

NIH Child Care Board Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2008
Building 31 Conference Room 2

Members in Attendance: Valerie Durrant, Jayne Lura-Brown , Henry Primas, Heather Rogers, Christie Espinoza, Lisa Strauss, Angela Magliozzi, Rosalind King, Brian Rabin, Joslyn Kravitz, Conrad Farina, Shanil Haugen, Tom Hayden, Mary Ellen Savarese, Tonya Lee

Members Absent: Hillary Fitolis, Susan Persons, Kim Plascjak, Rachel Weinstein, Sheri Schully

Center Liaisons Attending: POPI: Paulina Alvarado and Michael Difilippantonio, ECDC: Beth Levy, Child Kind: Amy Cliber

Guests: Dr. Alfred Johnson, Lynne Kartsakalis

I. Welcome and Introductions -

Chair Durrant welcomed three new Board members: Rosalind King/NICHD, Brian Rabin/NIGMS and Sheri Schully/NCI and announced the re-appointment of Board members, Susan Persons, Hillary Fitolis and Valerie Durrant. Dr. Durrant acknowledged new liaisons Conrad Farina/ORF and Joslyn Kravitz/Women in Biomedical Careers Work Group. Dr. Alfred Johnson was welcomed as a special guest.

II. Greetings from Dr. Alfred Johnson, Director, Office of Research Services –

Dr. Johnson urged the Board to continue exploring the challenges and needs of the NIH workforce and bring these issues to the attention of NIH Leadership. Dr. Johnson informed the Board that the importance of “quality of life” is an issue reflected in every employee survey.

ORS faces a -.3% reduction in FY 2009 budget and there will be difficult decision to be made about what ORS programs and services can be sustained at previous levels. Dr. Johnson stated that the NIH child care subsidy program would be fully funded in FY 2009 for \$300,000- reflecting the importance of this program.

Dr. Johnson stated the Northwest Child Care Center is a top priority for the NIH Leadership and when funding is available, the existing Program of Requirement will be implemented.

The Gateway Visitors Center and Garage opened in August and ORS was able to address the safety and health concerns of parents who have children enrolled in the East Child Care Center by installing additional vehicle barriers, monitoring air quality and reconfiguring the visitor driveway. A new driveway to the child care center parking area will be constructed this fall to complete the project.

Dr. Johnson challenged the Board to continue to bring to his attention new and innovative ideas about child care, regardless of funding implications. Dr. Johnson committed to considering all issues and working with the Board for solutions. He congratulated the Board on their successful efforts to represent the entire NIH community on child care matters.

III. Board Orientation-

Mary Ellen Savarese asked members to review the documents in their packets- the Board Charter and Board Member Position Description, which clearly define and explain the roles of members and the operation of the Board. The Ethics Waiver in the packet is applicable if a voting member feels he/she may be eligible for the NIH Child Care Subsidy Program. Mary Ellen reviewed the Communication Plan and highlighted the Board's Vision and Mission. She directed attention to the statement "*The entire NIH workforce benefits from the stable child care arrangements of working parents.*"

The NIH Child Care Board schedules seven meetings per year. If a member misses more than two meeting consecutively, Mary Ellen will contact the member and ask them to re-evaluate their commitment to the Board. Meetings start on time and end on time. Meeting reminders will be sent 2 to 3 weeks ahead and agendas and handouts will go out at least one week in advance. Members are asked to come to meetings prepared to actively participate.

Specific work items of the Board are done in committees and committee membership is open to any interested individuals. Committees meet as needed and much work takes place via email. Board voting members are chosen very specifically to represent the broad interests of all NIH employees, including various Institutes, grades and job types. Members should represent the interests of NIH and should be familiar with the Board and NIH Child Care services and programs.

Voting members are required to be Federal employees, however, all Board meeting are open and visitors are welcome. Members may not speak on behalf of the Board unless the Board has asked the member to do so.

The Board does not have oversight of the child care programs, but can advise ORS on procedures and policies. Each child care program is a private corporation that answers to its own Board of Directors.

A federal regulation, referred to as the Tribble Amendment, is a document that specifies what is permissible for Executive Branch child care programs. There will be additional information about this at the next meeting.

Mary Ellen explained that she and Tonya Lee provide support to the Board and use the advice and consultation of the Board to advise the Division Director and the ORS Director. Over the last eight years, the Board has raised the vision beyond child care facilities and been responsible for the implementation of important new policies, services and programs including the waiting list and the subsidy program.

IV. Approval - Minutes for April - Chair Durrant called for a vote to approve the minutes from the June 2008, meeting. Minutes were approved.

V. Report from the Chair- Valerie Durrant

***Annual Report** – The Annual Report is in final draft stage and will be sent to members for comments. The Annual Reports includes highlights of the 2008 Needs Assessment, examples of the commitment of NIH Leadership to working parents, and includes information on current needs.

