

## **Empower Missouri Board Meeting Minutes Jan 21 2023**

Meeting convened at 10:05am

Present: Marqueia Watson, Mallory Rusch, Raquel Cooper, Anatolij Gelimson Jennifer Shotwell  
Stephanie Cooper, Izzy Litwack

### **1. In-person meeting date**

Meeting date was set for April 1<sup>st</sup>, location TBD (Mid-Missouri)

### **2. Financial Review and approval**

Due to Quickbooks problems (bank account disconnected from platform and due to the fact that Marilyn is on Medical leave, the main financial review was postponed until next time. Mallory has attached bank statements and Nov finances to allow board to confirm that the financial situation is good.

Mallory presented the financial statement as of Nov. Grants were ahead of schedule. Fee for service seems to start taking off. Fundraising gap of \$9k from leadership summit. Hope to make up for it at the brunch event. \$100k in the bank account right now

### **3. Motion to approve Nov 2022 agenda**

Moved by Jennifer, seconded by Stephanie.

Motion carried unanimously

### **4. Setting of board meeting dates**

Board meetings set for

May 20<sup>th</sup>

July 15<sup>th</sup>

Sep 23<sup>rd</sup>

Nov 18<sup>th</sup>

### **5. ED report**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jKdbZ35eNuGoE-5ik5CPyrMaqXOWLMX5YeQjQ00lgiE/e/dit>

Session has started and Empower has already testified in support of two bills.

Clean slate legislation filed with Republican sponsors. Empower distributes a leave behind deck on the Clean Slate initiative. Katie Sinquefeld is helping with the Clean Slate Initiative and is doing a great job. Empower has sent New Year's cards to legislators

Legislator events were held in Springfield, KC

The team has decided to that the "Welcome series for new legislators" is best done in the form of podcasts on Empower's priority issues

New apartment has been rented  
Review of insurance policies is being done

In the next 2 months, Mallory wants to work on a transition plan in case of unexpected events  
Bi-weekly meetings with an expert to help with the plan

Empower is looking to hire a development director (suggestions appreciated!)

Giving Tuesday has raised about \$2k, grant applications have been submitted

#### **6. Governance committee report**

Stephanie will be on leave due to a family emergency  
Anatolij volunteered to be interim chair of the Governance Committee

Recess until 12:30pm

Convened again at 12:35pm

#### **7. Staff and board member introductions**

#### **8. Presentation of the 2023 legislative agenda by Empower Staff (Gwen Smith, Holly Honig, Christine Woody)**

Criminal Justice priorities include:

- Clean slate SB 347 and HB 352
- Limits on privatized probation, offender-funded model. Legislation to limit time of probation down to 18 months and eliminate UA testing
- ID access for people returning from DOC prior to reentry. HB301 provides ID and birth certificate for everyone prior to reentry
- Opting MO out of lifetime ban on SNAP for drug felonies
- Expanding diversion pathways. Workgroup and DWI bill
- DOC oversight
- Raise the age 18 to 21, SB 406 (Schroer). Raise possible age for juvenile certification as adults from 12 to 15
- Geriatric parole
- ST Louis police funding defense
- Getting rid/reducing of mandatory minimums

Food insecurity priorities include:

- Restaurant meals program for food stamps for elderly or disabled SNAP for restaurants
- Abolishing Drug felonies ban on SNAP benefits
- Reducing benefit cliff that cuts people out of benefits at a certain income threshold
- Tax credits for grocery stores in food deserts

- Tax credit for rural specialty crop farmers
- Universal school meals
- End sales tax on food
- Fighting against: Limiting SNAP and TANF individuals from accessing cash, SNAP work requirements

Other Anti poverty priorities:

- Defending the current Initiative petition process
- Improving affordability of diapers
- employer tax credits for child care
- requiring minimum wage for public employers
- property tax rebate for seniors and people w disabilities
- decreasing unemployment
- Limit payday lenders
- Requires FMLA to include wages
- Waive birth cert fees for victims of domestic violence and abuse
- Increase pay for MO employees
- Increase Teachers pay
- Student loan forgiveness to teachers in high-need areas
- School programs, expand
- Postpartum Medicaid

## **9. Motion to adjourn**

Once the staff presentations were done, Marqueia moved to adjourn the meeting, Anatolij seconded

Motion passed unanimously and meeting was adjourned