



## **Finance & Operations Committee Meeting Transcript**

**January 12, 2023**

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THE CHILDREN'S TRUST  
FINANCE AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
(IN PERSON QUORUM WITH SOME VIRTUAL ATTENDANTS)

MEETING MINUTES

**CERTIFIED  
ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT**

The MDC Children's Trust Meeting, Finance and  
Operations Committee Meeting was held on January 12,  
2023, commencing at 9:31 a.m., at 3150 Southwest 3rd  
Avenue, 8th Floor Training Room, Miami, Florida 33129.  
The meeting was called to order by Matthew Arsenault,  
Vice Chair.

AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION

BOARD MEMBER APPEARANCES:

- MATTHEW ARSENAULT, Vice Chair
- JUDGE NORMAN GERSTEIN
- ANNIE NEASMAN
- JAVIER REYES
- KENNETH HOFFMAN (ex-officio)
- SHANIKA GRAVES

STAFF MEMBER APPEARANCES:

AMANDA GORSKI

CAROL BROGAN

DANIELLE BARRERAS

GINA ALONSO

JACQUES BENTOLILA

JAMES R. HAJ

JENNIFER MORENO

JOANNA REVELO

JUANA LEON

LISANNE GAGE

LORI HANSON

NATALIA ZEA

PATRICIA LEAL

RACHEL SPECTOR

SUSAN MARIAN

TATIANA CANELAS

WENDY DUNCOMBE

XIMENA NUÑEZ

YULIET ALFONSO

LISSET YERO

WILLIAM KIRTLAND

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Thereupon, the following proceedings commenced  
at 9:31 a.m.)

MR. ARSENAULT: Hi, everyone. It's 9:31, I  
believe we have a quorum so we'll get started.  
Thank you, everyone. Happy new year. I'll -- I'll  
be running the meeting today.

Mark wasn't able to make it so -- I never  
bumped that. I guess to -- to start, I want to  
welcome two new members to the committee, Annie  
Neasman and Judge Gerstein. Nice to have you on the  
committee.

JUDGE GERSTEIN: Morning, everybody.

MS. NEASMAN: Morning, everybody.

MR. ARSENAULT: With that, I guess we'll first  
see if there are any public comments.

MS. LEON: There are no public comments.

MR. ARSENAULT: Okay. So, we'll move to the  
approval of the minutes for the meeting of the  
Finance & Operations Committee from November 3rd,  
2022. Is there a motion for approval of the  
minutes?

MR. REYES: So moved. Reyes.

MS. NEASMAN: Second, Annie Neasman.

1 MR. ARSENAULT: All in favor say, aye.

2 (Whereupon, the committee members all responded  
3 with "aye.")

4 MR. ARSENAULT: Opposed?

5 (No audible response.)

6 MR. ARSENAULT: Okay. The minutes are  
7 approved.

8 Apologies. I didn't welcome Ken.

9 Ken -- Ken you're on the call?

10 MR. HOFFMAN: I -- I -- yes. I was not -- a  
11 little under the weather this morning, but I did  
12 want to join and also greet our newest member of the  
13 committee and the board, Judge Gerstein, and thank  
14 everybody for -- well, wish everybody a happy new  
15 year and thank everybody for service on this  
16 committee.

17 Obviously, a lot of the work of the board  
18 happens on the committee level and we appreciate the  
19 extra time that -- that all of you put into this and  
20 other committees. So, thank you.

21 Thanks, Matt.

22 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you, Ken. We're so  
23 appreciative for human hybrid meetings. A healthier  
24 community. When you're sick, you can stay home and  
25 it's a wonderful thing.

1           So, we will dive into the resolutions. We have  
2           three resolutions for consideration today. So, I  
3           will start with that.

4           The first is resolution 2023-A, which is the  
5           authorization to release competitive solicitations  
6           in alignment with the board's strategic priorities  
7           and projected available funding, across multiple  
8           investment areas with funding cycles that have ended  
9           or ending within the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

10          Is there a -- is there a motion for this  
11          resolution?

12          MR. GERSTEIN: So, moved.

13          MR. REYES: Second. Reyes.

14          MR. ARSENAULT: Second.

15          All right. Any recusals?

16          (No audible response.)

