



**BALTIMORE CHILDREN & YOUTH FUND, INC.**  
**TRANSITION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
January 20, 2021

**MINUTES**

The meeting of the Transition Board of Directors of the Baltimore Children & Youth Fund, Inc. was held on January 20, 2021 via video conference.

**Board Members in Attendance:** Dion Cartwright, Chair; Erika Seth Davies, Vice Chair; Kirsten Allen, Vice Chair; John Morris, Treasurer; Jacqueline Caldwell; Catherine Benton-Jones (arrived late)

**Board Member Absent:** Julia Baez, Secretary; Earl El-Amin

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The Meeting was called to order by the Chair, Dion Cartwright, at 6:40 p.m.

**I. Welcome & Review of the Agenda – Dion Cartwright, Board Chair**

Cartwright welcomed the Transition Board of Directors and public to this meeting of the Baltimore Children and Youth Fund, Inc. and acknowledged the historic day, Inauguration Day.

Cartwright reminded the attendees of BCYF's purpose: to create new opportunities for the city's young people to learn, thrive and succeed. Cartwright also stated BCYF's status and responsibility as a nonprofit organization stewarding public funds.

Cartwright reiterated BCYF's core values of racial equity, community ownership, intergenerational leadership, and collective decision making. She highlighted that the organization's commitment to racial equity comes in response to the failure of public, private and philanthropic sectors to adequately invest in Baltimore's people and communities of color, causing sharp disparities. As such, BCYF's commitment includes funding and providing hands-on support to nurture Black-led community organizations and supporting high-quality programming for children and youth of color.

Cartwright then shared the meeting's focus: BCYF's grantmaking and operational work to support the creation of a strong institution that lives its values. Cartwright outlined the following items of the meeting agenda: a review of the November 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting's minutes, a review of the first 6 months of BCYF, Inc.'s work and status of the organization's work and development, a financial report, updates from the standing Board committees, and a Grantee Spotlight on The Maryland Book Bank.



**II. Meeting Minutes from November 18<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting** – Dion Cartwright, Board Chair

Cartwright announced that the Board had received the draft of the meeting minutes from the November 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. She asked if there were any amendments or comments, and there were none.

Caldwell moved for approval of the minutes. Morris seconded the motion. The November 18<sup>th</sup> BCYF, Inc. Board meeting minutes were unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Note: Catherine Benton-Jones had not yet joined the meeting. However, the members that were present constituted a quorum.

**III. Transition Status Update** – Kera Ritter, Transition Manager

Ritter gave an overview of the work that has been done over the organization’s first six months, presenting the BCYF, Inc. Year-End Review Transition Report.

Ritter highlighted BCYF’s dual work of building an infrastructure prepared to carry out BCYF’s mission, vision and values after the transition period ends in December 2021, while continuing its daily operations and administrative grant work. This operational work included overseeing a portfolio of 78 grantees in 2020.

Ritter went over the year’s development, and how BCYF began the year focusing heavily upon the grantees, and later transitioned more toward a focus on institution building around September 2020.

Ritter highlighted significant milestones and developments in the 2020 year in all areas of BCYF’s work: the Transition Board, Portfolio Management and Technical Assistance and Grantmaking, Communications, Operations, and Institution Building.

**IV. Treasurer’s Report** – John Morris, Board Treasurer

Morris began his report on BCYF’s financial management status, by stating that BCYF is committed to transparency and public accountability in the use of public dollars.

Morris stated that BCYF supports 78 organizations, offering programmatic support as well as one-on-one technical assistance—in addition to over \$9.2 million in continuation grant funding. Morris reminded the Board that BCYF has completed the disbursement process, for the grant cycle ending April 30, 2021.



Morris highlighted that BCYF has completed its first six months of activities as the permanent fiscal agent. He recalled that BCYF is currently on a calendar year for its finances and will begin to report on a fiscal year that matches the City's fiscal year as of July 1, 2021.

Morris stated that BCYF is continuing to be a good steward of public resources through its internal controls and collaboration with the Fund for Educational Excellence. He introduced Chuck Adkins, Chief Financial Officer for the Fund for Educational Excellence.

Adkins provided an overview of BCYF's finances.

## V. **Committee Reports** – Dion Cartwright, Board Chair; Committee Members

Cartwright introduced the Committee Reports. BCYF has four Board committees that are charged with different aspects of the organization's mission. Cartwright stated that committee members will share status updates with the attendees regarding each committee's purpose and its current work. Cartwright also introduced each committee and the member presenting.

