



**Finance & Operations Committee Meeting
Transcript**

November 02, 2023

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The Children's Trust
Thursday, November 2, 2023
3150 S.W. 3rd Avenue - 8th Floor
The Children's Trust - Training Room
9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Finance & Operations Committee Meeting

Committee Members
(Present)

- Mark Trowbridge, Chairperson
- Matthew Arsenault, Vice Chair
- Judge Norman Gerstein
- Nelson Hincapie
- Annie Neasman
- Dr. Clara Lora Ospina
- Isaac Salver

President & CEO
James R. Haj

County Attorney's Office

Leigh Kobrinski
Assistant County Attorney

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S T A F F

Amanda Gorski	Bevone Ritchie
Carol Brogan	Danielle Barreras
Felix Becerra	Imran Ali
Jacques Bentolila	James R. Haj
Juana Leon	Jennifer Moreno
Lori Hanson	Michele Mordica
Natalia Zea	Rachel Spector
Sebastian Del Marmol	Victoria Gandul
William Kirtland	Ximena Nunez
Yuliet Alfonso	

1 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Good morning,
2 Everybody.

3 COLLECTIVELY: Good morning.

4 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: We're going to
5 call to order our Finance and Operations
6 Committee meeting of November 2, 2023. We
7 have a quorum.

8 A couple of points of privilege. I
9 want to congratulate Isaac Salver. He has
10 a new grand baby that has arrived as of
11 yesterday.

12 Do you have any vital statistics
13 you're willing to share?

14 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: He set a
15 Salver family record, nine pounds. And
16 my -- you know, my son and his wife,
17 they're not large people. So thank God he
18 came on time, natural and we're very, very
19 happy.

20 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Well, we
21 welcome him to the family. Well, you
22 know, being someone who was also an
23 oversized baby, I think good things are in
24 his future.

25 I want to welcome, of course, to our

1 finance committee, a relatively new member
2 to our Board, Dr. Ospina. Thank you so
3 much for saying yes and agreeing to join
4 our Finance and Operations Committee.
5 It's an honor to have you. Thank you so
6 much.

7 And a little bit of a bittersweet
8 note. I think some of you know that we
9 are soon going to be having an at-large
10 opening on the Board, but that's because
11 our dear friend Annie Neasman is going to
12 be departing in December/January, but this
13 may be our last finance meeting before
14 that. And so I just want to thank her for
15 her wonderful, wonderful service to our
16 finance committee.

17 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: And so, with
19 that, we're going to begin with what is on
20 our agenda, unless there's any other
21 announcements.

22 Any public comments today?

23 MS. LEON: No public comments, Mr.
24 Chair.

25 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: All right.

1 Then we'll close the public comments.

2 Thank you very much.

3 We have the June 29, 2023, Finance
4 and Operations Committee meeting. Is
5 there a motion to approve the minutes as
6 they are presented?

7 COMMITTEE MEMBER GERSTEIN: So moved.

8 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you, Your
9 Honor.

10 Is there a second?

11 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
13 Annie.

14 Any discussion?

15 Alright, seeing none, let's move
16 forward to a vote. All in favor, say aye?

17 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

18 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any opposed,
19 nay? Motion carries and the minutes of
20 June 29, 2023, Finance and Operations
21 Committee Meeting are approved.

22 We have a number of resolutions
23 today, so I look forward to you all's
24 discussion, but the very first resolution
25 I actually have a conflict on, so I'm

1 going to pass it to our Vice Chairman
2 Matthew to carry us through that first
3 resolution 2024-A.

4 VICE CHAIR ARSENAULT: Thank you,
5 Mark.

6 So the first is Resolution 2024-A,
7 authorization to enter into a sponsorship
8 agreement with Actors Playhouse at the
9 Miracle Theatre, Inc. for presenting
10 sponsorship of the Young Talent Big Dreams
11 Talent Search, in an amount not to exceed
12 \$65,000.00, for a term of 10 months,
13 commencing on December 1, 2023, and ending
14 on September 30, 2024.

15 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: I'll move
16 it, Salver.

17 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: I'll
18 second, Annie.

19 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: We've
20 documented the recusal.

21 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Mark Trowbridge
22 recusing. I sit on the Board of advisors
23 for Actors Playhouse.

24 VICE CHAIR ARSENAULT: Any
25 discussion? Hearing none, all in favor

1 say aye?