17          MR. ARSENAULT: Okay. The detailed discussion  
18          of this, right?

19          This resolution authorizes the Trust to release  
20          competitive solicitations across the various  
21          initiatives that are listed on page 4. The table  
22          presents each initiative's estimated timing to  
23          release the solicitation and prepare the funding  
24          recommendations, as well as the funding amounts.  
25          All funding recommendations will return to the Board

1 for approval following the application and reviews.

2 Do the staff want to have any additional  
3 comment on this?

4 MR. HAJ: Mr. Chair. Thank you. We just --  
5 this has been years in the making, the last two  
6 board retreats. Last -- I can't -- my dates gone,  
7 but in New Year we released Youth Development, which  
8 is the largest solicitation that's going out the  
9 door that will come back to the board for approval  
10 in April, and these are the rest.

11 This -- we're on a five-year cycle, so this  
12 year everything's going out the door. Innovation  
13 got released, Youth Development got released, and  
14 now Parenting, Health and Wellness, PPD are in the  
15 pipeline. So, that's what we're seeking the  
16 approval to release.

17 MS. NEASMAN: Mr. Chair, I apologize. I don't  
18 know if I need to recuse because of the health  
19 component.

20 MR. HAJ: I don't believe you need it for the  
21 release.

22 MS. NEASMAN: Okay.

23 MR. ARSENAULT: Right. My understanding is  
24 it's not approval of any funding.

25 With no further discussion, all in favor say

1           aye?

2                   (Whereupon, the committee members all responded  
3           with "aye.")

4           MR. ARSENAULT:   Opposed?

5                   (No audible response.)

6           MR. ARSENAULT:   Resolution passed as proposed.

7                   The next is resolution 2023-B.   Authorization  
8           to release multiple competitive solicitations that  
9           support the infrastructure of The Children's Trust.

10                   Is there a motion to --

11           MS. NEASMAN:    It's already moved.

12           MR. REYES:    -- second?

13                   This resolution -- are any re -- well, there  
14           would be no recusals for this because there's no  
15           authorizations.   So, this resolution authorizes the  
16           Trust to release multiple competitive solicit --  
17           solicitations across the core business systems and  
18           services that are listed on page 9.

19                   It presents each initiative's estimated timing  
20           to release the solicitation and to prepare the  
21           funding recommendations.   All funding  
22           recommendations will return to the board for  
23           approval concurrent with the recommendation to the  
24           board.

25                   Any additional discussion or comments from



1 staff on this -- or questions?

2 MR. HAJ: Yeah. I would just briefly, if I can  
3 have Jack chime in. Last -- before the holidays we  
4 met with the executive committee just to give them  
5 an update. And this is an area that we wanted to  
6 inform the board that, you know, we -- we did  
7 exceptionally well going into COVID because we built  
8 our infrastructure the two years prior, and we built  
9 it, and we were able to benefit.

10 Now we're, you know, we're coming in our 20-  
11 year anniversary, it's really got to position the  
12 Trust for the next 20 years and build the systems to  
13 support that, financial systems, infrastructure,  
14 data collection. And we want a release to really  
15 build the infrastructures to support us in the  
16 future. So, Jack, can you just chime in kind of  
17 talking about B and a little bit about C?

18 MR. BENTOLILA: Yes. So, this resolution,  
19 these are our major systems that are the backbone  
20 and infrastructure of this organization. Many of  
21 them have been in place for a long, long time, over  
22 ten years. Great when, you know, the Trust was in  
23 its earlier years of existence, but now, as Garcia  
24 stated, at -- at 20 years, you know, it's -- it --  
25 this is the right time for us to go out, just look

1 at what the market's offering, what is the standard  
2 across the board.

3 See if what we have is the right fit or is it -  
4 - do we need to make a change? And to -- do that  
5 market research and -- and go out to the market and  
6 come back to the board with recommendations of what  
7 would set the Trust up for the next, you know, 20  
8 years or beyond to have the infrastructure necessary  
9 to keep providing to -- for the com -- community and  
10 the services that the Trust provides for the family  
11 and children.

12 C, just quickly, if you want me to jump in to  
13 C. That is basically bringing on a consultant firm  
14 Kaufman Rossin, really going to heavily focusing in  
15 on the financial and HR payroll systems. Those are  
16 really two big investments that the Trust is looking  
17 to make, and they bring a lot to the table.

