

JCICS Board Meeting
December 13, 2006
Conference Call

Attendees: R. Gibson, J. Sciortino, S. Pitkowsky, H. Stultz, L. Vollman, D. Murphy-Scheumann, L. Wetterberg, J. Peterson, T. DiFilipo, J. Ruben, R. Pearlman

Absent: K. Wallace (e), J. Rolsky (e), S.Wu (e)

Call to Order & Agenda: R. Gibson at 3:04 PM EST

CEO Report: T. DiFilipo

International Relations Initiative

Guatemala

The trip to Guatemala in early November was exceptional. It was extended by one day and culminated in a joint meeting including the JCICS delegation, John Lowell & Kathryn Cabral from DOS, UNICEF's Manuel Manrique, as well as attorneys Roberto Echeverria and Gorge Castillo. One of the attorneys (who had helped write the constitutional challenge to the Hague in 2003) presented 16 points that represented areas that all present could agree upon. The delegation had opportunity to visit a Hogar and also met with the First Lady's Office, UNICEF, DOS, Homeland Security, two Attorney Groups (Association in Defense of Adoption & Instituto de Derechos de la Nino e Familia), the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Secretaria de Bienestar Social de la Presidencia de la Republica.

At the end of November a one day meeting on Guatemala-related issues was held in Washington DC to gather together the caucus chairs, Hannah Wallace (FOA), Bruce Mossberg (Bethany) Traci Orr (Hope Int'l) and other key players, including Chris Huber (FTIA) and Chip Orr (For This Child).

Tom testified on behalf of JCICS before the House Subcommittee on International Relations during their Intercountry Adoption Hearing. Much of the conversation and question/answer period focused on Guatemala.

On December 4th a Congressional briefing regarding Guatemala was held. It was hosted by CCAI and at least 21 staffers were in attendance. JCICS, CIS, DOS, and Roberto Echeverria all participated in the meeting.

A few days later CCAI hosted eight members of the Guatemalan Congress for a series of approximately eleven meetings with various Senators and Congressmen. Together they represent a voting majority that committed to passing Hague legislation in Guatemala as soon as possible. The visit ended with a reception held at the Ethiopian Embassy and dinner with various JCICS members. They were also put in touch with Richard Klarberg

of COA who will provide them with the current standards and who may assist with the crafting of the regulations once the law passes in Guatemala.

Romania

JCICS met with a small Romanian delegation at the British Embassy last week. Good dialogue was held and issues outside of international adoption were discussed. The delegation also met with Paul Springer and other players a few weeks ago. The group complimented Romania on the progress that they have made on foster care. These opportunities are building good will and are creating possibilities for continued dialogue in the future.

Russia

Decree #268 was signed December 16 and went into effect on December 23. Lakhova was not supportive of this and asked that the Prime Minister remove his signature, but he refused. The protocols for accreditation still have not been released, though they are still saying it will happen any day. The decree did not address the issue of independent adoptions; this will likely not be brought up again until after agencies are re-accredited.

High Visibility Events

Most recently Tom has participated with a member agency on the Diane Ream show on NPR and the House testimony was aired on CSPAN.

Pledges

Pledges for the Global Awareness Campaign are almost all in. Approximately \$18-20,000 has been pledged for 2007. Efforts are being made to coordinate a gala fundraising event and key givers will be approached after the holidays.

Complaint Policy

Language regarding confidentiality in the complaint policy has been reformatted; no substantive changes have been made. It was clarified that the board is not made aware of actual complaints or their authors, simply the general nature and number of those that are made. The policy was also clarified to indicate that if a member commits an especially egregious action, JCICS does not have to wait 6 months to remove their name from the website.

Language may need further revision to indicate that the board creates policies but not the procedures to implement them, allowing room for the possibility of board review/comment on procedures as needed.