2 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

3 VICE CHAIR ARSENAULT: Any opposed?

4 Motion carries.

5 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you, Vice
6 Chair.

7 We'll move on now to Resolution
8 2024-B. This is an authorization to enter
9 into a purchase agreement with Hitex
10 Marking Group. Our Children's Trust buys
11 our promotionally branded -- promotional
12 items from Hitex, and this is an amount
13 total not to exceed \$50,000 for a term of
14 10 months, commencing on November 15th and
15 ending on September 30, 2024.

16 Is there a motion to approve this
17 resolution?

18 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Can we get
19 a little love on the computer screens
20 here? I mean, not only are they blurry,
21 but they're not moving along with the
22 agenda, unless I'm doing something wrong.
23 Yeah.

24 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: So we've made a
25 note to take another look. Thank you

1 Juana for doing that.

2 Going back to Resolution 2024-B. Is
3 there a motion to approve this resolution?

4 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: So moved,
5 Annie.

6 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
7 Annie.

8 Is there a second?

9 COMMITTEE MEMBER OSPINA: Second,
10 Clara Ospina.

11 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you, Dr.
12 Ospina.

13 As many of you know, they specialize
14 in manufacturing and delivering various
15 branded materials, And you have some
16 details there on what we currently have in
17 terms of the vendors that bid.

18 Are there any recusals on this?
19 Seeing none, we have a motion and a
20 second. Any discussion?

21 Alright, seeing none, all in favor
22 say aye?

23 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

24 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any opposed,
25 nay? Motion carries. Resolution 2024-B

1 is approved and our contract with Hitex
2 Marking Group.

3 The next is 2024-C. This is an
4 authorization to execute and negotiate a
5 contract renewal with Armstrong Creative
6 Consulting for planning services in a
7 total amount not to exceed \$290,000.00,
8 for a term of 10 months, commencing on
9 December 1, 2023, and ending on
10 September 30, 2024, with one remaining
11 12-month renewal. It's still a little bit
12 blurry just so you all know.

13 BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: So moved.

14 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: So moved.

15 Thank you, Nelson.

16 Is there a second?

17 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: Second,
18 Annie.

19 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
20 Annie.

21 Any recusal for Armstrong? Seeing
22 none, as many of you know, they help us
23 plan our Champions for Children Awards
24 Luncheon and a number of other activities
25 that occur throughout the year -- I'm

1 sorry, the expos that we do. My
2 apologies. The expos that we do that
3 occur during the summer, back to school,
4 et cetera, and they've done this with us
5 for a number of years. I don't know how
6 many, but I know we had a multiyear deal.
7 There is one more remaining opportunity on
8 this contract as well.

9 Any further discussion for Armstrong?
10 Seeing none, all in favor say aye?

11 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

12 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any opposed,
13 nay? Motion carries.

14 We now move onto Resolution 2024-D.
15 This is authorization for a procurement
16 waiver for a formal competitive
17 solicitation to enter into a purchase
18 agreement with the Doubletree by Miami
19 Airport Convention Center in a total
20 amount not to exceed \$69,565.54. This is
21 inclusive of a contingency fee of
22 \$6,324.14 to host and cater the 2024
23 Champions for Children event.

24 Is there a motion to approve?

25 /BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: To move.

1 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
2 Nelson.

3 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Is there a
4 second?

5 COMMITTEE MEMBER GERSTEIN: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Great. Thank
7 you very much.

8 I got a little ahead of myself on the
9 Armstrong. This is the one that is for
10 the Champions for Children event, and we
11 asked for a procurement waiver, 'cause
12 this is obviously a sole source
13 opportunity to return back to the Hilton
14 at the Miami Airport. I think many of you
15 have been to this event.

16 Any recusals on this item? Thank
17 you, Leigh. No recusals, so we'll move
18 back to the discussion.

19 I think this will be the third year,
20 Natalia, that we're there?

21 MS. ZEA: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: They've done a
23 great job for us, especially because we
24 can accommodate a very large crowd, build
25 out a beautiful stage and celebrate our

1 community on that day.

2 Yes, Nelson.

3 BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: I just want
4 to thank the staff. I look at the chart
5 that's a comparison.

6 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Yeah.

7 BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: Those of us
8 who do events, this is great. Seeing
9 capacity, I've always wanted to see the
10 comparison.

