Board of Directors Retreat & Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: May 28, 2026

KIDS CENTRAL, INC.
A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN
Building Better Lives

Chairman: Kevin McDonald
Date: May 28, 2026
Location: KCI Boardroom
Members Present: Kevin McDonald, Brad Rodgers, James Nations, Diana Brown, Chuck Troutman, Lt. Anthony Piarulli
Advisors: John Cooper (CEO), John Aitken (CFO), Veraunda Jackson (CLO)
Not Present: Rachel Kaser
Guests: Amanda Wilson-DCF, Dave DeStefano (CSO), Billy Kent (CPO)
Minutes: Vicki Austin, Executive Assistant
Quorum: Yes
Call to order at 10:16 am

ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT:
CHAIRMAN REMARKS: Kevin McDonald had no remarks accept to hand the planning review over to John Cooper and to get this part rolling.

John Cooper, CEO: Thanked everyone for attending the review of the past year and planning for the upcoming fiscal year and passed the review to Dave DeStefano.

Dave DeStefano: First review of the Board Annual Survey: In accordance with accountable accredited agenda requirements, we have to abide biannual assessment of the Boards relationship with Kid Central CEO. Mr. Cooper and your efficiency as a board of directors. We received 7 responses this year out of eight remaining board members.

The survey looks at your responses to efficiency and advocacy of board meetings, community engagement, fundraising, discontinued planning, performance monitoring, fiduciary oversight and legislative awareness. It also looks at collaboration relationship with Mr. Cooper that is in relation to best practice engagement with the board in these critical areas and looks for areas of strength and areas for improvement on the board.

In comparison with the past three surveys we've had steady improvement. Results are continuously high, everything in combined areas in excess of four on five points scale. Those are great results. Board tenure of those answering survey this year, one board member had 10 years were more on the board 2, two were in the four six-year range for our fairly new board members at one to three years Board meetings been looking at this area of the responses.

It was mentioned in the comments that previous years the Board was not invited to attend the development of strategic planning. John Cooper noted this was discussed during the SWOT analysis and staff would like to open it up to all stake holders, Board members and community members we partner with to attend in future planning sessions.

One additional comment in the survey was discussed that a comment this year about the board is highly Christian based and then there may be some gap in terms of certain children and families without other faiths, other religious backgrounds.

Diana mentioned that agreeably, if there's no bias against someone, as long as the checks we do to make sure the child is going to be in a safe environment, we're not going to disapprove them for not finding their specific religious services to place them somewhere.

Diana also mentioned: we don't incorporate our partnership with faith-based organizations enough.
Cooper noted that community-based care was built around extending our network through the community, not just your typical traditional child welfare providers. I try not to use the term Christian, but instead Faith based and the majority of our foster parents are faith based.

Dave continued forward to the annual review of performance progress with a chart reviewing as far back as 2005 the fluctuation of care throughout the disciplines of services KCI provides. He reviewed some budget numbers where we're going to spend $18 million in Group care this year and in 2018 with the same number of kids we spent $6 million.

Mr. Cooper reviewed the performance measures and noted that we're finding permanency in forever homes for kids, that's a good thing. Adoptions by the end of the fiscal year, we project our third highest year ever of adoptions, exceeding 270.

Billy reviewed Kids Central Connect, a social platform where people can reach out to find resources that has been successfully running 5 years. We receive a lot of referrals from CPIS. This social platform has exceeded the previously closed community centers outreach for information and resources. This allows us to collect data on the top search terms that include housing and licensures.

Records Management costs of storing, retrieving and destroying records was reviewed. If a record is requested for any reason including records requests. We have implemented a process if one file is needed the entire box is retrieved from storage and the records are scanned for electronic storage and destroying the paper.

Kids Central Resource Center served 486 families including 950 children, it's like a mini-Walmart onsite.

Highlights of staff recruitment with a stabilized workforce and getting some retention is important and only training 42 people last year says something about the leadership.

Veraunda spoke about the Records Request electronic system that launched this year and it has been a tremendous help in reducing hours spent by departmental and legal staff to fulfill the requests.

Mr. Cooper mentioned that the State tracking system is being replaced again and Billy has taken the lead on the transition and training. It takes a tremendous amount of time with staff to make a transition like this to learning a new system.

Board Annual Training commenced while lunch was served.

