybody -- this entire organization, the last
24 two years have been leading up to this -- to
25 this moment.

1 Upon approval of the recommendations -- the
2 day after we will have -- if it's approved, we
3 will have a press conference and announce to the
4 community our next five-year investment. And
5 then we will also start -- we will have an
6 onboarding session May 12 to get all our
7 providers up to speed. We have existing
8 providers and all the new providers, to be able
9 to train them, get them up to speed, make sure
10 when the -- their contract starts that they're
11 up and running.

12 Given that -- again, given the number of
13 new agencies being recommended, we will be
14 offering additional supports, as needed, to
15 bring organizations up to speed and ensure a
16 smooth rollout of high-quality programs.

17 In -- just in closing, this is a large
18 investment -- this is the largest investment in
19 trust history in youth development. It's been
20 years in the making, and we're excited, if the
21 Board approves, that this will be our next five-
22 year investment to serve children and families
23 throughout Miami-Dade. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 MR. HOFFMAN: Just in reviewing the
25 resolution last night -- thank you for the

1 background -- what I thought of, as I was
2 looking at it, was the amount of work that must
3 have gone into putting that together, so
4 congratulations.

5 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

6 MR. ARSENAULT: Yeah. I -- I want to echo
7 my thanks to the staff, to everybody. This is -
8 - what impressed me most, is you guys have been
9 talking over the last few years about the plan
10 for this, right? You've been planning for this
11 and executed on the plan, and it -- it's just
12 outstanding work. So, very -- commend everyone
13 on that and look forward to getting --

14 I -- I guess -- just one question, I guess,
15 or maybe just a comment, you know, with a lot of
16 new providers, I think one of the things that I
17 discussed with staff, the idea of several pass-
18 through grants through municipalities, things
19 like that. Just the idea of -- I think
20 something that would be good to bring forward to
21 the Board, this could be, like, just the due
22 diligence plan of execution and monitoring of
23 the providers, especially with a large amount of
24 new providers coming in, right? I mean, I think
25 you've done an amazing job in the trust assets,

1 allocating the trust assets to providers. And
2 now, the next step is ensuring that they're
3 following, right, the -- things like that. So,
4 new providers, I just think that that would be
5 something that would be good to refresh maybe
6 the Board and the committee on in the future and
7 make sure as we do that that they're -- they're
8 abiding by what they're supposed to be doing --
9 that in so long.

10 MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

11 MR. HAJ: Mr. Vice Chair. May I
12 -- may I speak?

13 MR. HOFFMAN: Oh, yes. I know since we're
14 not in an official meeting, I'm allowed to speak
15 remotely. I just wanted to say as -- as you
16 know, hearing here, that this has been a long-
17 term planning exercise. I think the -- the
18 staff has really done an excellent job in
19 preparing not just the -- the changes in -- in
20 funding but the whole system, so that the
21 providers feel that they have the information
22 they need.

23 I've talked to Jim (phonetic) extensively
24 over the last few weeks and months about those
25 that have come in and -- and have appealed and -

1 - and the like. And it really has helped a lot
2 to have a much refined system. Not that the
3 trust was not doing a good job previously, but I
4 think the planning that's gone into this has
5 really made it an effective process, and I look
6 forward to seeing it repeated in the future as
7 well for other RFPs that we're going to let out.

8 MR. ARSENAULT: Any other comments?

9 MR. HAJ: April 12 to the YMCA at South
10 Florida Shenandoah Elementary from 3:00 to 4:00
11 p.m., Champions for Children, the RSVPs are
12 starting to come in. They're starting to fill
13 up.

14 We're good to go for April 27. The videos
15 are being wrapped up also, so we're excited for
16 our big day on the 27th.

17 And Young Talent, Big Dreams, which is in
18 the Miracle -- Miracle Theatre, is happening May
19 13th at 7:00 p.m.

20 Just one more note, the summer programming
21 -- so we've been working very closely with the
22 school system, the county, JCS, just to let --
23 as parents start right now looking for summer
24 programming for their kids. How do we work
25 together to give them a one-stop shop that they

1 can go to to find all the programming they need?
2 So, our community engagement team, our
3 communications team, and our programs team have
4 been working with the county, school system, and
5 JCS, in an -- in an extraordinary way. You
6 know, it's nice to see the -- the larger offices
7 all working together to really put one place --
8 to go -- to market to the parents.

9 So, it's almost wrapped up. Probably next
10 week, you will see a huge marketing push, on TV,
11 on the radio, directing the parents where to go,
12 one site to find all their programming needs for
13 -- in Miami-Dade County, so there's been a lot
14 of work behind that. More -- and the mayor
15 shop. I mean, it's been -- it's been exciting
16 working together, and this is first year and
17 then we're looking forward what happens in year
18 -- year two and year three.

19 MR. REYES: We want to -- we want to
20 commend -- Natalia on her -- on her leadership.
21 She really pushed the envelope on this stuff.
22 Making sure everybody was on -- on task,
23 understanding the -- the -- the sheer volume,
24 right? All of these different entities, with
25 all these different summer camps and bringing it

1 all together. She did a fantastic job.

2 MR. HAJ: Okay. Thank you. And -- and you
3 know, the work about putting this together
4 sounds nice, but when you have -- working from
5 spreadsheets, collecting from all different
6 agencies --

7 MS. ZEA: Yes. Yes.

8 MR. HAJ: -- about all the programs -- the
9 hundreds and hundreds of programs in this
10 community, has been something else. So, we're
11 going to hit the ground running. We're doing
12 the best we can to get it out; we will get it
13 out. By next year, we really want to get to
14 real-time attendance sheets. And that's so when
15 parents are looking, they know how many -- where
16 the open seats are. So, there's a longer-term
17 plan, but it is phenomenal that all -- all the
18 partners are involved. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you. Are there are any
20 other comments? Our next committee meeting is
21 Thursday, May 4. I'm hearing none. Our meeting
22 is adjourned.

23 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

24 MR. HOFFMAN: Good. Thank you, sir.

25 MR. TROWBRIDGE: Great job.

1 (Thereupon, the meeting concluded at 10:11 a.m.)

2 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTION

3
4 The above and foregoing transcript is a true and
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9
10 Cecil Clark

11 CECIL CLARK, Transcriber

12 April 18, 2023
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