11 I'm just curious. Why did Miami
12 Beach Convention Center not respond, do we
13 know?

14 MS. ZEA: Exactly. So when we send
15 out the request for the bids, they just
16 did an acknowledgment.

17 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Yeah. On
18 Miami Beach or any other location, except
19 for this one, you know, obviously the
20 eastern part of the County is good for me,
21 but this particular venue has great
22 parking, and that makes a huge difference.
23 This just has a huge parking lot behind
24 it. You know, you can put unlimited cars
25 in there, you know, and that makes a big

1 difference, so it's worth it going out
2 there. And it's been -- there's been some
3 beautiful events there.

4 BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: And I wasn't
5 asking, because I think we should go there
6 or anything. I just --

7 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Just wondered.

8 BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: -- curious,
9 you know, about their capacity.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
12 Nelson.

13 Other questions regarding this
14 Resolution 2024-D?

15 All right. We'll move towards a
16 vote. All in favor say aye?

17 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

18 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any opposed,
19 nay? Motion carries. And thank you to
20 staff for working hard to get those
21 various bids in and we'll be looking
22 forward to returning there this spring.

23 Our next Resolution is 2024-E. This
24 is our annual authorization for the
25 expenditure of dues for membership in the

1 Florida Association of Children's Councils
2 and Trust staff in an amount not to exceed
3 \$85,000, inclusive of training and
4 analytics tools to support public policy
5 initiatives for one term of 12 months,
6 commencing retroactively to October 1,
7 2023, and ending on September 30, 2024.

8 Is there a motion to approve?

9 COMMITTEE MEMBER GERSTEIN: So moved.

10 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
11 Judge.

12 Is there a second?

13 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
15 Annie.

16 Any recusals? Alright, we'll move
17 into discussion. Thank you.

18 Some of you may remember that we
19 annually approve our dues to this
20 organization. In your package, you'll see
21 the various other CSCs that we share this
22 with.

23 One note, because the number of CSCs
24 has increased over the last few years, our
25 responsibility is a little bit less than

1 it used to be. It used to be a little
2 over \$100,000.00. Now, it's at
3 \$85,000.00, as we share the dues structure
4 with these various other CSCs from
5 Hillsborough County to Escambia County and
6 everything in between.

7 Any further discussion?

8 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Do they
9 still maintain an office up in
10 Tallahassee?

11 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Yes. Great
12 question, they have an office in
13 Tallahassee.

14 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Right.
15 It's convenient for those of us that go up
16 to Tallahassee and to lobby for whatever
17 our causes are. You know, they always
18 make their offices available to sit, make
19 phone calls, gather your thoughts and do
20 whatever. They've always been very
21 supportive of the Children's Trust folks
22 that are going to Tallahassee.

23 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Wonderful.
24 Thank you, Isaac.

25 Other questions regarding this

1 resolution? Seeing none, we'll move into
2 a vote. All in favor of Resolution
3 2024-E, say aye?

4 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

5 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any opposed,
6 nay? Motion carries. Thank you very
7 much.

8 We'll move now to Resolution 2024-F.
9 This is a resolution to authorize to amend
10 Resolution 2023-43 and to execute contract
11 amendments with Miami-Dade Family Learning
12 Partnership, Inc. and All in One Mail
13 Shop, Inc., doing business as All in One
14 Direct Marketing Solutions, for the
15 support and maintenance of a birth to five
16 book club, to add an additional
17 \$1,000,000.00 to the contract amount for a
18 new total contract amount not to exceed
19 \$3,602,239.00, and to correct and clarify
20 that there are no remaining 12-month
21 renewals on this agreement, authorization
22 to amend the fiscal year 2020 -- sorry,
23 2023-2024 budget, to increase the total
24 allocation of the book club to accommodate
25 the increase in funding noted here.

1 Is there a motion to approve this
2 resolution?

3 COMMITTEE MEMBER OSPINA: So moved.

4 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: I'll second
5 it.

6 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you. We
7 have a motion and a second.

8 Are there any recusals on this
9 motion?

10 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Do I have
11 to -- Leigh, do I have to recuse myself if
12 one of my grandchildren are a member of --

13 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: The brand new
14 member as of yesterday? City attorney has
15 opined that we're in good space there,
16 Your Honor.

17 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any other
19 discussion regarding this?

20 This is one of our jewel programs
21 that we get to fund, so please, I think
22 following some of our strategic
23 initiatives of the last couple of years,
24 we're adding some additional dollars to
25 this and we continue to see just

1 tremendous desire to be a part of this
2 program, so kudos to the Trust for
3 continuing to elevate this program.

