



HOPE 4 Youth Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, July 28, 2025

Time: 5:00 pm | Anoka County Sheriff's Office or Zoom

Board Members Present: Krista Benjamin, Liz Cook, James Lyght, Steve Nash, Brad Wise, Pat Chen, Paul Moore, Linda Barnum, Bri Clarin, Don Phillips, Julie Cole, Sue Woodard, JJ Slag

Board Members Absent: Anna VonRueden, Shawn Beatty, Brad Konik

Staff and Guests Present: LaChelle Williams, Mark McNamer, Nikki Kalvin, Brooke Limanen, Breanne Patton

Minutes:

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 5:03pm by Julie Cole.

Mission Moment (Pat Chen)

- Pat shared a photo of the HOPE board at HOPE 4 Youth's 12-unit transitional housing facility in Coon Rapids, HOPE Place. Pat shared accomplishments of a few of the youth that live at HOPE Place.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- **Motion made by Brad Wise, seconded by Steve Nash and passed unanimously to approve the agenda and May 19, 2025 minutes.**

Board Executive Committee Update (Julie Cole)

- New Facility:
 - HOPE 4 Youth is almost at the finish line of securing a new building. Julie thanked James for lending his financial expertise to HOPE 4 Youth and expressed great gratitude to Steve for all the time and knowledge he has given toward this project.
- Board Fall Retreat:
 - Reminder the Board Retreat will be on Thursday, September 18 from 5-8pm. Sue, LaChelle and Julie are meeting on Wednesday, July 30 to finalize the Board Retreat agenda. During the Board Retreat, the Board will go over the survey results and begin building the Strategic Plan for 2027 through 2029. Those Board Members unable to attend the retreat will have the opportunity to review the agenda and share any feedback.
 - Additional Reminder: The Board Meeting on Monday, September 22 is cancelled, but another Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 27.
- Additional Board Members:
 - HOPE 4 Youth continues to expand the Board of Directors. We are specifically looking for experts in Fundraising and Marketing to join the Board. Please reach out to LaChelle by Sunday, August 31 if you have anyone in your network who would be interested. Julie recommended Steve Huls. Steve is the Director of Development for the Opus College of Business at St. Thomas University.
 - Julie noted that Brad Konik is transitioning to the Advisory Committee.
 - Paul asked what is the ideal size for HOPE 4 Youth's Board of Directors. LaChelle responded 25 members, but the goal is to have 20 members by Q1.
- Midyear Check-In:
 - Julie listed the 2025 Board Goals:
 - Empower and Support: The Board should empower and support the HOPE 4 Youth Team. Julie asked HOPE 4 Youth's Leadership Team (Mark, Nikki, Brooke and LaChelle) if the

Board is meeting goal one. LaChelle responded, “yes.” Julie followed up by asking, “what else the Board could be doing to empower and support the HOPE 4 Youth team?”

- Foster Innovation and Adaptability: Julie pointed out that the Board can show their innovation with the new facility.
- Collaboration and Community Engagement: Julie asked the Board to reflect on whether they are taking actionable steps to raise public awareness about HOPE 4 Youth and the services our organization provides to young people.
- Board Development and Leadership: Julie spoke to the Board Survey results that showed Board Members would like a clearer understanding of their role on the Board.
- Emphasize Efficiency: Julie was wondering if there are more efficient ways to communicate and promote Board engagement and participation.

Operational Snapshot (LaChelle Williams/Julie Cole)

