

Date: May 04, 2022

Time: 2:00 to 4:00pm

Location: City of Suffolk

City Hall
442 W Washington St
Conference Room 3



May 2022 Commission Meeting

Members Present

Mark Furlo

Tamie Rittenhouse

Gin Staylor

Sarah Townsend

Shawna LoMonaco

Carol Wilson

Kelly Donnell

Lori White

Catherine Pichon

Members Absent

Gail Harrison

Bonnie Maki

Terrance Johnson

Guests Present

Amanda Greco

Jennifer Connor

I. **Introductions/Welcome**—Tamie Rittenhouse called the meeting to order.

II. **Review Minutes**—The commission reviewed the minutes from April 15, 2022. Lori White made the motion to approve the minutes, Gin Staylor seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous.

III. **Coordinators Report:**

A. Child Care Numbers: Shawna reported 42 licensed and 13 unlicensed facilities in Suffolk.

B. ECDC Update – Shawna shared the following:

1. Access and Space- Shawna LoMonaco, Clint Rudy Director of Libraries, and Tiffany Duck Manager of Library Locations have a scheduled meeting to discuss plans for expanding ECDC space
2. Mini-Grant Opportunity– The grant applications were sent out as of April 18

and will close on May 6. Marie and Carol will review applications and recipients will be notified by 5/20/2022.

3. Early Educator Appreciation and Feedback- Educators had a similar choice as last year of classroom materials and/or cupcake delivery for staff. Educators completed a survey sharing preference of future appreciation celebrations. Results showed 82% preferring the classroom materials and treat. Some comments made from Educators referenced wanting both. The Commission agreed it was nice to gather with one another and discussed the possibility of finding a common ground in future years.
4. Growing Up Suffolk – Will take place 5/7 at Creekside Elementary and 5/21 at Booker T. Washington Elementary. Shawna provided an overview of each event. Tamie requested a table for EHS and HS info and she will put Shawna in contact with a representative.
5. Ready Set Grow! – Catch’um/Catch’em Early bags for new parents leaving Obici Hospital have a new name and new logo. Shawna shared one of the new Ready, Set, Grow! bags and provided an overview of contents.

III. Other Business:

- A. **Finance Report:** Shawna LoMonaco provided the most up to date budget. She explained there is a surplus of \$19,204.94 to spend by the end of the fiscal year in June and shared how the remaining funds will be used.
- B. **Virginia Quality Update:** Carol shared the most up to date VQ information. She explained June 30 is the deadline to move up in VQ levels and new levels will not be awarded after July 2022. All levels will remain frozen until July 2024. The VQ website will be phased out in Dec. 2022 and Practice Year 2 will begin the collaboration with Ready Regions. Carol is waiting to receive a list of Suffolk Quality programs and will share the update with Shawna.

IV. New Business:

A. Community Engagement:

1. Community - The commission engaged in a discussion about the EC community, how it has changed, and how we can learn more. Several members mentioned how diverse our community is and the importance of a more diverse commission. Shawna will plan EDI training for the commission. Tamie shared a noted increase in families experiencing homelessness and Lori shared a noticeable decrease in hospital deliveries. The Commission agreed working with partners like DSS and ForKids will help us learn more about the community, as will community conversations with parents and Early Educators
2. Becoming More Visible as a Commission – The commission shared ideas on becoming more visible with our community. Community conversations, lunch and learns with local businesses, neighborhood walks, and partnerships with churches were some suggestions. The commission also agreed on promoting our public meetings more and encouraging the public to share input.

III. Action Items:

- A. **Community Engagement:** Shawna will plan Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training for the Commission and connect with partners to share stats regarding the EC community.

B. Va Quality- Carol will share local VQ info and Shawna will provide follow-up with the commission.

C. Mini-Grants: Marie and Carol will complete Grant review selection by May 20th.

IV. Informational Needs:

- Current EC community demographics?

V. Adjourn:

Our next meeting will be **June 1, 2022**