18 Obviously, they're a large consulting firm that  
19 does work in the financial field. They do a lot of  
20 work in the private industry, but they do work with  
21 non-profit and government agencies as well. So,  
22 right now, they've been contracted to come in and  
23 assist us with the market research and the  
24 development of the scope to make sure that we are  
25 aligned with what the needs are of the Trust to move

1 forward with the current market trends.

2 So, that they'll be ad -- advising us and --  
3 and working with us and being our technical advisors  
4 through the entire process. Obviously, they don't  
5 have a seat to vote on the actual proposals, but  
6 they'll sit as our advisors through the process.

7 MR. ARSENAULT: Yeah. I just want to, you  
8 know, I -- I commend the staff consistently since  
9 I've been here on the board. The administrative  
10 expenses as a percentage of the Trust has always  
11 been extremely well managed. So, it's a very wise  
12 decision, I think, especially doing everything as --  
13 well, doing everything all at once to kind of take  
14 the global view of -- of running the most efficient  
15 operations and getting some help to see why things -  
16 - you don't know what you don't know.

17 MR. BENTOLILA: Exactly.

18 MR. ARSENAULT: So, getting expertise on that,  
19 so--.

20 So, with that, we'll call for a vote. All in  
21 favor, say aye.

22 (Whereupon, the committee members all responded  
23 with "aye.")

24 MR. ARSENAULT: All opposed?

25 (No audible response.)

1 MR. ARSENAULT: Okay. The next is resolution  
2 2023-C. It's discuss authorization expend up to  
3 \$49,999 for Kaufman Rossin & Company to act as  
4 technical advisors for a term of ten months,  
5 commencing retro -- retroactively on December 1,  
6 2022, and ending September 30, 2023.

7 MR. REYES: So, moved.

8 MS. NEASMAN: Second.

9 MR. ARSENAULT: Any recusals? Any discussion?  
10 Questions?

11 MR. REYES: Just to echo what you had said,  
12 Matthew, I -- considering the development in  
13 technology, this makes a lot of sense. It's really  
14 advanced, so to get that advice, it makes a lot of  
15 sense to me.

16 MR. ARSENAULT: Okay. All in favor, say aye.

17 (Whereupon, the committee members all responded  
18 with "aye.")

19 MR. ARSENAULT: All right. Opposed?

20 (No audible response.)

21 MR. ARSENAULT: Passed. Thank you. I hand off  
22 now to Mr. Haj, CEO Report.

23 MR. HAJ: Thank -- thank you, sir.

24 Before we start, we have -- as we know Muriel  
25 (phonetic) retired in December and we have big shoes

1 to fill but we have Juana (phonetic), who has been  
2 at Muriel's side for years that will be leading  
3 this.

4 So, she is -- instead of a clerk on the board,  
5 when you e-mail the clerk of the board, or the clerk  
6 of the board sends a message, there's going to be a  
7 team behind that e-mail that will be able to respond  
8 to all the board's needs. So, everybody knows  
9 Juana.

10 So, Juana, raise your hand -- in front of the  
11 Judge, so -- and we have two other new members to  
12 the organization, you, Yuliet Alfonso,  
13 administrative services coordinator, and Gina Alonzo  
14 (phonetic) another administrative services. So,  
15 there's going to be a team working behind the scenes  
16 to meet the boards' needs, to get the information to  
17 the board, and to run these board meetings, and they  
18 do an exceptional job.

19 MR. REYES: I've sent e-mails and I've gotten  
20 great responses already.

21 MR. HAJ: It didn't take you three days to get  
22 a response?

23 It's an amazing team. I don't think that  
24 nothing's going to miss a beat with Dr. Muriel's  
25 departure.

1           So, on the CEO Report, Monthly Financial  
2           Statements. So, for the new Finance Committee  
3           members and the existing -- I've heard this a  
4           million times, five years ago we had a fund balance  
5           that was pretty hefty and keep -- continuing to go  
6           up. We've developed a five-year plan to get -- to  
7           drive down fund balance, put more money into the  
8           community and to release, or lower, or trim levels  
9           for a couple of years and have a balancing act, and  
10          we had a five-year plan.

