



## **Board of Directors**

### **Meeting Minutes**

April 25th, 2024 | 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.

In person/via Teams

#### **Board of Directors**

Thelma Drake, President – present

Amy Pucci, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President - present

Lynn Briley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – present

William Bane, Treasurer - present

Sondra Kendrick, Secretary – present

Pam Barton – present

Shernita Bethea – present

Chanda Chann - absent

Robert Holt – present

Dick Grice – present

Greg Grootendorst – proxy

Fran Richardson – present

Caryn West – present

Gary Zalas - present

Ex-Officio: Steve Zollos, CEO

Staff: Brigid Miller, CFO

Staff: Charnitta Waters, SDO

Staff: Wanda Rivers, Controller

Staff: Jane Constantineau, Marketing Director

Staff: Monika Zajac-Lorke, EA

#### **Welcome & Call to Order – Thelma Drake, BOD President**

The Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President, Thelma Drake.

**Thelma Drake requested a motion to approve the consent agenda that included Executive Committee 4.4.24 Meeting Minutes.**

**The motion was given by Caryn West, seconded by Gary Zalas, and all were in favor.**

#### **Public Comments**

There were no registrations for public comments.

#### **Strategic Goal 1: Awareness of Services - Thelma Drake, Steve Zollos**

Steve initiated his reporting by recounting the events of the Virginia Beach Budget Public Hearing, where Thelma Drake, Gary Zalas, Sondra Kendrick, and Barbara Booker Williams joined him in advocating for the concerns and needs of older adults. Their active engagement bolstered our appeal to transition from relying on

community organization grants to securing a dedicated budget allocation. However, with the city scaling back its grant budget, there's uncertainty whether we'll even maintain the same level of funding as last year. To strengthen our position, Gary Zalas proposed following the lead of other organizations by bringing clients to future hearings.

During the meeting, many seniors voiced their struggles and appealed for assistance, highlighting the urgency of our cause.

Steve then launched the idea of establishing a foundation to enhance our fundraising efforts and strategic fund allocation. Several similar agencies have already taken this step, and we have substantial unrestricted funds earmarked originally for legal fees related to the Hayden project. Since we've managed to avoid these expenses, reallocating these funds towards foundation establishment seems opportune. However, William Bane cautioned about potential repercussions, citing a case where an organization's ability to raise funds independently led to cuts in state funding. Steve acknowledged the need for careful navigation and committed to keeping the Board informed as we explore this avenue.

### **Finance Committee - William Bane, Treasurer**

Since the Finance Committee didn't convene in April, William Bane queried whether all members had thoroughly reviewed the financial materials provided by Wanda.

Brigid provided an update on the Revised Budget, noting that it's now in place, and the staff is gearing up to execute the planned expenditures until the end of the fiscal year. It's imperative that we expend the State funds by June 30th, 2024, and allocate ARPA dollars by the end of September, 2024, to avoid any return of unspent funds. She also highlighted the significant relief provided by the waiver of the 10% carryover limit on federal funds for this year, which will greatly ease our financial management.

**Thelma requested a motion to accept the March 2024 Financials. The Motion was given by Bob Holt, seconded by Sondra Kendrick, and all were in favor.**

### **Strategic Goal 1: Awareness of Services - Thelma Drake, President**

Thelma kicked off the Gala Review, celebrating its resounding success both financially and in terms of providing an enriching and enjoyable experience for attendees. Many guests expressed their support for future events. William affirmed his employer's backing and shared his table's admiration for the services offered, gaining a deeper understanding of our role in addressing the needs of older adults within the community. He also mentioned ongoing efforts by leadership to encourage volunteer involvement within our organization.

Steve chimed in, highlighting the impressive achievement of surpassing our initial fundraising goal by \$25,000, with a total of \$65,000 raised during the Gala. However, Sondra raised a point of concern regarding the Silent auction, which didn't meet expectations. This serves as a valuable lesson for future events, and we'll explore different approaches, possibly including a live auction format. Thelma expressed interest in reprising the magic show component, which was a memorable highlight of the evening, to which Steve affirmed it's under consideration.

Looking ahead to next year's Gala, as we contemplate expanding its scale, venue selection becomes crucial. Steve solicited suggestions from the Board, receiving proposals including Nauticus, Half Moon, the Aquarium, and the Chrysler Museum.

Continuing the discussion, Monika provided an update on the upcoming Public Hearing scheduled for June 4th at 1 pm at the Senior Services office. Its objective is to gather community input to update the development of a comprehensive Area Plan and Strategic Planning.

