The Center for Local Government Board of Directors Meeting

September 6, 2023

1:30pm – 3:00pm

CLG Offices (4015 Executive Park Dr. Suite 226, Cincinnati, OH 45241) or Virtual

In attendance: Jack Cameron, Amanda Zimmerlin (via zoom), Jim Lukas, Mike Rahall, Vicky Earhart (Board); T.J. White, Cody Smith (Staff)

Absent: None

* The meeting was called to order at 1:30pm
* July 5, 2023 board meeting minutes
  + MOTION from J. Lukas, seconded by J. Cameron, to approve amended meeting minutes (correcting a typo where Cheviot was referred to as Cleves.). Motion passed 4-0, V. Earhart abstaining
* CLG Annual Meeting
  + T. White stated that 86 people had signed up for the Annual Meeting. This is up from 59 people who had signed up at this point last year. J. Lukas asked what normal attendance was. T. White stated it is roughly 55-65 people.
  + J. Cameron asked how the Board could help with the Annual Meeting. It was determined that J. Cameron would open the meeting and introduce the Board members. He would then turn it over to T. White who would introduce CLG staff and eventually the speaker.
  + For the Leadership Academy graduation, A. Zimmerlin would announce names, and other Board members would hand out plaques.
  + J. Lukas asked what special recognition could be done for the Leadership Academy participants. It was determined that one approach could be to have an Academy alum talk about how they utilized their Leadership Academy experiences in their career.

* CLG Board Appointment Resolutions
  + MOTION by J. Cameron, seconded by V. Earhart, to nominate A. Zimmerlin and M. Rahall to new three-year terms on the CLG Board of Directors. Motion passed 5-0. A copy of the motion is available in 7/23-5/24 Board Meeting Binder
  + MOTION by V. Earhart, seconded by J. Lukas to nominate A. Zimmerlin as CLG Board President, V. Earhart as Vice President, and J. Lukas as Secretary / Treasurer. Motion passed 5-0. A copy of the motion is available in 7/23-5/24 Board Meeting Binder
* W.D. Heisel Memorial Scholarship Governance Motion
  + T. White stated that UBS Financial Services requires an updated corporate resolution every 5 years. This authorizes T. White and 3 CLG Board members to make decisions on behalf of the scholarship account. This was last updated in 2018.
  + J. Cameron asked what the purpose of UBS was. T. White stated that the Heisel Account is managed through UBS. This arrangement began when former Executive Director Lee Meyer started the scholarship. At the time UBS was Gradison McDonald.
  + J. Cameron asked why CLG uses UBS too manage the fund. T. White stated he was not sure why exactly UBS was used. J. Cameron asked whether there were any stipulations that came with changing anything about the account (e.g. moving to a new investment account). T. White stated that he would research.
  + V. Earhart asked if there were any tax implications. T. White stated he would talk to SJS Consulting (CLG financial advisor).
  + T. White also stated he would talk to Lee Meyer about why UBS is the holder of the account, and to get additional context.
  + J. Lukas asked for background information on Lee Meyer. T. White stated the Lee Meyer was the Executive Director of CLG in the 1990s. Donald Heisel was her husband.
  + J. Lukas asked where the money for the scholarship comes from. T. White stated that there is roughly $49,000 in the scholarship account, and that this money was raised over the prior 20 years. It is NOT related to CLG’s budget or general fund. CLG’s role is to manage the scholarship, but it is not CLG’s money. V. Earhart stated that she thinks it was set up that way so that the scholarship could continue even if CLG ceased to exist.
  + T. White and V. Earhart would look through old files to get context on how the Scholarship was initially funded, and why UBS / Gradison McDonald was chosen.
  + V. Earhart asked what the amount of the scholarship is, and how it compares to the past. T. White stated that when he began as Director, it was a one-time $1,500 scholarship. It was then raised to $2,500. Currently, it is a $4,000 scholarship, with half given out in the fall semester, and half given out in the spring semester.
  + J. Lukas asked whether there should be an application question pertaining to whether additional scholarships had been received by applicants. T. White said this could be added if the Board wanted it.
  + T. White stated that there still needs to be three members nominated for the corporate resolution so that there is decision making authority.
  + MOTION by J. Cameron, seconded by M. Rahall to appoint T.J. White, Amanda Zimmerlin, Jim Lukas, and Vicky Earhart to be named on the W.D. Heisel Scholarship Corporate Resolution. Motion passed 5-0.
* CLG Strategic Plan
  + C. Smith presented the 2024-2028 strategic plan and explained the development process for each of the five strategic plan goals.
  + C. Smith also stated that the new strategic plan will be in a new one-page format. Having a clear and concise strategic plan document allows for people new to CLG to more quickly ascertain the motives of CLG.
  + J. Cameron stated that the content of the new plan is good; however, both the new plan and other CLG marketing materials could benefit from some investment with a marketing or communications professional.  He also stated that it is best to have the main takeaways up front in order to entice audiences to continue reading.
  + V. Earhart stated that while she does not disagree with the previous statement, she posed the question of whether the investment in professional services would be worth it for materials that are primarily used by those already in CLG’s membership. J. Cameron stated that the investment would help with new audiences- either new managers coming in or new communities / partners.
  + J. Lukas concurred and stated that it may be worthwhile to pay for more professional marketing materials that will be primarily utilized in recruitment.
  + T. White stated that CLG staff will explore the possibility of hiring a professional marketing/communications consultant to work with CLG.
* 2024-2026 Budget Projections Report
  + Revenues increased in 2023 due to a return to 2021 dues levels and membership growth. This will lead to increased revenues over the next three years. Expenses are expected to dip into the CLG cash reserve by roughly $6,000 in 2024, but could dip as much as $16,000 in 2026. T. White stated that 3 years out, CLG’s revenue projections are generally accurate within 2.5%, but expense projections are generally 10.7% higher than actual expenses. The $16,000 dip in 2024 seems unlikely.
  + J. Cameron stated that it would be beneficial to have a comprehensive summary of the projections as the introduction to the document.
  + J. Cameron asked about the performance of CLG’s investment account. T. White stated that the account is up by roughly $10,000 in 2023 (4.7% growth). The Board asked to staff to benchmark how that growth compares to the market and to similar plans.
  + Back on the topic of communications consultants, T. White stated that CLG has a healthy cash reserve to take on costs associated with hiring one. T. White also stated that CLG has the cash reserve to invest in technology upgrades.
* West Chester Township / Liberty Township Solid Waste Bid
  + T. White stated that CLG is consulting on the bid itself, but will not get involved in the political process. He went on to say that even if the Townships do not pursue this project, working on the bid is good customer service.
* Finance for Non-Finance Professionals Training
  + J. Lukas provided feedback that the training session could be improved by looking at what makes up the nuts and bolts of what non-finance professionals needs to know about finance. For example, auditing is likely not as important as other topics.
  + J. Lukas asked if trainings such as this could be conducted as a series- that way people could tailor their session to their interest and skill level.
  + T. White stated that the sub topics of the training were determined by outreach visits and consultations with the trainers when the session was first conducted in 2022. The feedback CLG staff received throughout the early part of 2023 was to repeat the 2022 training.

* The meeting adjourned at 3:10pm