



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

PRESENT FROM BOARD:

Tawny Espinoza, Randy Brown, Brandi Coleman, Justin Aubert, John Flanagan, Dave Hayden, Jeff Franklin, David McKendry, Krista Ubersox

EXCUSED ABSENCE(S):

Tamara Krizman

PRESENT FROM STRIVE:

Grant Jackson, Mary Anne Lawrie, Chris Bergquist

OVERVIEW OF MEETING
No conflicts of interest were identified.
Minutes from previous meeting were reviewed and approved.
Financials were presented and approved.
Grant provided state and organizational updates.

A quorum was achieved at 12:01 p.m. and the meeting was called to order. No conflicts of interest were identified.

Brandi announced she will have a cookie tasting event at STRiVE the third week in November to provide cookies and business cards for Brandi's Blessings to attendees.

MINUTES FROM 08/26/2025

Minutes were presented.

It was M/S/P (Espinoza/Ubersox) to approve the 08/26/2025 minutes as written.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Chris reviewed the August financials highlighting the net income of \$18K aided by modest donations. Year-to-date reflects a net income of 189K, helped by \$14K along with the hail damage reimbursement that was received last month.

Revenue was approximately \$400K higher primarily due to better attendance and timing of reimbursements.

Personnel expenses remain stable due to fewer vacancies in comparison to last year.

Operating expenses were close to forecast. There were no big-ticket items for the month.

Operating income is slightly above forecast due to the hail damage reimbursement.

Actuals for the next 10 months will end the year on a positive note if there are no dramatic changes between now and then.

Attention turned to the balance. Chris informed Committee members that he was able to obtain a new contact at Health Care Policy and Finance (HCPF) and was able to resolve program revalidation issues allowing claims to be processed more efficiently and will be reflected in the September financials. Chris also shared that he closed on the sale of 3301, netting \$375,251, which will be recorded as a gain on sale in the September financials as an extraordinary item.

Personnel expenses were lower than forecast due to unfilled positions.

One member wondered about the outcome of the Garden Groove concerts. Chris reported the concert series was not financially successful, with inclement weather, poor attendance, and significant costs, particularly for national acts. Next year we will be considering hiring local bands to reduce expenses.

It was M/S/P (Franklin/Ubersox) to approve the August Financials as presented.

PRESIDENT/CEO REPORT

Grant expressed appreciation to the Board members who attended the recent tour of Alida's Botanical Gardens and Sugar & Ice and highlighted the positive feedback received. Participants who attended described the tour as informative and enjoyable along with expressing their appreciation for the opportunity to gain experience and connect with staff at the facilities.

Leadership Team decided to maintain the 1.6% rate increase for host homes. The decision was made to maintain provider stability and avoid any potential dissatisfaction among them.

Grant informed the Committee that the State has finally signed the Early Intervention contract though it still requires some amendments.

Grant announced that a new Behavior Manager has been hired, who has a doctorate and experience in special education. Ariel has agreed to provide the clinical supervision while she pursues her BCBA certification. There is also a possibility that some of her current staff are interested in working at STRiVE which could help address the staffing challenges in the behavioral line positions that we have been experiencing.

Grant commented that STRiVE will not be taking any position on the latest news about autism and Tylenol.

The topic turned to Leadership Team's decision to implement a 5% across the board increase to enhance retention and competitiveness in the market, noting the organization's strong financial performance. One member raised concerns about the potential compression

issues due to upcoming minimum wage increases, with Grant acknowledging the challenges faced during previous wage adjustments. The estimated cost is \$300K annually. Both Chris and Grant recognized the need to maintain competitiveness despite being at the lower end of nonprofit pay scales locally. The last raise given was 5% in 2020 and pointed out that the only group affected by the minimum wage increase would be the client class. One member noted that their non-profit follows a different approach with annual merit-based raises of 1-3%. The group also discussed the process for Grant's performance evaluation and potential raise, which would be overseen separately by the Chair and Co-Chair. All Board members expressed support for a proposed 5% pay increase for staff.

The group discussed compensation challenges, particularly for mid-level positions, i.e., Behavior Directors, where market comparisons are difficult due to organizational differences and varying pay scales across locations. The Board explored the possibility of conducting a comprehensive salary study through Alliance, which could provide valuable data for making informed decisions about compensation. The discussion highlighted the need to balance competitive wages with retention of key staff, while maintaining a collaborative relationship with their main competitor, Ariel, by keeping their rates in alignment with each other.

One member requested to review Grant's original contract terms to determine if it automatically renews and to understand the full compensation package, including non-monetary benefits like PTO and flexibility. Grant and Chris reported that there was no formal written contract, only an offer letter and clarified that Leadership Team members, including Grant, have unlimited PTO accrual and can sell back unused time, while other employees cap at three hundred hours.

Brandi announced that she is planning a cookie tasting for the second week of November at STRiVE and invited Board members to participate. Brandi's Blessings will also be conducting a holiday promotion offering a buy-one-get-one-half-off deal on cookies through the holiday season.

Chris shared plans for the Harvest Illuminated event with a Day of the Dead theme, noting they will use fewer pumpkins and instead focus on the use of luminaries to reduce maintenance issues. One member suggested that we reach to Dual Immersion Academy about involving students in the event.

It was M/S/P (Ubersox/McKendry) to adjourn the meeting at 1:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnne Lawrie
Senior Executive Assistant

Approved on 10/28/2025 (Coleman/Krizman) via Zoom