### **Strategic Goal 2: Staff Efficiencies – Steve Zollos**

Steve initiated the Staff Efficiencies reporting by introducing the organization's newest addition, Jane Constantineau, who assumes the role of Marketing Director. Jane introduced herself, emphasizing her extensive professional background, her passion for the nonprofit sector, and her vision for contributing to the organization.

Continuing with the update on Organizational Development, Steve informed the team that a three-month contract has been signed with Principal Strategies, with their work slated to commence on May 1st. Their scope of work encompasses evaluating aspects such as the hybrid work model, benefits, and pay scale. The insights gleaned from their assessment will be instrumental in guiding the organization towards optimal decision-making. Upon completion of their service, Principal Strategies will present their findings to the Board for consideration.

Regarding the evaluation of office space, Steve noted the potential need for expansion given the organization's growth trajectory. However, before pursuing this avenue, a thorough assessment is imperative to ascertain the current space's efficiency and explore potential adjustments to meet our evolving needs. Additionally, the option of utilizing space at the Planning Council office is being explored, although it's viewed as a contingency measure.

### **Strategic Goal 3: Board Effectiveness – Steve Zollos, Lynn Briley**

Lynn initiated the Board Effectiveness reporting by introducing a new candidate for the Board, Barbara Booker-Williams. Steve and Thelma had the opportunity to meet her, and she also participated in the recent Virginia Beach Budget Public Hearing.

**Thelma asked for the motion to accept Barbara to the Board. The motion was given by Gary Zalas, seconded by Amy Pucci and all were in favor.**

Lynn then reminded the Board of the two remaining Board seats designated for representatives from Southampton County.

Moving on, she opened the floor for discussion regarding the timing of both Board of Directors (BOD) and Executive Committee meetings. After considering everyone's preferences, it was agreed upon that a 10 am start time for meetings would accommodate the majority of the group.

Steve proposed a Bylaws Amendment concerning HRPDC Board Members. Recognizing that professional commitments often hinder HRPDC Board Members from attending our meetings, the proposal suggested loosening the Bylaws requirements to allow only one HRPDC member to attend our BOD meetings. Shernita Bethea deferred the decision to the CEO. She also announced her intention to step down from the Senior Services BOD after 18 years of service. Her seat will be passed on to another HRPDC team member, although she reassured the Board of her ongoing willingness to assist in any capacity. The upcoming full BOD Meeting will mark her final attendance as a Board member.

**Thelma Drake requested a motion to amend the Bylaws in regard to HRPDC Board Members. The motion was given by William Bane, seconded by Dick Grice, and all were in favor.**

**Strategic Goal 4: Sustainability - Steve Zollos, Dick Grice**

Dick Grice presented a compelling concept for addressing senior employment, highlighting the growing challenge faced by many seniors who cannot rely solely on savings and social security due to inflation and rising living costs. This financial strain often exacerbates social isolation among seniors. Unfortunately, the current job market predominantly favors younger individuals and offers mainly full-time positions, which may not align with the capacity of older adults. Furthermore, existing workforce development programs typically overlook seniors, emphasizing the need to establish dedicated initiatives that recognize their value and work ethic.

Dick emphasized the importance of identifying seniors who could benefit from re-entering the job market and educating the business community on the advantages of hiring older adults. This endeavor would require training, education, and an aggressive marketing campaign to advocate for the inclusion of older adults in part-time employment opportunities.

Steve inquired with Shernita about the Planning District Commission's consideration of such an initiative, to which she responded that employment-focused initiatives for seniors were not previously discussed. Thelma suggested the creation of a database to centralize available positions tailored to older adults.

Dick highlighted the funding barrier hindering the establishment of a senior-oriented work program at Workforce Development, citing a lack of resources and expertise in grant writing. Steve proposed a collaborative partnership to gather data and statistics and present a case to Workforce Development. Dick emphasized the need to secure grants to fund tailored programs for older demographics within Workforce Development.

Shifting to the Sustainability section, Steve reported on the State Funding Proposal developed by the team to increase funding for all Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) across the Commonwealth. The proposal outlines a \$4 million increase for the next fiscal year in the Statewide budget. However, DARS cannot sponsor or support this request, necessitating active participation from AAA directors across the State in advocating for the proposal with elected officials.

Brigid Miller brought to the Board's attention that Fran Richardson is attending her first BOD Meeting. She was greeted by Thelma and asked to share a little bit about herself with the group. Fran introduced herself, highlighting her career with Dominion Energy.

**Adjourn**

**With no further questions or business, Thelma Drake asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Caryn West, seconded by Gary Zalas, and all were in favor.**

Respectfully submitted by Monika Zajac-Lorke, EA 4/25/24

Approved by: