

**West Tennessee Legal Services Board Meeting Minutes**  
**February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**Present:** Nhung Nguyen, Cathy Clayton, Vanedda Webb, Laura Keeton, Michael Tate, Barbara Hudson

Meeting called to order at 4:31pm.

**First Order of Business:** Review and approve the minutes from January's board meeting. Motion made by Ms. Keeton, seconded by Ms. Webb, pass unanimously.

**Second Order of Business:** Program Review and Update –

The current LSC budget will not be disrupted by Congress's budget issues. But we hope the total budget will be higher once Congress passes the budget.

We are working with local partners in the counties on disaster relief for the counties affected by the storms. There are several relief programs that have become available, but only for a short window of time.

WTLS is working with TALS on a planning grant for the Opportunity Act funding. This funding would be used to expand and promote our work on greater family stability through child placements, helping parents get their children back, truancy issues, and expungements.

We are waiting to hear back on the status of our application for the Fair Housing American Rescue Plan funding. They are running behind on awarding those funds.

We are continuing to work with the HIV/AIDS programs to move those grants to another, more suitable, agency.

Our caseworker for our LTCO program has put in her resignation notice, as she received a better offer from another employer. This is good timing for WTLS as the state is transferring the Ombudsman contracts to the Northwest Area Agency on Aging, who could possibly take over the LTCO grant.

**Third Order of Business:** WTLS Inclement Weather Policy –

Currently, the Jackson office only closes when Union University closes. The outer offices each have other higher education institutions that help direct when/if those offices should be closed. This current policy was created before working from home (WFH) was really a viable option. In the current work environment, however, almost all work can be done remotely. The new temporary policy proposes that if the assigned higher institution closes, employees can choose to either WFH or take a leave day. Ms. Webb suggested that we could tie our policy to either a local higher institution or to the local court system. If the court is closed, employees can make

that choice. Employees who can prove that they were unable to work from home due to power outages or the like, must show proof of that to be granted a weather day.

Mr. Tate suggested that the policy needs to have a clear definition of what meaningful work is when working from home.

Motion to approve the new policy with the changes mentioned about made by Ms. Webb, seconded by Mr. Tate. Motion passed unanimously.

**Fourth Order of Business: December Financial Statement –**

Ms. Nguyen presented the financial statements for December 2021. She pointed out the differences in total cash, receivables, and accounts payable as of December 2021 versus December 2020. The decrease in total cash were mainly caused by the higher COVID fundings received in 2020 and by the increase in grants receivable. The increases in accounts payable and accounts receivable were mainly due to the delayed payment from HUD for the quarter 3 Housing Counseling grant. The delayed payment from HUD in turn delayed our payments to the subgrantees, which caused accounts payable to increase. TALS grants and, specifically Elder Trust grant, are also behind on their payments.

Ms. Nguyen pointed out the net loss in 2021 compared to net income of 2020. The largest part of the net loss was explained to be because of the bridge payment made to the employees in December 2021.

Motion to approve the December Financial Statements made by Ms. Keeton, seconded by Ms. Hudson. Motion pass unanimously.

**Fifth Order of Business: Petty Cash –**

Ms. Nguyen proposed that WTLS do away with petty cash box and deposit it back in the operating account. It hadn't been used in a year and from an auditing standpoint, it's a high-risk area and overall poses high potential for fraud. Motion to approve the closing of petty cash and redepositing it in the main operating account was made by Ms. Webb, seconded by Mr. Tate. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Clayton mentioned that the annual financial audit was scheduled at the end of February.

Ms. Clayton called the meeting to be adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Approved by:   
Laura Keeton, Board Secretary

Date: 3/16/22