

**Columbia County Community Healthcare Consortium, Inc.**  
**Notes from the Executive Committee meeting of September 6, 2023**

*Note: This meeting was held virtually on the Zoom web platform.*

**Attendance**

Committee Members: Scott Thomas, Art Proper, Becky Polmateer (arrived at 9:09 a.m.), Jack Mabb, Robin Andrews

Staff Members: Claire Parde, Lisa Thomas

**Call to Order**

Committee Chair Scott Thomas called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

**Executive Director Evaluation Process**

Last year's process for evaluating the Executive Director was reviewed and the following points were made:

- For the first time, we created an online survey tool using Google Forms; it was a great process that we should repeat
- We should also provide an option to print the form
- Robin sent out a link to the form last year and gave members 10 days to complete it
- Materials should be sent separately from the packet that goes out to members with a very obvious and searchable subject line
- The evaluation process will be introduced at the 10/4 Board meeting and the link will be distributed via email to members the next day; members will be asked to complete the survey by 10/18
- People will be asked to enter their email for tracking purposes, but responses will be anonymous
- Robin will drive the process
- Claire will complete a self-evaluation in narrative form and will include personal, professional, and organizational goals; this will be provided to the Executive Committee by 10/18 as well
- Claire's two-year contract is due to expire this year and renewing it will require action from the Board. Therefore, Claire was asked to include a cover letter with her self-evaluation with a requested salary increase with some description about how this compares to increases for other staff. A short discussion ensued with regard to staff wage adjustments. Claire noted that wages are not increased by the same percent across all positions, and that typically, she makes an effort to accelerate wage growth at the lower end and slow it at the upper end. Claire noted that while the agency conducted a compensation study in early 2020, so much has occurred since to affect compensation that she questions whether it is still relevant. She would like to do another compensation study in 2024 and estimates the cost will be \$5,000 - 8,000. Funding from the Foundation for Community Health could be used for this expense.
- With regard to the ED's contract and compensation, the Executive Committee will consider this during its November meeting, and make a recommendation to the Entire Board during an Executive session at its December meeting

**Strategic Planning**

Next year is the fifth and final year of the current strategic plan, which considers 2020 to 2024, so 2024 should also be a planning year. There has been some traction with the current plan. Work has been done around compensation, diversifying revenue, and growing the administrative team by creating and filling the position of Director of Development and Communications. The Committee wondered if the current plan still has "legs" given that we had to deal with a pandemic. A lot of it is still relevant, such as continuing to work on compensation and growing the Admin Team, but the Committee agreed that the plan should be revisited and updated where

appropriate. This should be standard practice every few years. It was also decided that Claire will report on the current Plan at the December Board meeting and let members know that a workgroup will convene early next year to work on updates to the Plan.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Claire provided a report on changes to the 401(k). We will transition the "recordkeeping" function from Nationwide to John Hancock. There will be a blackout period during which plan participants won't be able to move or withdraw the funds in their accounts. We are meeting compliance targets with respect to participant communication.

The Navigator Program and Tobacco Free Action have entered the 5<sup>th</sup> year of their contracts. Budgets and work plans were submitted, and approvals were received in record time. Claire suspects this is because the Grants Gateway will be eliminated in early October, with many of its functions consolidated into the State Financial System, SFS. We have been advised that the Navigator Program will have an additional year added to the current contract. We have also been informally advised that this will occur with our Rural Health Network contract and may happen for Tobacco as well. Navigator also received an increase in funding for Year 5 that we assume will persist in Year 6.

Lisa Thomas is currently managing the bulk of duties for the Office Manager position. There are a lot of projects coming up with ITS. The Office Manager position is being advertised, but we aren't receiving applications. There was one applicant, but her interactions with our office demonstrated that she wasn't a viable candidate.

NYS DOT 5310 funding of approximately \$75,000 was awarded to CARTS for the purchase of a wheelchair-accessible van. It requires a 20.1% match. The Rip Van Winkle Foundation (RVWF), which committed \$10,000 to sponsor the CARTS fundraiser, has requested Claire advise them if we have any other needs. Claire will submit a request to the RVWF to provide some or all of the match requirement for the 5310 grant.

Claire has also been invited to apply to Hudson River Bank and Trust Foundation.

Claire mentioned the vacant positions at the Consortium. There are two vacant positions in the Navigator Program, one part-time and one full-time. The hourly rate was increased from \$17.00/hr to \$19.75, but we still aren't getting applicants. The Community Engagement Coordinator position was filled by Jennifer Reilly Bluma. Claire noted that, despite the recent departure of the Office Manager, there has been a sense of buoyancy around the agency of late; people are a little jolly. This reminds Claire that she should not be afraid of personnel changes, as they can create unexpected effects and opportunities.

Claire mentioned some "food for thought." The agency has gone from being exclusively funded by grants and contracts for specific programs, often prescribed by State agencies, to having more diversified funding, including fully discretionary funds, such as General Operating Support dollars provided by foundations. The practical effect of this is that, for the first time, we must make choices about how to expense those funds. Claire noted that this creates some tension between programs as they are "competing" for the same discretionary dollars. All discretionary funding could go to CARTS, but some goes to the Financial Assistance Funds and some to the Prescription Access and Referral Program. Unlike CARTS, which provides direct services, the Financial Assistance Funds and the Prescription Access and Referral Program are essentially income-transfer programs (although accompanied by a significant amount of system navigation and options counselling), which reduce hardship for residents of the community. Claire thinks this new dynamic deserves some attention and hopes that it can be part of a strategic-planning discussion with the Board next year. At that time, we should ask ourselves whether we should continue supporting the programs that provide direct financial assistance to residents or retire them. In the meantime, we have allocated \$20,000 to the Financial Assistance Funds and approximately \$25,000 to the Prescription Access and Referral Program in 2023, and will do so again in 2024.

## **Annual Recognition Event/Fundraiser Report**

Claire updated the group on the upcoming Annual Recognition Event and Fundraiser. Sydney, the new Director of Development and Communications, has the planning for this well in hand. She is in constant communication and very organized. We have received \$11,335.00 so far with another \$10,000.00 committed. We don't have a number on tickets yet. The driver's tickets have been comped and they can invite one guest. Response from the Board has been limited. It was mentioned that tickets tend to come in late. Scott will give it another week and then email Board members if need be. Claire will give an update on ticket sales in a week or two.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

## **Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on **November 1, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.**