11          This is -- you're at the end of year five. And  
12          I'm pleased to announce that we hit our goals and  
13          our expenditures and almost hit the mark to the T.  
14          So, I'm going to hand over to Bill to talk about the  
15          monthly financials.

16          MR. KIRTLAND: Well, just to clarify, right?  
17          We have entered into the fifth year of the majority  
18          of the five-year funding cycle -- or, well, most of  
19          our solicitations are funded in a five-year cycle.  
20          And one of the byproducts of having a five-year  
21          cycle was that we were hoping to get better and  
22          better at forecasting our expenditures as we moved  
23          through each year.

24          And the completion of year four was our best  
25          performance as far as forecasting total expenditures

1 and the revenues. So, essentially, we were within  
2 about \$1 million of our expected fund balance,  
3 finishing at about \$37.7 million, which is near the  
4 balance that we wanted to have to support especially  
5 the expanded RFPs and the program funds that we're  
6 putting into the ex-solicitation way.

7 So, we -- out of our \$162 million expenditures  
8 that we forecasted, we actually realized \$163.3  
9 million. And what actually did not -- however,  
10 prevented us from hitting our mark perfectly, was  
11 more revenues. The -- the interest rates had been  
12 changing significantly over the year with the -- the  
13 fed rates going up. And so, we realized more in our  
14 investment earnings and actually, and some of the ad  
15 valorem tax collections, where our revenue  
16 expectation was \$1.8 million greater than what we  
17 expected.

18 So, we were actually closer in -- in  
19 forecasting our expenditures at a much higher volume  
20 than our revenues. So, all that's just a very long  
21 way of saying that we're right where we're supposed  
22 to be, starting the fifth year of our cycle --  
23 funding -- the fifth year of our funding cycle. So,  
24 we're well positioned going into this -- this new  
25 cycle.

1 MR. HAJ: Thank you, Bill. And -- and all of  
2 those charts will be coming back to the board  
3 starting in March and April to the -- to the Finance  
4 Committee, as you start getting ready for next year.

5 Board Retreat, February 23rd. We've been  
6 meeting with Ken for the last several months. We're  
7 excited about the board retreat, February 23rd. It  
8 should be on everybody's calendar, and we hope to  
9 have all the board members present.

10 The Mental Health Conference. We have a  
11 National Mental Health Conference, which we sponsor,  
12 on February 8th, 9th, and 10th. Let me know if you  
13 would like to attend, those in a mental health  
14 field. You'll get a credit in -- I'm not sure what  
15 those points are called, to kind of help with your  
16 accreditations.

17 Please let us know. We'll be sending out an e-  
18 mail later today or tomorrow, those who are  
19 interested in attending.

20 Community Newspapers. The community newspapers  
21 are doing a special edition on the 20th anniversary  
22 of the Trust. We'll be e-mailing that to you.  
23 We'll have hard copies for you at the board  
24 meetings.

25 And we are having a vet next Tuesday, if you



1 did not RSVP, where Dave and I will be at a  
2 restaurant in South Miami where we have a lot of  
3 elected, a lot of community leaders coming together  
4 just to spend an hour talking about the Trust and  
5 its impact on the community for the last 20 years.

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 7: When's that?

7 Next Tuesday morning at the --

8 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 1: Tuesday, 7:30 to 9:00,  
9 at CasaCuba if you'd like to RSVP, we'll just send  
10 invites.

11 MR. HAJ: So, Mr. Chair, I believe that's it  
12 for me.

13 MR. ARSENAULT: I don't want to miss -- are  
14 there any other business things? No? Okay. Then,  
15 do I have a motion to adjourn?

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: Moved.

17 MR. ARSENAULT: Second?

18 MR. REYES: Second.

19 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you, Mr. Reyes.

20 We're adjourned. Thank you.

21 (Thereupon, the proceedings concluded at 9:45  
22 a.m.)  
23  
24  
25

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTION

The above and foregoing transcript is a true and correct typed copy of the contents of the file, which was digitally recorded in the proceeding identified at the beginning of the transcript, to the best of my ability, knowledge and belief.

*Jonathan Gonzalez*

Jonathan Gonzalez, Notary Public  
February 14, 2023