

MINUTES

Committee Members in attendance: Al Whitesides, Brandy Bowman, Chavaun Letman, Jane Hatley, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Kit Cramer, Leslie Anderson, Mistie Reising-Cogbill, Philip Belcher, Rich Johnston, Robert Pressley, Susan Mims, Wendy Wieber

County support staff in attendance: Rachael Nygaard, Michael Frue, Burnett Walz, Trish Wallin, Angelyn Johnson

Welcome and agenda review by Jasmine Beach-Ferrara.

Virtual meeting reminder: Identify yourself when speaking. All votes will be conducted by roll call. This is a public meeting. If any community members are in attendance, there will be a time for public comment at the end of the meeting.

Old Business

- Reminder of grant review and meeting schedule:
 - April
 - Additional meeting on April 20 extended time from 12:00 to 2:30 pm
 - Possible additional meeting (if needed) on April 27 extended time from 12:00 to 2:30 pm
 - Recommendations due to Budget Office by April 30
 - Universal PreK ad hoc group
 - The ECE Committee was scheduled to take the month of May off, but due to the timeline of the Universal Pre-K presentation to the Board of Commissioners on June 1, it was recommended the committee meet in May to review the ad hoc group's recommendations. Philip Belcher made a motion to add a committee meeting on May 18 from 1:00-2:30 pm. Rich Johnston seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
 - The ad hoc group met last week and are thinking through the research that is needed and different possible scenarios. They have met with Stacey Bailey about NC PreK as well as other NC communities to review their models. Their presentation will summarize the successes of the previous/current grants, NC PreK strength and gaps, other models (including 4 in NC), and bring a recommendation for further study of Pre-K expansion.

New Business

- Grant funding recommendations
 - Jasmine invited the committee to hold approximately \$100,000 to fund the process around expanding PreK. These funds will be awarded through an RFP or a special grant process.
 - Rachael provided an overview of the different funding scenarios, including the existing multi-year commitments, the funds for the classroom at Avery's Creek, etc.

- Burnett presented the funding recommendation spreadsheet. The committee agreed to fund those projects with 10 or 11 committee member recommendations for funding at the median amount for the initial scenario. Then, they considered partial funding for those with recommendations from 9 committee members. After going through some funding scenarios, it was decided to lower the amount that is held for expanding PreK to \$69,000.
- Kit Cramer made a motion to explore fully funding the Buncombe County Schools request for \$1,000,000. Jane Hatley seconded the motion. The motion carried with 12 in favor and 1 opposed. The committee began discussing different scenarios of how to fund the project at the full amount, but due to time constraints, it was paused until next week's meeting.
- The committee would like information on the number of slots created and number of slots maintained for all projects added to the spreadsheet before the next meeting. The committee also requested staff gather information from Buncombe County Schools/Verner about financing cost (\$200,000), information about timeline of implementing new slots, other possible funding sources).

Announcements

- There were no announcements

Public Comment

- Pepi Acebo, Corrie Price and Amy Barry participated in Public Comment.

Next Meeting: Next meeting is April 27 at 12:30 pm.