- Ops Plan Update:
 - LaChelle spoke to the July Matrix from HOPE 4 Youth’s Operations Plan. The July Matrix can be found in the July 28 Board Packet.
 - HOPE 4 Youth is on track with all primary objectives pertaining to our Strategic Goal of providing life-enhancing programs empowering youth to reach their full potential.
 - Regarding Strategic Goal 2 to engage in transformational partnerships with community leaders, donors, and volunteers, we need your support helping us to fill the pipeline with new sponsors for events and/or introducing HOPE 4 Youth to Comprehensive Campaign prospects. We are working on our Major Gift cultivation (\$10,000 and above).
 - Our Strategic Goal 3 to keep a laser focus on premier staff retention and operational improvement is all on track and moving forward.
 - Our Strategic Goal 4 related to our new facility is on track with a request for the Board to help with Comprehensive Campaign outreach once HOPE 4 Youth closes on the new facility.
- Staffing:
 - New positions: there is currently one open position, youth service coordinator. This position would work out of HOPE 4 Youth’s Anoka location, the HOPE 4 Youth Center.
 - Each year staff participate in HOPE 4 Youth’s Employee Engagement Survey. The survey will go out to staff in August. Results will be shared with the Board at the October meeting.
 - HOPE 4 Youth’s leadership team will be building a Compensation Philosophy this year.
- Comprehensive Campaign:
 - HOPE 4 Youth’s private Comprehensive Campaign for the new facility will kick off in late September with the public campaign to the general community launching in Q1 of 2026.
 - We are 74% in meeting our \$13,000,000 goal. \$9,567,252 has been raised so far.
 - The Comprehensive Campaign is divided into three elements:
 - Mission Expansion (our new facility and additional funds for future expenses) and Mission Delivery (our current fiscal year’s budget) are Phase One, and Mission Sustainability (an Endowment Fund) is Phase Two.
 - LaChelle asked if anyone on the Board of Directors would like to join the Comprehensive Campaign Committee. Don and Paul have agreed to be part of the Comprehensive Campaign Committee. Please let LaChelle know by August 31 if you want to join the committee or know someone else that would like to join.
- New Facility:
 - The DEED grant contract is in final review.
 - Title work is clear. We need to finish the redemption work on the new property then we will be ready to close.
 - HOPE 4 Youth is working hard to secure the bridge loan from Bremer/Old National. There is a meeting scheduled with that team on Thursday, July 31. HOPE 4 Youth was given a 59 item checklist, but LaChelle is optimistic that HOPE 4 Youth can close by the end of August.
 - Key due diligence steps are completed. This includes property survey work, phase 1 of environmental, interior environmental and roof environmental.
 - HOPE 4 Youth has selected RJM as our construction firm. RJM will be working in tandem with LSE Architects, who will be our design partner. RJM and LSE Architects will join the HOPE 4 Youth team at the August 13 All Staff meeting, where the team will share their ideas for the new building.
 - Linda asked if there is anything that could prevent HOPE 4 Youth from closing on the new building.

- Paul asked about the closing date. There isn't one yet.

Strategic Discussion (LaChelle Williams)

- Elements of Thought Leader Interview:
 - HOPE 4 Youth is reviewing current partners and where we have partner gaps.
 - The Board has been tasked with reviewing the list of partner categories and bringing any connections with them to the Board Retreat on Thursday, September 18. The Board should also bring categories that are missing.
 - Once interviewees are determined, the Strategic Steering Committee and the Executive Director will conduct the interviews.

Financial Report (Brooke Limanen/James Lyght)

- Board Role in Financial Review:
 - The Board of Directors are responsible for HOPE 4 Youth's finances. They are to ensure strong fiduciary oversight and financial management. The Board should be reading and reviewing HOPE 4 Youth financial statements.
 - Julie asked that Brooke and James flag the Board if there's something the Board needs to review. James reminded the Board that the finances are going to change drastically because of the new facility.
- Building HOPE Fund:
 - We have already started to track the income and expenses for the new building. We have spent \$111,838.
- Statement of Financial Position:
 - The cash on hand is starting to dip due to the new building expenses we have incurred.
 - We transferred \$70,000 in June from our Building Fund at 21st Century Bank to our Operating Fund with Bremer to cover the earnest money and other expenses from the project.
- Statement of Revenue and Expenses:
 - Income:
 - We budgeted for the Summer Appeal in June because that is when it happened last year. This year, the target is late July and into August, so we are hopeful that we'll see the Civic/Faith numbers rise.
 - Foundations continue to be lower than budgeted due to not receiving the Otter Bremer and Schultze grants.
 - Expenses:
 - Facilities expenses are higher than budgeted because of the emergency repair of a refrigerator at the HOPE 4 Youth Center and replacement refrigerators for units at HOPE Place.
 - Payroll is behind budget due to open positions.
 - Expenses by Class:
 - We continue to stay at a high percentage of our funding going into our programs.