### a) Community Engagement & Communications Committee – Jacqueline Caldwell

Caldwell shared the Community Engagement & Communications Committee's charge: Elevation, Community Building, and Innovation.

Caldwell then updated the group on the Committee's work. The Committee has continued its engagement in the planning of the BCYF Grantee Showcases, and was integral in designing the second Grantee Showcase held on December 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Caldwell invited the attendees to visit the BCYF Facebook page to view recordings of the event, which showcased 18 grantee organizations. Caldwell stated the Committee will continue showcasing grantees as a regular part of their community engagement work.

Caldwell shared that the Committee, in conjunction with the Community Engagement & Communications Team, will focus on community-based technical assistance in 2021. The goal of community-based technical assistance is to build up and support the ability for grassroots organizations to receive funding from BCYF, Inc. and other funding sources. She outlined the following focus areas for 2021:

- First quarter: fiscal sponsorship/infrastructure.
- Second quarter: youth development/leadership.
- Third quarter: safety/violence prevention.
- Last quarter: youth employment/entrepreneurship.



Finally, Caldwell stated that the Committee is focused on shifting the narrative of who is considered an “expert” in youth-serving activities to value the contributions and expertise of communities. A goal of this work is to ensure that Black and other people of color are driving how youth-service happens in the City.

b) Audit Committee – Erika Seth Davies

Seth Davies shared the Audit Committee’s charge: to annually retain or renew the retention of an independent auditor to conduct the audit and, upon completion thereof, shall review the results of the audit and any related management letter with the independent auditor review and review any matters requiring an audit or independent review of internal practices of the Corporation, including any conflicts of interest.

Seth Davis stated that the Audit Committee is meeting regularly and is in the process of creating a request for proposals (RFP) for an independent auditor to perform BCYF’s first audit and subsequent annual audits and state and federal tax filings. This work will continue until an independent auditor is selected at the beginning of 2021.

c) Race Equity & Inclusion Committee – Dion Cartwright on behalf of Julia Baez

Cartwright first shared the Race Equity and Inclusion Committee’s charge: to annually review the policies and practices of the Corporation for alignment with the Corporation’s values detailed in the Preamble of these Bylaws and produce a report for distribution to the Board and general public.

The Committee is also is tasked with ensuring that BCYF has a youth-centered culture and makes recommendations for how to achieve this through the Board structure, creation of youth councils/advisories, and onboarding for youth and adult Board members.

Cartwright then relayed the update on the Committee’s work. The Committee is working to develop key definitions, benchmarks for success in achieving the organization’s values, and training on youth-centered culture for current and future Board members. The Committee is focused on developing a plan for assessing the organization’s alignment with race equity in its internal operations and engagement in the community through an Annual Equity Assessment. To that end, the Committee will be developing a request for proposals in 2021 to carry out the first Annual Equity Assessment.

The Committee also will be working with the Community Engagement & Communications Team and the entire organization to create meaningful youth participation and voice in all of BCYF’s operations.



d) Executive Committee – Kirsten Allen

Allen shared the Executive Committee’s charge: to make recommendations to the Board for its consideration, and this committee is to evaluate the Executive Director, once this position is hired. The Executive Committee also has the ability to make decisions when the Board is not in session.

Allen stated that the Executive Committee has created a hiring committee to develop the process for hiring BCYF, Inc.’s first Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer. This committee’s goal is to hire an Executive Director in the first half of 2021.

**VI. Grantee Spotlight: The Maryland Book Bank** – Dion Cartwright, Board Chair

Cartwright introduced the Grantee Spotlight, which provides an opportunity for the public to learn about the work of a BCYF grantee and hear directly from the organization. Cartwright encouraged attendees to tune in to future meetings hear from organizations doing important work to support children and youth in Baltimore City.

Cartwright introduced the grantee organization, The Maryland Book Bank, and their representative, Mark Feiring, Executive Director.

Feiring provided an overview of the vision, mission, origin of The Maryland Book Bank and its current work in making books accessible for free to children and youth in Maryland.

**VII. Adjournment** – Dion Cartwright, Board Chair; meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

*Julia Baez*

Julia Baez (Apr 7, 2021 14:45 EDT)

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Julia Baez  
Secretary