

STATE OF CONNECTICUT HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AUTHORITY
Grant Committee Special Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2020

The Grant Committee of the State of Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority held a special meeting via teleconference at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, September 11, 2020.¹

The special meeting was called to order by Dr. Estela Lopez, Committee Chair, at 9:04 a.m. and upon roll call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT: Dr. Estela Lopez, Committee Chair
Peter Lisi, Board Chair
Anne Foley

ABSENT: Barbara B. Lindsay, Esq.

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Angelini²
Lawrence Davis
Susan Martin

ALSO PRESENT: Jeanette W. Weldon, Executive Director
Denise Aguilera, General Counsel
Debrah Galli, Manager, Administrative Services
Daniel Giungi, Communications and Government Affairs Specialist
JoAnne Mackewicz, Controller
Michael Morris, Managing Director
Cynthia D. Peoples-H, Managing Director
Kara Stuart, Administrative Services Assistant
Betty Sugerman Weintraub, Grant Program Manager
of Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority

GUESTS: Maggie Gunther Osborn, SVP, Chief Strategy Officer, United
Philanthropy Forum, Washington, D.C

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Lisi requested a motion to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2020 Grant Committee Special Meeting. Dr. Lopez moved for approval of the minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Foley.

¹ All attendees participated in the meeting via conference telephone that permitted all parties to hear each other

² Mr. Angelini joined the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

Upon a voice vote, the “Ayes,” “Nays” and “Abstentions” were as follows:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTENTIONS</u>
Anne Foley Peter Lisi Dr. Estela Lopez	None	None

Ms. Sugeran Weintraub introduced Maggie Gunther Osborn, Senior Vice President, Chief Strategy Officer, United Philanthropy Forum, Washington, D.C. (formerly President, CT Council for Philanthropy).

KEYNOTE SPEAKER – MAGGIE GUNTHER OSBORN

Ms. Osborn gave a presentation on “Moving Towards 21st Century Philanthropy.” The presentation included an overview of the following topics:

- United Philanthropy Forum
- CHEFA’s Vision and Mission
- CHEFA/CHESLA Shared Values
- Trends in Philanthropy
- Trends in the Work
- Sustainability
- CHEFA’s Role
- Reflections

After completion of the presentation, the floor was opened to questions and a discussion ensued.

Regarding trust-based philanthropy, and with CHEFA being a quasi-public agency, Mr. Lisi inquired as to what Ms. Osborn considers fair expectations to have of grantees. Ms. Osborn said that right sizing and accountability to the size of the grant are key. Philanthropic organizations should think in terms of the minimum burden to put on grantees to provide the information needed. A discussion ensued.

Mr. Davis inquired about the trend in philanthropy showing that individual giving has been in decline over the past two decades. A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Weldon inquired about the best methods to obtain feedback on the actual impact of CHEFA's grant funds. Ms. Osborn stated the most important aspect is understanding what grantees think their success looks like, finding out what is important to them, and how they measure their success. Ms. Osborn stated it would also be beneficial for the grantor organization to understand their part in the applicant's mission. She said obtaining data and personal stories from grant recipients provides important feedback. A discussion ensued.

Dr. Lopez and the other Board members thanked Ms. Osborn for her time and exceptional presentation. Ms. Osborn left the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

At 10:03 a.m. Dr. Lopez stated that a break will be taken and all parties were asked to return to the meeting by 10:10 a.m.

CHEFA'S PHILANTHROPIC ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Dr. Lopez reported that she is proud of the CHEFA Grant Committee and their contributions to the community. Dr. Lopez opened the floor to discuss opportunities to improve.

Mr. Lisi stated that he is also extremely pleased with CHEFA's philanthropic role in the community. Mr. Lisi said that one area to improve upon would be more press coverage from media outlets. Ms. Foley agreed on the importance of self-promotion and visibility, as well as the opportunity for collaboration and connectivity. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Davis inquired about the need to better assess the impact of CHEFA's grant funds. A discussion ensued.

Ms. Sugerman Weintraub shared her involvement with the following organizations:

- Early Childhood Funders Collaborative - CT Council for Philanthropy
- Workforce Affinity Group, Chair - CT Council for Philanthropy
- Working Cities Challenge Advisory Board member - Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
- 2Generation Legislation Statewide Advisory Board - Co-Chair Workforce Sub-Group
- Campaign for Working CT, National Skills Coalition SkillSPAN State - Advisory Board member

- Regional and Sector Affinity Groups (Eastern CT, Fairfield County, Hartford, Arts, Education) - CT Council for Philanthropy

Ms. Sugerman Weintraub stated her community involvement ultimately connects back to CHEFA's mission and strategic plan. A brief discussion ensued.

Dr. Lopez reiterated that CHEFA is doing great philanthropic work and that collaboration and connection is a key strategy. Dr. Lopez also stated the importance of engagement and accountability, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to better understand the impact of CHEFA's grant funds.

GRANT COMMITTEE REVIEW PROCESS

Dr. Lopez stated her desire for Grant Committee meetings to involve a more robust conversation. She inquired whether this meant the Grant Committee members needed more information when reviewing the grants.

Ms. Foley left the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

As members of the Board, but not the Grant Committee, Mr. Davis and Ms. Martin both agreed that the information they receive is adequate and they are satisfied with the current grant review process. Mr. Angelini also stated his satisfaction with the Grant Committee's process and its governance focus.

Mr. Lisi stated he is appreciative of the work Ms. Sugerman Weintraub and the Internal Review Committee (IRC) do to evaluate the grants. He would like to see an increase in engagement and conversation from Grant Committee members when reviewing the grants. A discussion ensued. Ms. Lopez stated she will elicit feedback from Grant Committee members in future meetings.

FY 2021 GRANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER, JANUARY, MAY

Dr. Lopez stated that due to the recent FY 2021 COVID-19 Grants, and the suspension of the typical three grant cycles for this year, the Grant Committee will not have the need to discuss grantmaking and the allocation of funds at upcoming Grant Committee meetings. Future

meetings could feature speakers from different sectors to discuss various topics. Dr. Lopez also stated the idea of a “show and tell” in which CHEFA grant fund recipients could be invited to share how they have utilized their funds. Board members agreed these were valuable ideas for upcoming meetings and a brief discussion ensued.

NONPROFIT VIDEO-CONFERENCE FORUM

Dr. Lopez reported that the June 2020 Nonprofit Forum was cancelled due to COVID-19. The conference planned to have speaker Orlando Rodriguez of the Connecticut Education Association, providing a presentation on “Connecticut’s Changing Demographics and What it Means for our State.” Dr. Lopez stated through discussion with Ms. Sugerman Weintraub and Ms. Weldon, the conference could be done via teleconference if Board members were interested. The consensus was that Board members are interested in this topic and the teleconference will be scheduled soon.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Weldon
Executive Director