Recommendations include building the Northwest Child Care Center, and exploring additional resources for NIH parents. All comments are appreciated, as the annual report is a history of the work and success of the Child Care Board.

***Women in Biomedical Careers Work Group** – Chair Valerie Durant was asked to join Subcommittee 9-10 – Changing the NIH work culture and improving the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women at NIH which is in the process of preparing a report on its activities for Dr. Zerhouni. Joslyn Kravitz shared information about some initiatives that have resulted from the work of this group: FAES has reached an agreement with the Rock Springs Children’s Center that will provide priority child care spaces for up to 5 new tenure-track recruits, intramural postdoctoral fellows may be permitted 8 weeks of paid family leave (increased from 6 weeks), there has been a change in the tenure policy language to incorporate an automatic extra year for tenure-track investigators who need to either take extended family leave or temporarily reduce their work schedule below full-time, and the Office of Human Resources is developing a pilot leave bank which will launch in 2009 or early 2010 in one institute (to be determined). If successful, it will be expanded to other institutes. Accomplishments of the subcommittee which focuses on extramural initiatives includes raising the allowed paid family leave for National Research Service Award recipients to 60 days (increased from 30 days) and making it widely known that funds from NIH grants may be used for child care expenses during conference attendance. Chair Durrant commented that these are the small steps that lead to large changes. She expressed her appreciation for the efforts of the Work Group.

Lisa Strauss expressed concern that new hires to NIH are sometimes promised child care resources that are not actually available. This situation should be addressed by the Board via activities recommended in the Communication Plan.

VI. Child Care Board Work Plan and Schedule - Valerie Durrant – Major items for this plan identified were child care subsidy program, facilities, future trends, Triple Amendment, and communication.

- **Subsidy** – Mary Ellen Savarese reported that, as of July 2008, the Subsidy Program had served 99 employees with 115 children receiving subsidized child care tuition. Due to the delayed FY 2008 Federal budget appropriation in January 2008, new subsidy enrollment did not occur at the beginning of the budget year. As a result, there are funds to carry over for FY’09. It is projected that all the subsidy money will be spent in FY ’09.
- **Facilities** - Conrad Farina reported that the Northwest Child Care Center documents are being prepared so when funding is approved, the project can move forward. There is an issue concerning a security report that is holding up the Program of Requirements. Tom Hayden and Mary Ellen Savarese will look into this.
- **Future trends** - Last year the Board focused on future trends. The question was raised if the Board wanted to continue this focus. Rosalind King offered to assist the Board with identifying relevant studies that are funded through her office at NICHD.
- **TRIBLE Amendment** - Joslyn Kravitz reported that the Board Legislative Amendment proposal had been discussed with the OD/Office of Legislative Policy

and Analysis. It was suggested that this might have more attention after the first of the new year.

- **Communication** - The Board's Communication Plan was praised as an outstanding document. It gives a clear vision on how the Board wants to accomplish its goals. Lynne Kartsakalis, acting manager of the WorkLife Center/HR/OD, spoke about her interest in strengthening relationships with the Board.

Due to time constraints, Chair Durrant asked the Board to carefully review the 2007-2008 Work/Action Plan and submit their comments, suggestions and additions to Mary Ellen before October 1, 2008.

VII. Committee Assignments- Mary Ellen Savarese –

The Board has several standing committees. Members and liaisons are invited to participate on one or more of these committees.

Committees include Waiting List, Child Care Subsidy, Communication, Parenting Festival (will form in December), Emergency Information, and Membership (will form in March).

Committees that need to be convened and complete assignments before the end of 2008 are the Subsidy and Waitlist Committees.

The Subsidy Committee will evaluate data from the first three years of the subsidy program and make any recommendations for changes in program policy and design, including income caps and reimbursement percentages. These recommendations will be reflected in a new Manual Chapter that will be prepared by ORS.

The Waitlist Committee will meet with the Center Directors and waiting list manager to review new data collected for the past two years regarding length of time on the list and impact of the two-decline policy that the Board recommended in January 2006. This review may result in modification of policies and procedure governing the waitlist. The goal is to make the list as transparent and meaningful as possible for parents.

Board members will receive minutes from this meeting by September 19, along with the 2007-2008 Work Plan and the DRAFT 2008-2009 Work Year so that members can prepare to volunteer for standing committees.

- #### **VIII. Announcements and Adjourn –**
- Ms. Savarese stated that at the October meeting, there would be a 30 minute presentation on the NIH Child Care programs and services. A tour of the three child care centers will be scheduled for new members and anyone else that would like to participate.

The next meeting will be October 23, 2008 at Rockledge II