

JCICS Board Meeting  
May 14, 2008  
Conference Call

**Attendees:** R. Gibson, S. Cox, T. DiFilipo, J. Rolsky, A. Schlicht, P. Singer, J. Ruben, R. Pearlman, K. Sacco, K. Wallace, L. Brownlee, K. Altwies, T. Fleeson, D. Johnson

**Not Present:** H. Stultz and N. Fox—both excused

**Call to Order & Agenda:** R. Gibson at 3:02 PM EST

**Chair's Report:** R. Gibson

Welcome

Update on Heather's delivery of a healthy baby girl; postponement of Secretary's Report, specifically the vote on the March meeting minutes. Joelle to take notes in Heather's absence.

**Secretary's Report:** Postponed to next meeting

**Financial Report:** J. Rolsky, J. Ruben & T. Fleeson

Prior to this report, Rick brought up the status of the audit. Joelle has completed post-visit requests from the Berry Group and will be available to answer any final questions posed by the auditor. The expected turnaround time is several weeks from Board call.

Financials reviewed go through May 9<sup>th</sup> and indicate that our bottom line is \$643K. This amount includes the \$75K received by the Kellogg Foundation as well as the \$50K pledged by Paul Singer. Our Program & Services income of \$160K is all based on conference returns. We were slightly under budget, as detailed below in the Conference Budget to Actuals report. Our Contributions & Support line, which reflects donations, is at \$140K and includes the Kellogg grant.

Taylor pointed out several expenses that required explanation. Specifically, travel and meeting expenses rose despite no international travel as a result of the conference-related expenditures. Training and development also rose. These costs are attributed to using PsychoEducational Resources to provide CEs at our conference; however, individual attendees pay this fee with their registration check—offsetting any fees to Joint Council.

Jared raised the question as to whether HR expenses will remain significantly under budget across the year. The office expects to use that money on the addition of new staff in the latter half of 2008.

A separate report was presented on the 2008 Conference Budget to Actuals. Total profits were \$54K (\$64K when including \$10K in future services at the Affinia Liaison), compared to \$59K in 2007. Specific areas of savings were highlighted, including significant savings in speaker fees, travel, A/V due to organizations lending projectors, and printing as a result of a new vendor and the Going Green Initiative. The food and beverage was \$67K, approximately \$16K less than what was budgeted. This food and beverage total included a 10% discount, as well as the discount negotiated due to hotel construction.

On the income side, conference registrations were approximately \$13K less than budgeted. This was mitigated, however, by staff exceeding expectations in both the sale of exhibitor tabletops and conference sponsorships.

Overall, the Conference numbers were much stronger than anticipated as a result of strategic planning by the staff, extra efforts to recruit participants and the negotiation of a financial discount stemming from hotel construction.

**Board Committee Updates:** S. Cox, R. Gibson, J. Rolsky

#### Development

Richard has put together a statement on Joint Council's competitive advantage in terms of funding. Susan would like to make some time at the Board meeting for the Development Committee to meet and go over the next steps. She will send the committee more specifics regarding the timing.

#### Complaint Policy

Rick suggested that the complaint policy procedure be tabled until a new policy is completely finalized. The previous policy had been submitted for review by an attorney, who found internal discrepancies as well as the omission of a section on appropriate responses. The suggestion was raised to revise the process so that materials are sent directly to a complaint committee, bypassing staff entirely.

**MOTION: To suspend the current complaint policy and procedure pending further review.**

**J. Rolsky MOVED/ K. Wallace SECONDED PASSED by Majority**

Rick will draft a letter so that this news is coming from the Board and will send it via the Board listserv for comment. The letter will be sent in response to any complaints that come to the office between now and the effective date of the new policy.

#### Financial

No new business, as previously drafted policies were approved by email vote March 20<sup>th</sup>

## **CEO Report: T. DiFilipo**

### International Relations Initiative

#### *Romania*

Tom appeared on a Romanian television program about intercountry adoption following an interview at the Joint Council office

#### *Russia*

Tom, along with several Joint Council members, participated in a videoconference that resulted in several media pieces shown in Russia

#### *Global Awareness Campaign*

Tom and Joelle attended the Christian Alliance for Orphans Summit in Fort Lauderdale, FL, to look into the feasibility of collaborating with religious organizations.

Tom participated as a guest speaker at Children's Home Society and Family Services' retreat in Silver Springs, MD.

In the past month, Joint Council hosted delegations from China, Nepal and Cambodia. We are also expecting delegations from Ethiopia and India to arrive in June. If they overlap with the June Board meeting, we will make arrangements for the Board to meet with them in-person.

#### *Vietnam*

Tom, Keith, John Meske and Gary Gamer met with Julie Furuta-Toy and Michelle Bond at the Department of State for more than two hours regarding the situation in Vietnam. As a result, the information for A Child Rights Campaign has been revised and the new anticipated launch date set for Friday or Monday. Tom will travel to Vietnam within a month's time to ensure a unified message is presented across the country.

#### *Guatemala*

All 2,900 cases are being reviewed to the extent of a birthmother interview. Joint Council is going to issue a statement to the Membership that we understand the situation and are continuing to dialogue as part of our advocacy efforts. He will also return to Guatemala in the near future.

#### *Africa*

In the first week of July, Tom will travel to Ethiopia, Rwanda and Nepal. Joint Council has been asked to assist in the development of a child protection system in Ethiopia, and Nepal has signed off on the terms and conditions that will allow adoptions to resume.

Joint Council is working with the Carter Foundation, UNICEF and Holt to assist with the development of child protection regulations in Liberia, but we will not be traveling there.

### *Haiti*

Tom will travel to Haiti following the results of a study recently conducted there.

