

New Opportunities, Inc.
Board Meeting Via ZOOM and in Person

MINUTES
Thursday, January 25, 2024
3:45 p.m.

I. Meeting was called to order by Board President Eugene Meiners at 4:22 p.m.

A. Welcome and Introductions.

Present: **IN-PERSON:** Jon Hays, Eugene Meiners, Peg Hamilton, Dan Benitz, Carl Legore, Mike Fischer, Jerome Kuster, Mark Hanson, Cindy Wallace, Terry Striegel and Denis James.

VIA-ZOOM: Erica Burris, Kim Denman and Deb Lightner

Excused: Heath Hansen, Tim Farmer, and Carolyn Masters

Staff Present: Chad Jensen, CEO; Sheri Mertz, CFO; Jenni Schlichte, Board Recorder
Darcy Dailey HR Asst, Carla Morrow HR Director.

B. A motion was made for the approval of the December 7, 2023, Board Minutes by Denis James and seconded by Terry Striegel. Motion carried.

II. CFO Reports – Sheri Mertz

A. Sheri discussed with the Board the financial reports ending December 31, 2023. There was a general discussion of various line items. A motion was made to accept the financial reports ending December 31, 2023, by Dan Benitz and seconded by Denis James. Motion carried.

B. Sheri noted there has been discussions with regional office on the process for recording the self-funded SUTA reserve in accordance with 75.431(e)(1). The reserve has been set up as a fringe benefit expense in the amount of \$110,000. As actual costs are incurred, they will be charged against the reserve. If there is a need to add to the reserve based on actual expenses it will need to be funded from the current grant.

III. CEO Reports – Chad Jensen

A. Sheri, Chad, and Gene Meiners reviewed HS/EHS Policy Council agenda with the Board. The following items were discussed:

1. Financial Reports for the month ending December 2023

2. All charge account activity for December 2023
3. The December 5, 2023, Policy Council Minutes
4. The monthly Program Report for December 2023
5. Strategic Plan
6. Self-Assessment

- B. Chad presented to the Board the Behavior Health System Alignment and HHS Update. Chad expressed his concerns regarding how these “proposed districts” would split New Opportunities catchment area into 3. Currently New Opportunities has 1 contract per service with the state. This new proposal would mean New Opportunities would subcontract through 3 districts potentially for each service / contract. At this time the state is looking at our substance abuse contract (IPN), tobacco, prevention, and gambling. There was general discussion.
- C. Chad presented to the Board the following contracts for approval:
- a) DOE Weatherization Assistance Program (HEAP-24-01)
The motion was made to approve the HEAP 24-01 contract by Mark Hanson and seconded by Terry Striegel. Motion carried.
- D. Chad shared with the board a success story on WIC. Statistics were shared regarding the increase in services being provided to the clients and families in Crawford County and Buena Vista counties as compared to last years state reported numbers. A great “shoutout” to our health department!

IV. Handouts – FYI’s

- A. DOE Weatherization Assistance (DOE-23-01) Amendment 9
- B. Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP-23-01) Amendment 11
- C. Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP-23-01) Amendment 12
- D. Weatherization Assistance Program (IPL-23-01) Amendment 2
- E. The Royal Throne – (January)

V. Adjournment

A motion was made at 4:59 p.m. by J.D. Kuster to adjourn the meeting. Dan Benitz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Jenni Schlichte
Board Recorder

Respectfully submitted,


Eugene Meiners
Board President