Kerry Marks is no longer able to serve as an alternate on the review committee. Discussion was held about who could serve as alternate and adding one additional regular

member. Further discussion was held that JCICS received a formal complaint against 23 member agencies involved with AMREX and a second complaint was rejected because it was improperly submitted. If it is resubmitted and both complaints are found to be valid, it may be necessary to add yet another member and or create another committee to work on them.

MOTION: To ask Rosio Gonzalez to serve as a member of the Review Committee and ask Meghan Hendy to serve as an alternate.

D. Murphy-Scheumann MOVED/ L. Wetterberg SECONDED

PASSED Unanimously

Executive Director's Report: J. Peterson

January Board Meeting

The January board meeting will begin at 8:30AM on Tuesday, 1/23/07. An email with the hotel address and contact information was sent to the board. The DOS/CIS meetings will be held at 2PM on Monday, 1/22/07. The meeting will adjourn at 3PM on Wednesday, 1/24/07.

2009 Conference Contract

JCICS was given a deadline of November 30, 2006 to sign the hotel contract for the 2009 Conference. Due to the time constraint the contract has already been signed. Jennifer will send further details to board via email. The conference will be March 24-28, 2009 at a rate of \$174/night. It is essentially the same contract as before with a few strategic changes.

Membership Report

Over 180 prospective new members have been identified. They have all been sent introductory letters and applications. Applications and newsletters have also been sent to renewing members. 15 membership applications for next year have already been received, as compared to 2 this time last year. 6 of those are new members, so it seems JCICS is off to a great start and positive numbers are anticipated despite the Hague.

New Board Listserv

A new board list serv using JCICS has been created. This decision was made due to an abundance of technical problems with Yahoo. The new email address for the board list serv is board-l@lists.jcics.org. Please note at the beginning of the address it is the letter "L" not the number "1".

Interns

JCICS is pleased to welcome two new interns starting in January. One is a student at American University and the other is a student at Georgetown University.

Secretary's Report: H. Stultz

Action items were reviewed.

MOTION: To approve the minutes from November 8, 2006.

S. Pitkowsky MOVED/ L. Vollman SECONDED PASSED Unanimously

Financial Report: L. Vollman & J. Ruben

IRI donations have contributed to additional income as compared to November 2005. JCICS has started collecting money from the membership drive, but it will not be counted until 2007. Other points to note include last minute donations received from Children's Charities in December and 2007 Conference Registrations begin today. YTD gross expenses are about \$450,000 and about \$13,000 for the month of November. That figure includes one time expenses of postage, holiday cards, JCICS applications and the Guatemala trip. Linda cashed a CD in the amount of \$46,000 to put into the main account. Anything that can be put back at the end of the year would be nice. In summary JCICS has brought in \$13,000 more in income than budgeted and expenses are about \$20,000 under budget. Staff will email December expenses to the board.

2007 Budget: T. DiFilipo & J. Peterson

A draft of the 2007 budget was emailed to board. Jen has worked diligently on it and tried to be conservative. For example, \$10,000 was budgeted for legal, but that amount will probably not be spent. The same holds true for other discretionary line items like the Global Awareness Campaign or an additional part-time employee for the entire year. IRI income was discussed. About \$102,000 has been committed and \$80,000 has been raised. It was requested that the IRI pieces be more clearly defined.

MOTION: To approve the basic outline of the 2007 budget and for the IRI pieces to be rearranged more clearly.

**L. Wetterberg MOVED/ D. Murphy-Scheumann SECONDED
PASSED Unanimously**

Board Meetings: T. DiFilipo, J. Peterson & R. Gibson

Discussion was held about how to extend the board meeting at the annual conference to maximize productivity and perhaps allow for the elimination of another meeting during the year. It was suggested that the meeting extended Saturday evening and Sunday, or do a full day on the Wednesday before the conference. Further discussion indicated that it was too difficult to indoctrinate a new board in a few hours and then begin business right away. The bylaws require that the BOD meets in person twice a year; the policy says it must be during the first and third quarters. It was then proposed that the old board meet

on Saturday morning from 6-8:30AM and the new board meets on Saturday afternoon at 1:30 to do introductions and elect officers for the coming year. This was agreed upon for the 2007 conference.

