

JCICS Board Meeting  
December 17, 2008  
Conference Call

**Attendees:** R. Pearlman, H. Stultz, J. Rolsky, R. Gibson, K. Sacco, K. Wallace, L. Brownlee, K. Altweis Nicholson, A. Hayo, D. Johnson, T. DiFilipo, N. Fox, S. Cox

**Absent:** P. Singer

**Call to Order & Agenda:** R. Gibson at 3:09 PM EST

Hague Update

Thanks to everyone for their efforts regarding the board post to the membership and the developing survey regarding the Hague and its impact on JCICS members. The board chair has received numerous private posts expressing gratitude for the board's decision, tone and plan to assess membership opinion more thoroughly on this issue.

Paul Singer

Please continue to support Paul during this difficult time via his Caring Bridge website. He is currently undergoing treatment for an aggressive malignant brain tumor.

NCFA

The executive committees of JCICS and NCFA hope to have a conference call the first week of January to discuss future opportunities to collaborate given that they are without an Executive Director at this time.

**Secretary's Report:** H. Stultz

Open action items will be emailed to the board for review.

**MOTION: To approve the minutes from November 19, November 25 and December 11, 2008.**

**N. Fox MOVED/ L. Brownlee PASSED Unanimously**

**Financial Report:** J. Rolsky & T. DiFilipo

2009 Budget Presentation

Two budgets were presented at the September 2008 board meeting. The board selected one that it has been operating by to date. The treasurer made a recommendation that due to changing economic times that the 2009 budget not be presented and voted on at the last scheduled board call in November to allow time for additional modifications to be made and presented today.

The proposed budget represents a 15% decrease in expenditures over those of this year and a significant reduction in the number of programs, services and advocacy efforts. The major expense adjustments versus the 2008 budget are:

1. Elimination of all overseas trips (with the exception of one trip to Haiti in January 2009)
2. Increased rent (staff are looking into the possibility of subletting to offset this expense)
3. \$5,000 total budget for all in-person board meetings
4. Elimination of 1 staff position
5. Elimination of continuing education benefit
6. Elimination of salary increases
7. Reduction in outside services including but not limited to IT consulting, board consultant
8. Elimination of outside sponsorships
9. Utilization of pro bono legal services
10. Elimination of country specific initiatives & general services to Member Organizations

Discussion took place regarding various points of clarification. The trip to Haiti will be the third and final to present the Standards of Practice. If future advocacy efforts require trips, members will be asked to contribute to cover the associated cost. There is only enough in the proposed budget to cover the January 2009 in-person board meeting. JCICS will continue to cover expenses for those who cannot cover their travel costs or provide access for board members to participate by telephone. In-kind donations continue to be appreciated and board and staff will have to remain flexible about the scheduling of future meetings given current budget constraints. One staff position has been identified for elimination and a second one has also been identified if it becomes necessary. Though this budget may still be optimistic, there are various opportunities for potential funding that were not included. Staff are recruiting 93 Hague approved agencies that are not yet JCICS members and potential donors are also being developed. It will be clear by the end of January whether or not JCICS will hit its goal for income derived from membership. Further discussion took place that given the current economic realities, the board and staff will need to monitor the budget on a monthly basis and make corrections as needed throughout the year.

**MOTION: To accept the proposed 2009 budget and review on the monthly basis, making corrections as necessary.**

**L. Brownlee MOVED/ K. Wallace SECONDED PASSED by Majority, 1 abstention**

#### Management Letter

The management letter from the 2007 audit was sent to the board in October and again today.

**MOTION: To accept the management letter.**

**L. Brownlee MOVED/K. Altweis Nicholson SECONDED      PASSED**  
**Unanimously**

**Committee Reports: BOD**

Development: S. Cox

There was nothing new to report. Susan needs to meet with Tom to discuss where they are at in the process. Tom is continuing to cultivate potential donors.