4 BOARD MEMBER HINCAPIE: Do we have
5 any idea on the reason for the significant
6 increase in enrollment?

7 MR. HAJ: Well, the enrollment has
8 been searching, so we had to close it down
9 when they had 40,000. So we held it when
10 we were going through our TRIM
11 discussions, that was one of the ask, to
12 add additional million, to continue
13 raising it to 60,000. The hope was really
14 -- what's our target, 90,000?

15 MS. ZEA: Big picture.

16 MR. HAJ: Big picture is 90,000.
17 We're trying to get other sponsors, other
18 people to come in.

19 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Great question.
20 Other questions regarding the
21 resolution? Alright, we'll move to a
22 vote.

23 All in favor signify by saying aye?

24 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

25 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any nays?

1 Motion carries. Resolution 2024-F is
2 approved as amended.

3 Our final resolution is 2024-G. This
4 is an authorization to release competitive
5 solicitations in alignment with our
6 Board's strategic priorities and projected
7 available funding across multiple
8 investment areas with funding cycles that
9 have ended or are ending within the
10 upcoming fiscal year 2023-2024.

11 Is there a motion to approve this
12 resolution?

13 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: So moved.

14 COMMITTEE MEMBER GERSTEIN: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: We have a
16 motion and a second.

17 Are there any recusals? Seeing none,
18 we'll move to discussion now.

19 MS. KOBRINSKI: Sorry, who seconded?

20 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: I'm sorry?

21 MS. KOBRINSKI: I missed the second.
22 Who seconded the motion?

23 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Second I think
24 was the Judge. Thank you, Leigh.

25 COMMITTEE MEMBER OSPINA: I just

1 wanted to say just as a relatively new
2 member, I just got my tax bill yesterday.

3 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Yes, me, too.

4 COMMITTEE MEMBER OSPINA: For the
5 very first time, when I saw all the line
6 items and I saw the Children's Trust, it
7 had a really powerful impact.

8 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Nice.

9 COMMITTEE MEMBER OSPINA: And I
10 thought that's not a lot of money relative
11 to everything that we now know the
12 Children's Trust does, so it was, you
13 know, really interesting. At some point
14 everybody really gets to see and really
15 understand what is done here.

16 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: And I
17 appreciate that. And I imagine a lot of
18 people are getting them yesterday, today,
19 tomorrow. We're in sort of that third
20 block. I think it's orange on most of the
21 memorandum and I think we're the last line
22 item in that block. So you'll notice,
23 based on our .5 mills that the Board
24 approved what your total amount is based
25 on your property.

1 And I think it is impactful, and you
2 realize you're all making contributions to
3 what we do everyday and what we, as Board
4 Members, get the privilege to help spend
5 that money in a very judicious and wise
6 way.

7 Other questions? This is a big deal
8 and we always put out a solicitation and
9 obviously it will come back to the Board
10 obviously when there are responses, but
11 this is what we do in terms of deploying
12 those dollars.

13 And, again, going back to our
14 strategic plan as we have met over the
15 last couple of years looking to deploy
16 additional dollars into those programs
17 that need those resources.

18 Alright, seeing no further
19 discussion, we'll move to a vote. All in
20 favor say aye?

21 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

22 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Any opposed,
23 nay? Motion carries and Resolution 2024-G
24 is approved.

25 We'll bring all of these resolutions

1 to the Board on November 13th.

2 Mr. CEO, we move now to your report.

3 MR. HAJ: Mr. Chair, thank you.

4 Book Fair is November 17th to the
5 19th. We've had a tremendous amount of
6 responses from the Board Members. Our
7 clerk will be reaching out to you to
8 arrange the tickets if you want to attend.

9 The U.S. Soccer Foundation Project.
10 This is the one that we kicked off with
11 Ken Griffin adding five million into the
12 project. We did a ribbon cutting and a
13 press event a couple of months ago. The
14 first field was just announced two weeks
15 ago that we did the event. Two weeks ago
16 was the first field with Ken Griffin's
17 logo and the Trust logo at Central Matter.
18 So this is one of 50 soccer pitches that
19 will be going up leading up to the world
20 cup. So it's a great event.

21 The finalist, we are the finalist for
22 the grade level reading pacesetter honors
23 award, which is a big deal throughout the
24 state, and we're honored to be a finalist
25 there.

