

**West Tennessee Legal Services Board of Directors  
Minutes of July 27, 2020 Board Meeting  
Held Via Zoom Due to COVID-19**

**Present:** Charles Barnett, Barbara Hudson, Michael Tate, Cecil Giles, John Hamilton, William Kendall, James Pearson, Kortney Simmons, Laura Keeton, Mary Jo Middlebrooks

**Also present:** Cathy Clayton, Karen Laird, Sarah Johnston-Barnett

**First item of business:** Review and Approval of May 26, 2020 Minutes

Mr. Barnett moved to approve. Mr. Hamilton seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Second item of business:** WTLS transition plan/COVID updates

- Additional funding due to COVID
  - Received additional \$72,526 to help with COVID cases, including the hiring of a COVID attorney;
  - \$2,000 BancorpSouth donation that has to be spent by end of year to help with housing;
  - Additional funding from Ryan White and HOPWA – we had 2 weeks to spend additional Ryan White funding; despite valiant effort, WTLS was unable to spend it all in timeframe.
- Transition plan – Ms. Clayton went over the transition plan in detail:
  - Drafted to be comprehensive;
  - Different counties have different issues with COVID;
  - We are currently in phase 3; will remain in phase 3 through Labor Day and probably through the end of 2020;
  - Transition team meets weekly (management + supervising attorneys at outer offices)
  - Office coordinator in each office, keeps office staffed as needed and tracks supplies;
  - Starting outreach via Facebook videos.
- There were no questions or comments on the transition plan

**Third item of business:** Racial justice at WTLS (email, proposed statement, LSC guidance)

- Ms. Clayton reviewed email that was sent to entire office following the murder of George Floyd
- Discussed the Racial Justice group meetings (volunteer employee-led group discussions)
- Ms. Clayton reviewed the LSC guidance on addressing racial justice
- Ms. Clayton requested feedback from the Board on the statement shared via attachments to the Board packet
  - Mr. Hamilton moved the Board approve the statement once it has been cleaned up grammatically; seconded by Ms. Simmons; the statement was approved unanimously.

**Fourth item of business:** Proposed policies to be approved (parental leave, social media, LEP policy)

- LEP policy – Most clients who don't speak English speak Spanish; WTLS has Spanish interpreter and uses Language Line
  - Moved to approve by Ms. Webb, seconded by Mr. Barnett, approved unanimously
- Hashtag policy – Ms. Clayton advised that, because WTLS cannot control how hashtags are used, WTLS needs a policy to only use hashtags if previously authorized by the funder or WTLS management.
  - Ms. Webb moved to adopt this hashtag policy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Giles and approved unanimously.

- Parental leave – Ms. Clayton reviewed current parental leave policy and presented the proposed new parental leave policy, which has been sent to employment counsel for review.
  - Ms. Middlebrooks moved to adopt the proposed new policy, subject to changes suggested by employment counsel. Motion was seconded by John Hamilton.
    - Ms. Simmons suggested that the policy should not penalize the employee for needing to quit as a result of the parent’s or the child’s health; perhaps to say if it’s something beyond the parent’s control, then they should not be penalized
    - Ms. Webb suggested the policy should include language if the child’s physical or mental disability necessitated the employee not returning to work, there would be no requirement to pay back the leave.
  - Ms. Middlebrooks amended her motion to address the concerns raised by Ms. Simmons and Ms. Webb and Mr. Hamilton seconded. The amended motion was unanimously approved.

**Fifth item of business:** Increased remote monitoring during COVID

- Housing grants (FHIP and Housing Counseling) received excellent evaluations from HUD.
- HOPWA and Ryan White were recently monitored – the financial team received an excellent review report; programmatically, there is room for improvement and the team manager has implemented a corrective action plan that has been approved by the funders.
  - These grants, which provide supportive services to people living with HIV, require a separate case management system. Only team members working on these grants have access to the case management system.
  - Two employees were not putting their case files in their case management system as they were instructed to do and is required by the funder; one of them had paperwork in good form but just hadn’t been uploaded; the other employee had sloppy/incomplete reports and had failed to properly document required actions.
  - Both employees are on corrective action plans.
  - Ms. Clayton is meeting with grant manager/team leader regularly to make sure needed improvements are made.
  - The funder has approved and WTLS has hired an independent contractor/consultant (who worked to develop the case management and required reporting system) to assist in getting all files and checklists completed and uploaded.
  - Ms. Middlebrooks inquired whether there is another organization outside WTLS that can take over these grants. Ms. Clayton agreed this was something to explore for the next grant cycle.

**Sixth item of business:** Needs assessment

- Ms. Clayton reported WTLS has been working to obtain more needs assessments and outlined the strategy of including community partners, as well as having intake workers send out needs assessments to be completed with applications for service. WTLS also attempted to send needs assessments to every individual with an email address who applied for our services within the last year. Google suspended our Google account because we sent so many requests to complete the needs assessment. This means that the online survey is not available currently, but we have requested Google reinstate our account so that the surveys can be resent.
- Ms. Clayton reported that the LSC grant due August 20, and they are very focused on needs assessment. She asked that the board complete the needs assessment, either online or manually.

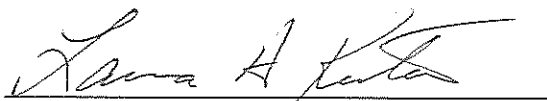
**Seventh item of business:** WTLS strategic plan (evaluation of 2016-2020, proposed 2020-2024 plan)

- Ms. Clayton reviewed the evaluation of WTLS progress on 2016-2020 strategic plan (included in documents provided to the board prior to the meeting) and reported that overall WTLS did well in meeting those goals.

**Eighth item of business:** Financial and property management update by CFO, Karen Laird

- Ms. Laird reviewed the June 2020 financial reports, which were provided to the board prior to the meeting.
- Ms. Laird further reported on the status of WTLS' investments. Three out of 4 CDs have matured. She reported the due diligence taken by WTLS management in seeking the most favorable new interest rates. Due to very low interest rates that continue to decrease, the following actions were taken with the approval of the finance committee:
  - The Carroll Bank and Trust, approximate balance of \$76,000 was rolled into new CD at 1%
  - The Commercial Bank \$76,000 and Leaders Credit \$102,000 matured CDs have been invested in an 18-month CD at Foundation Bank with an interest rate of 1%
- Leaders credit union needed a board resolution to withdraw matured CD proceeds. The finance committee adopted a resolution to be ratified by the board.
  - Mr. Hamilton moved to ratify that resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnett and approved unanimously.
- Ms. Webb then moved to accept the financial report. Ms. Keeton seconded, and the financial report was unanimously approved.
- Roof at Selmer has been a real challenge; contracted with a company in March or April, and are still waiting; have not yet put a tarp on the roof
  - Emma Covington has been in daily contact with the roofing company, who has now promised to get the roof completed within the next couple of weeks.
  - Ms. Webb suggested to reach out to the DA's office to see if there are any complaints about these roofers and Ms. Laird agreed to do so.

Mr. Barnett moved to adjourn, motion was seconded by Mr. Tate, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM



Laura Keeton, Board Secretary

Date: 12-1-2020