Nominating Committee: N. Fox & H. Stultz

No confirmations of board candidates have been received. The committee continues to try to recruit members, however many are deterred due to financial constraints of their organizations. Committee members and staff are hearing that many members interested in running are choosing not to do so as they have heard they will need to cover their own expenses for board meetings. Further discussion was held that those being recruited should be informed that JCICS will financially assist all those who are unable to pay for all or a portion of their travel costs to in-person board meetings in D.C.

Performance Review: R. Gibson

Thanks to those who have contributed feedback for Tom's review. Susan and Kristine have volunteered to participate with Rick on a subcommittee to prepare the formal evaluation for the President.

**Board Liaison Reports: BOD**

Ethics Committee: J. Rolsky

The Ethics Committee has drafted proposed revisions to the Standards of Practice. Jared will follow-up with Vicki Peterson.

**CEO Report: T. DiFilipo**

*Permanency & Child Welfare*

Russia

Tom went to Russia to speak at the Ministry of Education and it was a success. Side meetings were held with the U.S. Embassy. UNICEF was there to present as well and stated that the MOE should use current international adoption methods (e.g. adoptive parent screening) for domestic adoptions but unfortunately also stated that international adoption has a dampening effect on domestic. Tom tried to counter that statement in his presentation even though the topic was supposed to be on post-placement services. An example of a "dampening effect" was that it was suggested that doctors create bogus

medicals on orphans being identified for international adoption to prevent domestic families from considering them. This was happening in Kyrgyzstan, which is why adoptions are currently at a standstill there.

### Vietnam

Tom has been working with CCAI, Senators Landrieu & Coleman on a proposed letter to the Prime Minister of Vietnam requesting his participation in negotiations for a new MOA and the eventual implementation of the Hague. A call will go out to the membership by the end of the day requesting members to contact their Congressional representatives to this end.

### Haiti

Tom made two trips last year and a third is budgeted for in January 2009. After lessons learned from the development of other Standards of Practice the draft was shared with orphanage directors, UNICEF, DOS, CIS and JCICS caucus members. The US Embassy is hosting a meeting where the SOP will be formally presented. The press, orphanage directors, JCICS member organizations with programs, and UNICEF will be present. UNICEF has been very helpful and has given credibility to this JCICS initiative by also announcing this effort.

### FFO Act

Tom has been working with the coalition & members of Congress. It appears this may be introduced after the inauguration and has received verbal support from Senators Clinton & Landrieu.

### *Research & Education*

#### Conference/Adult Adoptee Institute

Preparation and planning continues to be underway. Staff are recruiting other professionals in the field to try to help offset reduced attendance due to the current economic climate.

#### Knowledge & Resource Center – Adoptipedia

Tomorrow, JCICS will announce the launch of the *Joint Council Knowledge & Resource Center*, an interactive information-gathering-searching tool for adoption professionals and adoptive families. The *Resource Center*, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, is offered in direct response to Joint Council Member requests for consolidated, up-to-date information on a myriad of topics.

## Webinar Series

A new series is being developed regarding the U.S. government procedures for prospective adoptive parents.

## COA/Hague: J. Rolsky

It was shared that at least two agencies that were previously denied have now been given accredited status, with a third agency pending. It is unclear what process is being used and whether or not all denied agencies are being given the same opportunity. JCICS had argued to COA that the law allowed for a reconsideration process and since it was undefined in the regulations could give room for an appeal process.

Tom has also been nominated to serve on the board for COA and the vote will be held in March 2009.

## Membership

The membership drive is still underway. There are 41 members to date, 18 of which are new. Staff continue to send out letters recruiting various groups, including adoptive parent support groups and 93 organizations that received Hague accreditation but are not JCICS members.

## Development

The potential acquisition/merger with Firefly is no longer a possibility. Tom continues to work on cultivating donors.