1 Champions for Children's nominations.
2 Thank you for the Board Members who
3 volunteered to be on the selection
4 committee. Right now the David Lawrence
5 award, the Youth Award and what's the
6 third award for? Direct service for the
7 Board is out, so if you know someone who's
8 worthy of David Lawrence Award, please
9 send them a link so they start applying.
10 We close November 13th.

11 Spooky Symphony. It's always a great
12 event for us. We had over 1300 children
13 and families. Thank you Mark for MCing
14 the event and his costume changes this
15 year. He did an amazing event.

16 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you.

17 MR. HAJ: But it's always nice to get
18 1300 kids into the auditorium and families
19 listening to the orchestra. Great event
20 for the community, great event for the
21 Trust.

22 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: And, Jim, I'll
23 just say, I think I've been going maybe
24 the last six years. I know we were at the
25 Arsht Center and we've been at the Dade

1 County Auditorium, which they all do a
2 great job.

3 I have to say between the Alhambra
4 Orchestra and the Youth Symphony, this was
5 their best curation of the seven different
6 pieces that they did. And the crowd sang
7 along when they did soundtrack from
8 Frozen, which I thought was awesome,
9 'cause you can hear them singing, you
10 know, backstage. And then, you know, just
11 their enthusiasm. I think for the
12 directors and the musicians that wear
13 costume, what a lovely, lovely event that
14 we get to put our name on it. Whoever
15 puts together the graphics in the back, I
16 think it was the best year ever, so just
17 Mazel Tov, wonderful work.

18 MR. HAJ: The monthly financial
19 statements are attached to your packet.
20 And I'd like to close just turning over to
21 Bill for a minute. I want Bill to kind of
22 accomplish two things. One, to introduce
23 a member of his team that you've seen.
24 We've been talking a lot as a Board
25 priority about succession management, and

1 building our department and systems into
2 the Trust. That's not dependent on any
3 one person. So when Bill wins that
4 lottery for a billion dollars and steps
5 away, that we can function.

6 So we've been working quite a bit on
7 our system's upgrade as well as putting
8 the right people in the right seats. And
9 we've also -- Bill, if you or Lisanne can
10 report back on some of the functionality.
11 A year and a half ago, we surveyed our
12 providers about our finances and how they
13 interact. You've heard in the past that
14 it's cumbersome, that it may not pivot in
15 a timely manner. And we took many steps
16 in the last year and we added an enhanced
17 functionality recently that will be
18 launched -- we changed it to December 1st
19 now that we'll do a Zoom call with our
20 providers.

21 So, Bill, you want to talk a little
22 about your team, a little bit about the
23 functionality they're working on.

24 MR. KIRTLAND: Absolutely.

25 For the first time in several,

1 several months, I'm not discussing the
2 budget or the millage, so it's slightly a
3 welcomed change of pace just to talk a
4 little bit about, you know, our
5 relationship management with providers as
6 we shift our mindset a little bit from the
7 budgeting process, which never ends,
8 right, the management and the, you know,
9 generation of budgets.

10 We look more at now closing out our
11 current contracts and moving into our new
12 contracts of the new cycle that we -- that
13 was our main part of our discussion in
14 developing the budget for the fiscal year
15 of 2024.

16 So a lot of -- we take a lot of
17 introspective over what our relationship
18 with providers was like in the past year,
19 especially as we close out contracts, and
20 It's always a bit of a chore, right,
21 cleaning out all our remaining invoices
22 from providers to make sure that we have
23 as much as, you know, real time data
24 available to this committee and our
25 understanding of our financial progress

1 every year.

2 So we're always trying to explore
3 ways to make that process more seamless so
4 that invoices and expenditures are just as
5 up to date as possible.

6 So this year we're releasing new
7 functionality. I'm going to let Lisanne
8 Gage, our finance director, my right hand,
9 I wouldn't say man, my right hand, you
10 know, woman, is taking -- you know, is
11 primarily leading the charge and
12 communicating with all our providers, you
13 know, the way this functionality will
14 work, you know, gathering insight from
15 them on how it would best assist them.

16 So, Lisanne, can you come up here.
17 I'll let you discuss it a little bit
18 further.

19 MS. GAGE: Sure. Hi, Everybody. I
20 think the last time I spoke to the
21 committee must have been a year and a half
22 ago. I shared several results with
23 providers. We did a survey, got some
24 feedback and shared some of the short term
25 and quick enhancements we had turned on.

