

BrightWorks

2 Pine Tree Drive, Arden Hills, MN 55112

Executive Board Meeting

June 18, 2025

Members Present:

Carol Bomben, Community Representative

Paula Cole, Electoral District 3

Andrea Cuene, Community Representative

Jessica Ellison, (Virtual) Electoral District 1

Bill Harvey, Community Representative

Laura Oksnevad, Electoral District 2

Members Absent:

Kacy Deschene, Electoral District 1

Karen Gabler, Electoral District 3

Sarah Johansen, Electoral District 4

Deborah M. Pauly, Electoral District 4

Staff Present:

Gina Boots, Teacher & Apprenticeship Liaison

Colleen Feller, Director of SparkPath & Director of Human Resources

John Schultz, Executive Director

Angela Skrade, Executive Assistant, Office Manager, Executive Board Support (Recorder)

Chris Streiff-Oji, Regional COMPASS Director

Tom Wieczorek, Business Manager

Visitors:

None

Call to Order:

Chair Harvey called the meeting to order at 3:47pm, after a quorum was met.

BrightWorks Meeting Attendee Introductions & Public Input:

BrightWorks Executive Board, and BrightWorks Leadership Team introductions were made. No public was present.

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Approval of Agenda:

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Bomben and seconded by Ms. Oksnevad to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried.

Financial Update:

Mr. Wieczorek stated at this meeting he will concentrate on the May financial reports. He states that expenses are over revenue by 1.7 million. He reports that the organization has been getting by using the fund balance and READ Act advance. He informed the board that with BrightWorks no longer managing EANS (Emergency Assistance for Non-Public Schools) grant funding, it takes more creativity to keep the organization moving along. He advised that historically at this time of year, it was normal to be in this financial position. Questions were answered regarding grant funding. Mr. Wieczorek informed the board that the fund balance is replenished as other grants come in.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Financial Update.

A motion was made by Ms. Cuene and seconded by Ms. Ellison to approve the Financial Update as submitted. The motion carried.

Human Resources Update:

Ms. Feller reported on new staffing, stating that most new hires were related to the COMPASS program, and that one position was a Minnesota Service Cooperatives-related hire. She elaborated there were changes to the advocate staffing roles, which resulted in some staff switching positions and 4 staff moving on from the organization. Ms. Feller advised the board that staffing has now doubled with a total of 62 employees, beginning on July 1, 2025.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Human Resources Update.

A motion was made by Ms. Bomben and seconded by Ms. Oksnevad to approve the Human Resources Update as submitted. The motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Oksnevad and seconded by Ms. Cuene to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. The motion carried.

Organizational Meeting:

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Organizational Meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Cuene and seconded by Ms. Bomben to approve the Organizational meeting as submitted. The motion carried.

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Approval of 2025-2026 Budget:

Executive Director Schultz presented the 2025-2026 budget, advising that it only had minor tweaks from the draft included in the April 2025 board meeting. He commented that it is an interesting budget, with BrightWorks taking on 32 new staff members, and managing dollars supporting pay for these new employees. He stated that moving forward in July and August, BrightWorks will be applying for grants to manage about 70 apprentices in the Teacher Apprenticeship program. These will come from different sources of revenue. He advises the budget supports the programs COMPASS, Teacher Apprenticeship, Long Term Facility Maintenance, and Mental Health for staff. Dollars are flowing in and out for these programs.

Mr. Wieczorek discussed membership changes, with a cap of \$16k, a 2% salary increase for staff, pointing out a column in the budget which has been separated out for human resources. He advised that it is a conservative budget, created with the hope of financially catching up.

Board questions and concerns regarding federal cuts were addressed, with Mr. Wieczorek advising that we have no direct federal grants. All our grants come through the state, so we are not impacted by federal cuts. He addressed questions on grants and Federal Indirect numbers, providing clarification that federal indirect is for the administration of grant funding, 80% of our budget is salary with the other 20% going towards supplies and staff development. He advised we are working with approximately 10-15 grants and grant funding flows in and out.

A question on the Miscellaneous expense section was answered, with Mr. Wieczorek confirming this is for the Cooperative Purchasing program. Board questions on the fund balance were addressed. Mr. Wieczorek advised the fund balance does need to keep increasing but does not need to double to cover payroll. He states we will need to keep working to build the fund balance up. A request was made for these numbers to be shown as a percentage of expenditures for ease of understanding. Mr. Wieczorek agreed to provide information for the board in this format for future budget presentations.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the 2025-2026 Budget.

A motion was made by Ms. Cuene and seconded by Ms. Oksnevad to approve the 2025-2026 Budget as submitted. The motion carried.

Leadership Team Reports

Executive Director Schultz, Ms. Boots, Ms. Feller, and Ms. Streif Oji, shared brief presentations with the board on the programs they oversee. Questions from the board on these programs were answered. Ms. Aasan was unable to attend. The board was referred to her presentation included in the meeting packet.

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Executive Directors Report:

Executive Director Schultz opened his report with complements to the Leadership Team for all the behind-the-scenes work they have been doing with their programs. He addressed cash flow issues, and advised he is working with MDE on the evaluation of what COMPASS looks like, and how Special Education plays into the READ Act.

A brief update on the new Long-Term Facilities Maintenance program was provided. Monthly meetings for this program will begin in August. Executive Director Schultz also discussed the Mental Health Program for staff, which has seen participation double over the past year. Expansions to the program are being considered.

Executive Director Schultz touched on the Apprenticeship program again. He advised the board that once federal documents are in, a special meeting may be required in July to approve a Joint Powers agreement for the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC). He will reach out to the board with possible dates.

Closed Session-Executive Director Evaluation:

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.05, Subd. 3(a) to evaluate the performance of an individual who is subject to the Board's authority. The Board intends to go into closed session to conduct the performance evaluation for Director John Schultz. The Board will summarize its conclusions regarding the evaluation at our next public meeting.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to go into closed session.

A motion was made by Ms. Cuene and seconded by Ms. Bomben to close the session. The motion carried.

Adjournment:

During the closed session, a board member had an emergency which required them to leave the meeting. Due to loss of a quorum the meeting was reopened and adjourned at 5:23pm and executive director's evaluation and contract will be Old Business in the next meeting.



John Schultz, Executive Director



Karen Gabler (Aug 21, 2025 10:15:21 CDT)

Karen Gabler, Board Clerk

Next Meeting Date: August 20, 2025