## Communication

The board has been apprised of the various communications that go out including Mbali's Message and the E-brief. One goes out each month and another goes out every other month. The board had also suggested increased communication with membership. This was increased by 50% and has been maintained at that increase.

As a point of clarification Tom shared that there are two ways that JCICS receives adoptive family information. The first is through campaigns where agencies submit lists of impacted families and the other is by direct individual or group contact from adoptive families themselves. To date JCICS has solicited about 6,000 families. It has not utilized all names received, but rather only those that were received independent from member organizations.

**Next Board Meeting:** The in-person board meeting will be held January 27-28, 2009. All travel arrangements should be made and schedules provided to Joelle. The meeting with DOS will be held at 10am on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **Other Items & New Business: BOD**

### Hague Survey

Thanks to Kathy for the reformatting of the six proposed questions. A subcommittee of Kathy, Nancy and Jared was formed to finalize the survey. Tom requested that it be done by tomorrow or Friday at the latest if it is to be shared with the membership before the holidays. Staff have vacation plans and it will take 24-48 hours to set up the logistics.

### Guatemala

Nancy discussed the possibility of arranging for meetings with various agencies and officials to discuss the possibility of the adoption of children over the age of eight or those with special needs.

### Negative Press

An anti-international adoption article has recently circulated in major media outlets. JCICS put out an immediate response and has also challenged the Better Care Network who endorsed the article.

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 4:48 PM EST.**

**K. Wallace MOVED/ J. Rolsky SECONDED PASSED Unanimously**

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Stultz, Secy

### **Action Items:**

1. BOD & Staff – monitor 2009 budget on a monthly basis.
2. Performance Review Committee – finalize feedback to be shared with CEO.
3. J. Rolsky – follow-up with V. Peterson regarding Ethics Committees' proposed revisions to the SOP.
4. Hauge Subcommittee – finalize Hague survey and send to staff ASAP.
5. BOD – submit travel plans for January board meeting to Joelle ASAP.

### **Open Action Items from September 16, 2008:**

1. S. Cox, K. Altweis-Nicholson, N. Fox & J. Rolsky – work on plan for new affiliate acquisition.

### **Open Action Items from September 15, 2008:**

1. Staff – release Guatemala & Vietnam survey results.

### **Open Action Items from June 24, 2008:**

1. R. Gibson & J. Rolsky – examine the expansion of employee healthcare benefits.

2. T. DiFilipo – send statement regarding members advertisement of pending Hague status to Executive Committee for review.
3. Staff – post finalized Hague status statement on JCICS website.

**Open Action Items from April 23, 2008:**

1. Staff – notify BOD 24-48 hours before new website goes live.

**JOINT COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONFERENCE CALL**

**Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> 2008  
3:00pm EST**

---

---

**AGENDA**

1. Chair's Report & Introductions – *Rick*
2. Secretary's Report – *Heather*
  - Vote on November Board Meeting Minutes
  - Vote on Mid-November Board Meeting Minutes
  - Vote on December 11 Board Meeting Minutes
3. Treasurer & Finance Committee Report – *Jared, Tom*
  - Financials
  - 2009 Budget Presentation and Vote
4. Committee Reports
  - Development Committee Update – *Susan*
  - Nominating Committee Update – *Heather & Nancy*
5. Board Liaison Reports
  - Ethics Committee
6. CEO Report – *Tom*
  - Permanency & Child Welfare
    - Russia
    - Vietnam
    - Haiti Standards of Practice
    - FFO Act
  - Research & Education

- Conference
  - Adult Adoptee Institute
  - Knowledge & Resource Center – Adoptipedia
  - Webinar Series – USG for PAPs
  - COA/Hague Update – *Jared*
    - Denied ASPs receive accreditation
    - COA Board of Directors
  - Membership
    - Membership Drive
  - Development
  - Communication
    - Mbali’s Message
    - E-Brief
7. January Board of Directors Meeting
- All travel and hotel arrangements should be submitted
8. Other Items & New Business – *All*