1 So this long-term one that Bill is
2 referring to, we've been working on for
3 probably a year and a half as well, since
4 that moment, And so we're ready to roll it
5 out.

6 And so what it is is that a lot of
7 providers we hear that amendments take a
8 long time, you know, when they're trying
9 to, like, amend their budgets, sometimes
10 it takes a while.

11 So what we were trying to figure out
12 is there's an enhancement we can turn on
13 that would allow them to make minor
14 adjustments to, like, you know, certain
15 line items within our budget while they're
16 doing their reimbursements. So then we
17 don't delay them getting reimbursed and we
18 don't have these long amendment processes.

19 And so we're calling this, like, a
20 flex functionality within the system. And
21 so what it will allow is providers to
22 exceed certain line items without going
23 over, of course, their total budgeted
24 amount, but it will allow them to exceed
25 certain line items within their

1 reimbursement and then within
2 reimbursement, too. They will just need
3 to identify kind of where they're going to
4 be debiting those funds from.

5 And so once the reimbursements are
6 approved, they'll just -- in the system,
7 it will recognize it as an amendment and
8 balance the budget in the back end.

9 And so it's a great functionality, I
10 think, a lot of providers will be excited
11 having, especially, you know, when we're
12 at these tail end, the summer close out of
13 our programs, we see a lot of providers
14 who are just trying to move \$100 from one
15 line item to another item. I think it's a
16 really good enhancement.

17 We're rolling it out on December 1st
18 to the provider community and we're
19 excited about it.

20 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Great job.

21 MR. KIRTLAND: Any questions on
22 that? Maybe we can work out a time
23 monthly financial segments.

24 Well, I mean, just in review of the
25 August 2023 financial statements, we're

1 looking at expenditures this year that
2 didn't quite have the amount of activity
3 that -- in comparison to last year as far
4 as how much was recognized, and I don't
5 believe that to be in direct correlation
6 to utilization of the contracts, but
7 there's difficulties closing out contracts
8 this year and collecting the invoices as
9 quickly as we have in years past.

10 We think that with additional
11 functionality like this, we can help turn
12 over invoices and prevent this kind of
13 year-to-year comparability issues, we can
14 lessen that effect, so hopefully that will
15 improve our reporting process to this
16 committee and our understanding in the
17 future.

18 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you.

19 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: I'm sorry.

20 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Isaac.

21 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Can you
22 restate in incredibly, like, 5th grader
23 terms what the goal was and is?

24 You know, I understand that, you
25 know, providers, they, you know -- you

1 know, they prevent -- present invoices and
2 you pay them. And when a program, I guess
3 the final invoice, needs to really close
4 out the entire grant or whatever.

5 And you're saying that you're
6 implementing some software or, you know,
7 some, you know, plug in or whatever that
8 will enable a provider that's having
9 problems balancing their books yearend,
10 and this is what I heard, that your
11 software will allow them to plug in an
12 amount that will make it balanced.

13 MS. GAGE: I can break it down for
14 you.

15 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Yeah, just,
16 you know, just --

17 MS. GAGE: Yeah. So providers, at
18 the beginning of their contract, they
19 create a budget, right? 'Cause we're cost
20 reimbursement system, right?

21 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Correct.

22 MS. GAGE: They do a budget. Then
23 they invoice against this budget, right?
24 So invoice have their own item level.

25 So what this functionality allows,

1 every time they need to -- we allow them
2 two amendments in the year, so if they
3 needed to make -- shift funds within line
4 items, they can do what we call as an
5 amendment. They go into the system. It's
6 this whole procedure where they do
7 amendment shift funds, explain why they're
8 shifting funds.

9 So what this functionality will do is
10 that -- it won't get take away amendments,
11 because, of course, there might still be
12 some reasons that we still need to keep
13 amendments, but what it will do, is that
14 -- I'm going to give you an example.

15 If a provider has budgeted \$2,000 in
16 travel, right, but then realize they've
17 actually just spent 2100, right, so they
18 don't have that extra \$100. Instead of
19 now having to open up an amendment and go
20 through that process, when they're
21 invoicing us for that \$2100, they're doing
22 it in the invoice, they'll be submitting
23 the invoice, that system will allow them
24 to go instead of 2,000 to go to 2100, and
25 within that same invoice, they'll just

1 need to identify where they're taking that
2 extra \$100 from.

