

**Fox Valley United Way**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**8:30 am –10:00 am**  
**Tuesday, December 14, 2023 – Via Zoom**

1. Call Meeting to Order—CEO Deborah at 8:31a

2. Roll Call

**Board Present**—Mark, Joe E., Mansa, Stacey, Kelly, Michele

**Absent**—Karen, Laura, Terese, Joe D., Maria

**Staff**—Deborah, Lisa joined at ~ 9:00a

**Guest**—Weber & Associates—Gabriela Fedmasu

3. Approve Minutes – November 2023

4. Chairman of the Board's Report—No report

5. Committee Reports

**Finance—Audit Report will be presented by Auditors – Weber and Associates**

A copy of the Draft Audit Report for year ending June 30, 2023 was provided to the Board for review. Gabriela stated the FVUW records were found to be complete and accurate. The financials are materially correct. She highlighted many of the year-over-year net changes. She concluded with her comments and praise for the improvements in the way our Board and leadership has developed our financial records over the past year, and that we have met the deadlines. It has been a learning process, and the hard work has paid off. Deborah recognized Bookkeeper Nancy her support of the work. Kelly made a motion to approve the Audit, and Stacey seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

6. Chief Executive Officer Report

**Holiday Assistance**--This year's sponsorships were the highest we've ever supported. We started last Friday with a deficit of 148 children. Denise Crosby's article in the Beacon News ran on Friday and by Monday morning we were down to 68 without sponsors. The Naperville Sun picked up the story on Monday and by Tuesday, we were down to "only" 28 children. Wednesday morning JD received a call from a man in Arizona who was responding to a personal appeal JD made to a current sponsor, and this man, along with his local family in Aurora, agreed to take all remaining children on our list! We found sponsors for ALL of our children. Deborah acknowledged everyone who stepped up and shared our appeal and helped to make this happen. Michele and Stacey doubled the number of sponsorships at their organizations. The COA had a total of 34, and Rush had a total of 83. A truly amazing effort! We worked together to pull this off! Between the sponsors who stepped up, the donations we received and the money we had from last year – All 502 children will have something under the tree. In 15 years... it has never been this type of struggle. Distribution will take place on Saturday, Monday, and Monday night. Our staff has been working so hard, and Deborah acknowledged the incredible time and effort they have committed to make this project successful this year. She will be taking them out for a holiday lunch on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

The office will be closed for the holidays on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> and since we do not give any type of financial year-end bonus to staff, Deborah would like to reward their outstanding efforts this season by giving them an extra day off the Friday before New Year's – the 29<sup>th</sup> as a day off.

7. Committee Reports

**Finance** (continued from above)—October and November 2023 financials will be reviewed in January.

**Nominating**—Diana McClaren has accepted the board position that was approved last month. She is scheduled for a Board Orientation in January, and time to meet with Rosa.

**Community Resource Committee**—No report

**Impact / Investment**—Lisa is working on a program to offer the Dolly Parton Imagination Library which provides a free book once a month to children ages birth to 5. This will truly make an *Impact* in our communities. This is an initiative that many United Ways are already supporting across the nation, and several of our partner United Ways locally are funding this initiative. It is in alignment with our early childhood focus and has become a State of Illinois focus as well. Lisa showed several slides and talked about the statistical success of this program. Over 224M books have been shipped to date. In order to participate, FVUW will reach out to local partners in the various community zip codes, to make donations to us to help pay for the program. The cost is \$26/year per child, with the possibility of the state's reimbursement of approximately 40%.

8. **Engagement**—Women United

- The first big event was the Power of the Purse fundraiser. Society 57 hosted and provided their facilities as an in-kind donation. 82 tickets (\$100 ea.) were sold and an additional \$500 in raffle tickets were sold the during the event. Rick Guzman, Neighbor Project director, made a short video presentation about the importance of home ownership in building strong communities. The Neighbor Project is the recipient of the event proceeds in the amount of \$8,700!
- Look for more details about our February meeting/event where we will be discussing the book *"Maid"*.
- The committee has \$800 in their account to start 2024.

9. Program Updates—SPARK

- Adrianna, Ivette, and Rosa attended a 3-day training in Rockford for Opening Doors. This is an evidence-based program developed specific for Latino parents with children ages birth to 5. Kassia is already trained to facilitate this course. It will be a 10-week course to support parents of all cultures to be the child's first teacher. It helps parents to navigate the structure of preparing children for school developmentally, socially, and emotionally.
- SPARK is also looking at enhancing their screening process to expand beyond just developmental screening but also supporting social and emotional screenings by supporting parent education along the importance of mental health in young child in preparedness for school and life. We are looking at investing in software that will enhance our ASQ screening (Ages and Stages) and allow us to process those screenings more effectively within the community. The enhancement of the software is being financially supported through the Grant we received earlier in the year from the INC. Board
- SPARK has expanded their screenings to once a month to include North Aurora and Montgomery as requested by community partners, and twice a month in Aurora at Santori Library and the Eola Public Library.
- We have started the focus to update the SPARK data sheets.
- Collaboration Activities: The City of Aurora Educational Commission board has directly asked Rosa to provide SPARK data to the Commission on efforts and results around Kindergarten Readiness data here in Aurora.
- SPARK had their Monthly SPARK Collaboration Meeting in person this month, they had 23 attendees representing different agencies.

10. Development—Fundraising updates:
  - Giving Tuesday \$2,295.00 raised
  - Wahlburgers \$25.00 raised

11. Next Meeting Date—January 11, 2024

12. Adjournment—Approximately 9:28a

**NOTE:**

The Board secretary was not present for the meeting, so the minutes were transcribed from the Zoom recording made during the meeting.