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REGULAR BOARD MEETING

I. Chairman's Remarks

Kevin welcomed everyone with a thank you for attending the retreat planning and training portion of today's meetings.

a) Approval of March 26, 2026, Minutes –Anthony moved to approve, Brad seconded the motion; **all voted in favor and passed unanimously.**
b) **Introduction of DCF representative Amanda Wilson.**
c) Board resignation of Liz Thompson was accepted
d) Board re-election of Jim Nations and Diana Brown as members: Brad moved to approve, Chuck seconded the motion; all voted in favor and passed unanimously.
e) Board new members: Paul Mealy, Judy Williams, and Walter Bussell submitted applications and were interviewed by CEO John Cooper and Board Chair Kevin McDonald. Jim moved to approve the applicants and Diana seconded the motion. All voted in favor and passed unanimously

    Kevin mentioned we still have room for additional members and need representation for Citrus and Hernando Counties. He asked if we can focus on those two areas and see if we can attract other folks that would be best at it.

f) Officer position of Secretary was discussed: As written, we do not have to have the secretary they are a recommended position. Most of the responsibilities of this position are handled by administrative staff and it is just a Board oversight. The opportunity for separation of Secretary/Treasurer could fill an additional seat on the Executive Committee an opportunity to develop another board number for other leadership sentence as well. This subject was left for further discussion when the new members are aboard.

II. President's Report

a) Halo Event: John thanked the Board members who were able to attend. This event has been successful for eleven years and the foster parent's appreciation is apparent. A lot of our foster parents did not attend, couldn't get childcare for the child or didn't trust leaving that child with anyone due to multiple reasons. Previous years we rented a day care where our employees staffed the event. We could consider other options for the future events to help more attendance.
b) Legislative Report: The budget for us is neutral, every agency has the same amount of funding for the last two years. The back of the bill funding is only 28 million and we had a request for 33 and a half million dollars or 37 and a half million dollars leaving us short. So we're not going to get from the back of the bill 100%. The KPMG funding model did not get picked up; however they intend to run a mock model behind the scenes. we had a really good phone call with the House Appropriations Chair for the big, the big committee, the Appropriations Committee; we made an argument for the underfunded lead agencies based on the equity model I built. So as far as legislative update, really just hope the budget was done, it was printed and ready to go. They're going to go back Friday and vote.
c) Marion Recruitment Update – Marion CMA remains close to full staffing, 85% with only nine vacancies. Expect it will pick up in the spring with graduation happening. Unemployment's gone up three months in a row, 4.6% statewide.

III. Operations Report – Shalonda was not available for this meeting, and the reports were briefly reviewed by John Cooper on Shalonda's behalf.

IV. Finance Report

a) Ratification of 990 submitted to IRS. Motion by Kevin and seconded by Diana, all approved.
b) Continuation Budget required due to the State funding has not been provided by DCF. Motion by Brad and seconded by Chuck, all approved.
c) Authorization for the Finance committee to sign the FY27 spending plan and ratify at the following Board meeting. Motion by Diana and second by Chuck, all approved.
d) March 2026 Financials – Jim Nations briefly reviewed the financials. The income statement regarding the Out of Home care remains with the same issue. Anthony recommended the approval of the Finance Committee Report, seconded by Diana, all approved.
e) John Aitken mentioned some of the funds were recovered from a Fraud payment case and that the Insurance claim has been submitted to recover the remaining loss. Since there is a 25K deductible, this will be our loss for this incident.

VI. Committee Reports

a) Executive Committee –April meeting minutes were reviewed
b) SIC Committee: Diana explained the meeting for April 2026 – was cancelled in preference of receiving KCI Business plan for objectives for this committee. Next meeting is in August
c) Community Development – Brad Rogers mentioned it is a committee of one, although Kimberly is doing a fantastic job keeping up the social media and getting John Cooper out in the Public for notability, he ecstatically awaits the new members assignment to the Community Development Committee.

- The Community Development Calendar was shared so board members can plan for their participation –Especially noted was:

April 2026
- Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Adoption Event - TBD

May 2026
- HALO – May 3rd
- National Foster Care Month

June 2026
- Reunification Month

September 2026
- Kinship Month

October 2026
- CARE Awards – October 9th

November 2026
- National Adoption Month

VII . Unfinished Business/New Business – None

VIII. Public Forum – None

Adjourned the meeting at 1.36 pm.

Next Meeting: July 23, 2026 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Wildwood – (KCI Board Room)