### Firefly

Joint Council Member agency Firefly is experiencing a merger that did not go as intended. As a result, there is conversation about migrating their programs (specifically, training in Russia) and funding to Joint Council and possibly having one of their Board members fill a director-at-large seat. A Firefly staff member would also join Joint Council, as well as their funding operation and potentially two part-time workers.

Tom will hold a conference call with the Board Executive Committee to discuss this proposal in more depth and then offer a full presentation at the June in-person meeting.

### Families for Orphans and Vulnerable Children Initiative

The coalition is still aiming to introduce the concept of a policy shop within DOS that would control everything related to permanency (including adoption) during 2008. The coalition is working with Kathleen Strotman from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, who has agreed to facilitate the process to merge the coalitions into a unified group.

### Staffing Update

Emily Whitworth was selected as the first Margi Miller International Children's Services Intern. Emily is a Master's candidate at Cornell University and is specifically moving to DC for the summer for her internship at Joint Council. She is expected to start on Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

This is Adam's last scheduled Board call. Many thanks to Adam for his hard work across the past two years and welcome to Anna, whom we expect to continue this positive trend.

It was mentioned that the office has been experiencing some IT issues. Paul asked the office to send a list of these problems to see if he can help further.

**COA/Hague Update:** J. Rolsky

Joint Council is still waiting for COA's response to the proposal of potential redresses and a timeline for agencies caught in Hague accreditation limbo. Richard Klarberg called the office earlier that morning, but had yet to connect with Tom to issue an update.

There was also discussion regarding a potential lawsuit from agencies not happy with the Hague accreditation process.

The Joint Council office received a request on how to appeal a denial, but it was not clear whether this was in response to a specific denial or more of a preventative measure.

**Miscellaneous:** K. Wallace, R. Gibson

The idea was revisited about bringing Abbie Hayo to the Board. Abbie has extensive experience serving on the Boards of other organizations and organizing international medical missions. In the past, she has collaborated with Deb Murphy-Scheumann and Keith Wallace, both of whom highly recommended her.

**MOTION: To vote in Abbie Hayo as a Board Director-At-Large**  
**P. Singer MOVED/ R. Pearlman SECONDED PASSED by Majority**

**In-Person Board Meeting:**

Joelle sent hotel confirmation numbers via the Board listserv on May 13. However, due to same last-minute changes in the plans of several directors, she will be revising that list and sending a more accurate version in the coming days. All Board members should send their travel information to Taylor immediately to ensure prompt processing of their reimbursements.

The heads of each Board committee will contact their respective committee members regarding a meeting time and place for Monday evening. The staff will not be available Monday evening, as the formal meeting begins on Tuesday.

K. Altwies made a request for mergers to be added to the June in-person agenda.

**Questions/Comments:**

K. Altwies inquired as to the status of Ethica's claim to be working with the local state licensing authorities to share information on adoption practice and specific adoption service providers. The discussion was that this is a work in progress.

P. Singer shared that Jeffrey Raikes, a longtime friend and child advocate, has been chosen as the head of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Joint Council should consider future collaboration with Mr. Raikes once he is in his new position.

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 4:35 PM EST.**  
**J. Rolsky MOVED/ K. Sacco SECONDED PASSED by Majority**

**Action Items:**

1. Development Committee – meet at in-person June board meeting to discuss Richard's statement and next steps.
2. R. Gibson – draft letter regarding suspension of complaint process and send to BOD for review.
3. Staff – issue statement regarding current status in Guatemala to the membership.
4. BOD – send travel information to Taylor ASAP.
5. Staff – add topic of mergers to June board meeting agenda.

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

1. R. Gibson – share attorney feedback regarding Discipline & Complaint policy with Tom; call for volunteers to form new Ad Hoc committee.
2. A. Schlicht; BOD – BOD report any inaccuracies in the board contact list; Adam email final draft to the BOD.
3. BOD – review online biographies and submit any requested edits to Adam.
4. BOD – send names to Adam to recruit to fill empty chair positions.
5. T. DiFilipo – ask for clarification for transition cases for I-600 for countries that are now Hague.
6. T. DiFilipo, J. Ruben, S. Cox, K. Sacco – provide feedback to board regarding Adult Adoptee Institute to be held at the 2009 conference.
7. Staff – notify BOD 24-48 hours before new website goes live.
8. BOD – email itinerary and name of roommate for June in-person BOD meeting to Taylor by May 9, 2008.
9. R. Gibson – contact new board members about meeting for orientation during the Monday evening of the in-person June BOD meeting.

**Open Action Items from January 9, 2008:**

1. T. DiFilipo – inform review committee of board's intent regarding the wording of the complaint policy.
2. Staff – contact China caucus chair to draft bullet points for letter to CCAA.
3. N. Fox & J. Rolsky – review current SOP to revise sub par standards to Hague language.

**Open Action Items from January 8, 2008:**

1. Development & Finance Committee – develop charters.
2. Finance Committee – set membership rate for state licensing bureaus.
3. Development Committee – investigate existence of organization representing state licensing adoption professionals.
4. J. Rolsky, N. Fox & J. Sciortino – review Golden Cradle model and craft ethical practice statement.
5. BOD – further discuss revising the SOP to incorporate current Hague standards.

**Open Action Items from July 11, 2007:**

1. R. Gibson, J. Rolsky, D. Murphy-Scheumann – examine the expansion of employee healthcare benefits.

**Open Action Items from April 13, 2007:**

1. T. DiFilipo – email investment policy to the board for a vote.
2. BOD – acknowledge receipt, give comment and vote on proposed investment policy.

**Open Action Items from September 19, 2006:**

1. Staff and/or Education Committee – investigate post-adopt resources by state.