Advancement Update (Nikki Kalvin/Paul Moore)

- Pack the Pantry:
 - 17 organizations joined the Pack the Pantry Challenge to restock the shelves, which provided critical food and hygiene support for the youth.
 - KARE 11 featured HOPE 4 Youth on Community KARES.
- Funding Wins:
 - HOPE 4 Youth was awarded \$27,000 through the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines by matching funds from partners at CorTrust Bank, 21st Century Bank and Blaze Credit Union.
 - Individual giving is continuing to trend high.
 - Summer Appeal drops in mailboxes the first week of August. The goal is to raise \$20,000 via the Summer Appeal.
- Community Engagement:
 - Nikki shared a list of Community Engagement events for June and July.
 - June: Anoka Pride, Columbia Heights Art Fair, Minneapolis Pride
 - July: Coon Rapids Women of Today Drive, Champlin Park Food Truck Festival, Anoka Chamber Golf Tournament, Eat and Greet with Columbia Heights PD

- Darkest Night 4K:
 - This will be the 10th annual Darkest Night 4K. The event will take place on Friday, October 3. The theme is “Light the Way.”
 - There is a sponsorship goal of \$40,000.
 - Nikki gave a shoutout to the Phillips Foundation for their donation of \$10,000.
 - Nikki reported that TopLine Credit Union committed to a \$500 sponsorship.
 - How to get involved:
 - Register a team
 - Recommend a new business at the \$500 level. The goal is to have 10 new businesses support the Darkest Night 4K via a \$500 sponsorship.
 - There are four new businesses that have already committed to a sponsorship.
 - There was discussion around forming a team of Board Members to go out and connect with businesses near the new facility about the Darkest Night 4K.
 - A picture of the Darkest Night 4K yard sign was shared. Board Members had positive feedback about the event signage.
- Events Benefitting HOPE 4 Youth:
 - Heartland Tire Golf Classic will be held on August 25 at Bunker Hills.
 - Clays 4 Youth will be on September 9 at the Minnesota Horse and Hunt Club; the Clays 4 Youth team will table at the shooting leagues at the club to generate excitement about the event.
 - Hunt 4 HOPE is celebrating their 10th year anniversary; the event will take place on September 26 at Wild Wings of Oneka.
- There was a request for Nikki to send calendar invites to the Board for HOPE 4 Youth events.

Program Update (Mark McNamer/Pat Chen)

- Youth Survey Results:
 - Mark shared midyear youth survey results with the Board. He pointed out the percentage of youth that noted they had less encounters with the Justice System since working with HOPE 4 Youth.
 - Steve was wondering if the response rate has changed over the years. Mark said the response rate continues to grow year after year. There was feedback to add the number of surveys sent out to the results graph shown.
 - Linda asked if there was any type of incentive given to the youth for filling out the survey. A decision was made not to give an incentive to complete the survey, so we can get raw, honest feedback.
- New Enrollments:
 - HOPE 4 Youth is projecting 508 new enrollments in 2025. Between the months of January through June, there have been 254 new enrollments.
- Unique Youth:
 - HOPE 4 Youth is projecting 750 unique youth in 2025. Between the months of January through June, there have been 534 unique youth.
 - Total Youth Visits:
 - Mark said HOPE 4 Youth is on track to receive 6,100 visits in 2025. Mark remarked that HOPE 4 Youth is seeing an increase in visits because youth are traveling from the Twin Cities to get our services. Our services are immediate, and young people don't have to wait. We are also seeing more youth due to the current economic environment.
 - Linda asked if other agencies are seeing the same numbers as HOPE 4 Youth. That is something the Leadership Team can investigate and share with the Board.
 - 2024 vs. 2025 Comparison:
 - Youth Served is up 60%
 - Center Visits is up 58%
 - New Enrollments are up 63%
 - Other Program Updates:
 - Horse Empowerment Youth (HEY) Program: This is a pilot program for HOPE 4 Youth. Five youth will have a chance to attend each session. Don has another contact for equine therapy that he would be happy to share with the HOPE 4 Youth team.
 - Microsoft, through Shawn's connection, donated 30 surface tablets to HOPE 4 Youth.
 - Job Readiness:
 - The program curriculum will consist of 11 modules. The modules will be about basic job skills like applying for a job, creating a resume and how to advance within a job.

Open Business (Julie Cole)

- Paul asked if there is a publicity plan for when HOPE 4 Youth opens a new facility. It is on our radar, and we are in conversation with people who have opened a new building.

Adjourn

- **Motion to adjourn was made by Steve Nash, seconded by Don Phillips, and approved unanimously.**

The meeting ended at 6:57pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Breanne Patton, Administrative Coordinator

Action Items:

- Let LaChelle know of any potential Board Members especially if they are experts in Fundraising or Marketing by August 31
- Let LaChelle know if you or someone you know would like to join the Comprehensive Campaign Committee by August 31

Upcoming Events:

- Monday, August 25: Heartland Tire Golf Classic
- Tuesday, September 9: Clays 4 Youth
- Friday, September 26: Hunt 4 HOPE
- Friday, October 3: Darkest Night 4K