3 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: So they're
4 going to underwrite --

5 MS. GAGE: Correct.

6 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: -- that
7 additional line item charge using another
8 line item?

9 MS. GAGE: Exactly.

10 MR. KIRTLAND: We have set very small
11 variance controls on each line, so they
12 can't make a huge adjustment to, you know,
13 their request. It's just to allow them
14 basically the pennies that they need to
15 finish maybe a line item or finish out
16 their contract without having to open up
17 this really long, robust amendment process
18 in the budget that holds them up, which we
19 think is the reason for a lot of the
20 invoice delays that we have. We have a
21 number of open amendments that we need to
22 close out.

23 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: Right,
24 right, right. So I guess the deliverable
25 here is just to streamline amendment

1 process.

2 MR. KIRTLAND: Right.

3 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you,
4 Isaac.

5 Other questions?

6 MS. NEASMAN: I guess that we're
7 taking the provider in, that is terrific,
8 because I hear staff all the time talk
9 about we've got to get this amendment done
10 so that we can, you know, move supplies,
11 because they're not spending it or
12 whatever. So I want to thank you all for
13 doing that, 'cause it makes it easier.

14 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Great feedback.
15 Leigh.

16 MS. KOBRINSKI: Were there other set
17 -- you said that there are certain
18 variances? Are there set limits to that
19 stated in the contract that they have to
20 spend, like, \$5,000, and just go buy a
21 bunch of, like, pencils and stuff? Is it
22 set for direct services or administrative
23 or --

24 MS. GAGE: Yeah. It's set at the
25 line item level, and so, yeah, they won't

1 be able to -- there's another rule in
2 place that they won't be able to do that.
3 At the end of the contract year as well,
4 they won't be able to just go buy pencils
5 at the end of the contract year, yes.

6 MR. KIRTLAND: We look for that kind
7 of purchasing activity, even outside of
8 whether or not they use the funds through
9 this additional functionality. We try to
10 identify spending activity that
11 specifically serves the contract period
12 that they're requesting of us. We look
13 out to see if they're stockpiling for the
14 next year.

15 MR. HAJ: Mr. Chair, thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Thank you.

17 Thank you, Both.

18 Anything for the good of the order?
19 We've come to the end of our agenda, but I
20 certainly want to open it up to any of our
21 members if there's anything you want to
22 discuss.

23 And, Bill, I'll just mention, when we
24 had our briefing call early in the week, I
25 know that you guys are ready to close the

1 fiscal year. It just happened about 30
2 some days ago. I think you said the
3 auditors were already in the office this
4 week.

5 MR. KIRTLAND: Yes, very diligent
6 auditors.

7 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Yes. That's
8 great. That's great to hear.

9 COMMITTEE MEMBER SALVER: I just want
10 to say a word, you know, about Annie. You
11 know, we served together pretty much an
12 entire term. I don't think you've missed
13 a meeting, first of all.

14 Second of all, I really appreciate
15 the passion, the intellect that you apply
16 to everything you do here. It's clear.
17 You take this very, very seriously. You
18 come prepared. You know, you make
19 wonderful arguments. You're a true, you
20 know, fighter for the community, and it
21 was an honor to serve with you.

22 COMMITTEE MEMBER NEASMAN: If I can
23 just say thank you. I'm learning to say
24 thank you, because I do believe in giving
25 folks their flowers. So thank you all for

1 having me, first of all. And it has been
2 a pleasure. The Children's Trust, I was
3 here when it was born in the community,
4 and I just love what's happened over these
5 many, many years. So thank you all for
6 being so passionate and caring about the
7 children and families. And I'm still
8 going to be around, but thank you all very
9 much.

10 CHAIRMAN TROWBRIDGE: Anything else
11 for the good of the order?

12 All right. Great job. We'll see you
13 on the 13th. Without objection, we will
14 stand adjourned.

15 (Thereupon, at 10:02 a.m., the
16 meeting was adjourned).

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE)

I, Lorena Ramos, National Registered Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did TRANSCRIBE the AUDIO taped proceeding of the Finance & Operations Committee meeting, held on the 2nd of November 2023; and that the foregoing transcript, pages 1 through 37, is a true record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this 11/16/2023 in the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Lorena Ramos

LORENA RAMOS, COURT REPORTER
Registered Professional Reporter

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