

South Carolina Autism Society Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting
held at SCAS headquarters, 806 12th Street, West Columbia, SC 29169
May 6, 2017

Members present:

Chair Becky Hughes
Denise Chastain
Susan Kastner *
James Mack
Kelly Nash
Joyce Nielsen
Ron Reames
Nina Saini
Brooke Thomas
SCAS President and CEO Kim Thomas
* denotes phone participation

Members Absent:

Edward Addison
Randall Sisam

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chair Becky Hughes. Introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was amended to include review/approval of the minutes from 8-27-16 and 3-18-17, and review/approval of the succession plan submitted by President and CEO Kim Thomas.

Approval of Minutes from 2-4-17

The minutes from the quarterly meeting of 2-4-17 were inadvertently not included in the Board packet and copies were not available. Approval of these minutes was tabled until the next quarterly meeting.

The minutes from the meeting of 8-27-16 were not included in the Board packet and copies were not available. Approval of these minutes was tabled until the next quarterly meeting.

The minutes from the committee meeting of 3-18-17 were included in the Board packet. Approval of these minutes was tabled until the next quarterly meeting.

Legislative Update

Kim Thomas presented the Legislative Update, provided by McGuireWoods Consulting.

- PSP Proviso Budget – “Our funding of \$500,000 has been adopted by the House and Senate and therefore it is locked in the budget. This means that the funding will be secure through the budget conference committee.” Governor Haley had requested a 3% reduction, but our new governor is not enforcing this.
- ABA Therapist Rates – ABA providers in SC work for rates below the rates in neighboring states. “A proviso was adopted in the Senate that will allow the transfer of some funds to

go towards ABA rates, but there is little expectation that this will bring the rates up to a suitable level for the providers.”

- ASD Insurance Definition Introduced – A bill has been introduced by Senator Katrina Shealy (R-Lexington) to update the definition of Autism Spectrum Disorder to match the definition in the latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V). When the bill is presented at the subcommittee level, Senator Shealy would like someone from SCAS to testify for the bill.

Treasurer’s Report

Brooke Thomas presented the Treasurer’s Report.

- SCAS is still looking for a part-time accountant to replace Harry Langley, who has not been prompt with information requests from Kim or Brooke and has not always been available for telephone conferences. The search has been difficult because it is part-time work and it must be done at the SCAS office (as opposed an accountant working from home). Another requirement is experience with accounting for non-profit agencies.
- Strides for Autism brought in \$7,000 more this year than last year.
- Salary expenses are down because Kim has been cutting personnel.
- We need to increase our fundraising so that we can help more families, and it seems that the public is tiring of fundraising walks. Brooke explained how a Color Run fundraiser worked at her child’s school.

Director’s Report

Kim Thomas presented the Director’s Report.

- SCAS outreach efforts have included transition fairs at schools and a panel for a class at the University of South Carolina.
- Case management continues to grow. SCAS now has 1,945 cases, up from last quarter’s total of 1,885.
- The Parent-School Partnership now serves 606 families, 152 of which are new. In the first quarter Parent Mentors worked with 226 schools, attended 197 meetings, and made 7,901 contacts.
- Information and Referral averages about 154 requests per month for a total of 615 requests in the first quarter. These requests came via phone, e-mail, voice mail, and postal mail.
- In March Kim received a letter from the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC). The letter states that since the three-year restriction from considering grant applications from SCAS has ended, future grant applications will require a specialized, on-site audit by a team assembled by the DDC. This audit “could involve significant time and expense.” The DDC has two grant applications from SCAS that Kim was encouraged by the DDC to submit, but the letter states that neither of them is being considered. SCAS has already been through a full forensic audit. Considering this new requirement, grants from the DDC might not be worth the trouble.
- Kim received an e-mail from the SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) concerning an “advance” received by SCAS (and other non-profits) in May, 2014, in the amount of \$25,702.56. This “advance” was to be used to recoup expenses incurred in

switching to DDSN's then-new accounting system. SCAS did not request the "advance," and Kim believes it was not presented as a loan at the time. Kim will look for the memo that accompanied the "advance" to verify this and determine whether this amount must be refunded to DDSN. The e-mail also stated that SCAS received a duplicate payment of \$65,684.32 in April, 2014. This was not caught by our accountant or by the auditors. The Board must decide how to pay back this amount.

New Business

- New Board members - Ron Reames and Nina Saini attended the meeting. Joyce Nielsen moved that they be accepted to the Board, and Kelly Nash seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- Executive Session - Denise Chastain moved and Kelly Nash seconded that the Board go into Executive Session. Brooke Thomas moved and Kelly Nash seconded that the Board leave Executive Session.
- The board informed Kim that SCAS is not in a financial position to give her a salary adjustment at this time.
- Kim has informed the Board of her resignation, effective 12-31-17. She is willing to stay on for up to six months to assist in transition. The board formed a search committee: Becky Hughes, Brooke Thomas, Kelly Nash, and James Mack. This committee will meet via phone conference on 5-11-17 at 6:15 p.m. The Board will also consider what might be done to retain Kim in some other capacity.

Ongoing Business

Review of updated bylaws – The Board went over the changes proposed at the 3-18-17 committee meeting. All Board members should review this document before the next meeting so that we can vote on approval.

Succession plan - Before the next meeting all Board members should review the succession plan prepared by Kim so that we can vote on approval.

Adjournment

Becky Hughes adjourned the meeting at 12:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Chastain, Secretary
May 6, 2017