Nominating Committee Update: S. Pitkowsky & J. Sciortino

The board is requested to submit desired skill sets and names of potential candidates. Five members volunteered to serve on the nominating committee, but only three are needed.

**MOTION: For Susan Kupferberg (JCCA), Susan Myers (Lutheran Adoption Network) and Gary Gamer (Holt) to serve on the Nominating Committee.
D. Murphy-Scheumann MOVED/ L. Wetterberg SECONDED
PASSED Unanimously**

2007 Conference: J. Peterson

Jennifer is working on filling all the slots for the medical day. It has been hard to fill them all because several presenters had to withdraw due to the change in the timing of the conference.

Extra Issues: T. DiFilipo

An inappropriate email was sent to the members list serv. It has been removed from the archives and the ability for responses to be posted has been blocked. It is impossible to retract the original message. The member will be notified that their email was inappropriate and that their ability to post will be temporarily suspended. A public apology will go out tomorrow.

Vietnam: R. Gibson

The question was raised about JCICS speaking as one voice regarding adoption fees to help eliminate the bidding of one agency against another. Adoption fees will be discussed with DOS in the near future.

AMREX & Membership Issues: T. DiFilipo

JCICS is working with NCFCA to approach accredited or previously accredited agencies to assist/partner with individual families that have referrals and/or agencies that have been impacted by the AMREX bankruptcy. These agencies will be requested to assist with reduced or waived fees. The AMREX affiliated agencies will be asked to provide a clear option plan for all 198 families that have been impacted, not just the 82 with referrals. The options should include an offer to transfer to another program or to another agency. The upside for the adoption community as a whole is limitless, but for the individual agency is limited. JCICS and NCFCA are approaching this from the viewpoint of helping children be placed in permanent homes by advocating for sound policies for families.

Both organizations will be working with the Wall Street Journal, NPR and other media sources to get the message out to the broader press.

Next Board Meeting: In Person, January 22-24, 2007, Hampton Inn Alexandria, 1616 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 5:46PM EST.
S. Pitkowsky MOVED/ L. Wetterberg SECONDED** **PASSED Unanimously**

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Stultz, Secy

Action Items:

1. J. Peterson – email the BOD with details of 2009 Conference contract.
2. Staff – email December expenses to the BOD.
3. J. Peterson & L. Vollman – work on the 2007 budget with respect to the IRI line items.
4. BOD – send skill set and candidate suggestions to Sam and Jody.
5. Staff – contact author of inappropriate email and temporarily suspend list serv privileges.
6. Staff – email apology/explanation to membership tomorrow.
7. Staff – work to finalize and advertise AMREX plan.

Open Action Items from November 8, 2006:

1. Staff – add to future board call agenda discussion regarding what, if any, action JCICS should take in light of Jared’s recent Congressional testimony. Not public

Open Action Items from October 11, 2006:

1. J. Sciortino & S. Pitkowsky – begin board dialogue regarding future board needs and recruit additional Nominating Committee members.
2. Staff – put 2010 Conference on the next board call agenda.
3. Staff – gather more information regarding the AMREX investigation and post pertinent information on the website.

Open Action Items from September 20, 2006:

1. Staff & Board – form task force to investigate future board composition.

Open Action Items from September 19, 2006:

1. Staff – investigate post-adopt resources by state. (Education Committee working on this)

Open Action Items from June 28, 2006:

1. Staff – add to future BOD meeting agenda further discussion regarding who JCICS should reach out to in anticipation of the membership bylaw change, how

JCICS can better collaborate and with whom, as well as a policy for how the BOD can reject membership applications.

2. R. Pearlman – draft bullet points for regional training proposal for USCIS.
3. R. Pearlman – will send L. Vollman suggested opportunities of other insured accounts that JCICS may want to look into.