
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

@PEACE, Inc., 217 S. Salina St., 2nd Flr.

Monday, March 23, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Judge James Cecile (President & Development Chair), Paula Freedman (via zoom), Erich Shafer (via zoom), Eric Caballero (via zoom), Nicholas DeMartino (via zoom), Mitayah Donerlson (via zoom), Steve Hodgins (via zoom), Christopher Montgomery (via zoom), Jason Wallace (via zoom), Tysha Martin (via zoom), Michael LaFlair

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Robert Tackman (Finance Chair), Patricia Usherwood Fitzpatrick, Edward Perry

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Carolyn Brown, Kathleen O'Brien, Nancy Turo, Mandy King, Brenda Kross Curinga, Todd Goehle, Maribel Arce

Verbal Roll Call:

President Cecile noted for the record that a quorum was present, either in person or via zoom.

Call to Order:

The Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President Cecile at 4:50 pm.

Moment of Silence: Board members observed a moment of silence.

Approval of Minutes (February 2026):

The President requested a motion to approve the February 2026 Board Meeting minutes; Steve Hodgins motions, Eric Caballero seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

President's Report & HS/EHS Request: Approval for Vehicle Disposal:

Judge Cecile noted the tragic passing of Augustus Grissett – a Family Development Advocate at Eastside FRC -- at the Nob Hill Apartment Fire. There will be a memorial held Friday, March 27, 2-6 pm at Eastside FRC.

We are seeking approval for the disposition of 20 Head Start/Early Head Start vehicles to right-size the fleet. Carolyn Brown explained this action is driven by ongoing challenges in recruiting bus drivers as well as the need to reduce insurance and vehicle inspection costs.

President Cecile requested a motion to dispose of HS/EHS vehicles; Jason Wallace motioned; Mitayah Donerlson seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.



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Carolyn D. Brown, Executive Director

March 23rd, 2026

Ms. Stephanie Sowalsky, Regional Grants Management Officer
Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
26 Federal Plaza
Suite 4114
New York, NY 10278

Grant No. 02CH013040
Vehicle Disposition

To whom it may concern,

The PEACE, Inc. Board of Directors has reviewed and hereby grants permission for the application of disposition of twelve mid-sized school buses and eight vans for PEACE's Early Head Start/Head Start program.

Sincerely,

Honorable James H. Cecile
President
PEACE, Inc.
Board of Directors

Committee Reports

a) Development Committee Report:

Judge Cecile noted the committee met on March 3, had quorum. The committee had not received a response to his letter to Common Councilor, Rita Paniagua. Michael La Flair will be contacted regarding his committee assignment. Sponsorship requests for Champions of Diversity were issued.

President Cecile requested a motion to approve development committee minutes, Paula Freedman motions; Tysha Martin seconds; motion carried unanimously.

b) EEO/Personnel Committee Report:

Jason Wallace reported the committee met on March 5th, there was quorum. They discussed a strategy being considered to switch the agency employee benefits plan to a third-party administrator, Aetna, as recommended by Haylor, Fryer & Coon. This would result in the disruption of services for 2% - 4% of medical providers and there would be no change to employee deductions through the agency during the current benefit plan. Augustus Grissett's passing was also discussed.

President Cecile requested a motion to approve EEO/Personnel committee minutes, Erich Shafer motions to approve, Nicholas DeMartino seconds, motion carried unanimously.

c) Planning Committee Report:

Tysha Martin reported the Committee met on March 11. The Committee approved the HS/EHS Policy Council Bylaws. The Committee also approved the Family Outcomes Dashboard report that shows families' progress throughout the year focusing on four Family Well-Being domains: transportation, stable housing, employment, access to food. The updated Grants Summary report was also approved, including the application for CDBG funding to stabilize Free Tax Prep. The hiring of Jordan Wood as Grants and Planning Manager and Champions of Diversity were also discussed.

Augustus Grissett's passing was also discussed. Tysha Martin noted that in her role at CNY Fair Housing she was at the Nob Hill tenant's association meeting, the meeting was very emotional and sad about Gus and his wife's passing.

President Cecile requested a motion to approve planning committee minutes, Michael La Flair motions to approve, Chris Montgomery seconds, motion carried unanimously.

d) Finance Committee Report:

Nancy Turo, CFO discussed the monthly financial statements for February 2026. She reminded the Board that February is the first month of the new fiscal year. The fiscal department is still in the process of closing the fiscal year ending 1/31/26, so the balance sheet accounts are not a true reflection at this time. After the year end is closed, the balance sheet will again reflect the correct status of the accounts. The Net Income before depreciation year to date is \$151,128 vers a budget of \$33,058. The net income after depreciation is \$104,307.

The net income from normal operations is \$25,543. The number is the net of "timing differences" of fixed asset purchases, revenue recognition grants, grants with revenue based on head count and donation cost centers. Ms. Turo explained that a portion of salaries, benefits and expenditures are accrued back to January 31, 2026. Therefore, the current month expenses for February 2026 is low compared to other months. This will level out during March and April.

The indirect rate is 31.2%. We are approved for 26%, so 26% was allocated for February to the various cost centers. This will even out during March and April as salaries and expenses are being accrued back to January 2026. The line of credit balance was \$0.

There was a robust discussion about Health Insurance. Carolyn Brown explained we are in the process of changing the 3rd party administrator so we will now be getting rebates on the specialty drugs that affected our insurance costs.

We are in the process of an Insurance RFP, 10 submitted documents, 4-5 will be brought in to make presentations. Nancy did a survey and a lot of agencies do not use the same PNC and benefits brokers.

We are also in the process of an Audit 401K RFP. We got one application, expecting 3 more.

The rise in diesel and gas prices was discussed. Nancy Turo expects that gas expenditures will increase next month as well as electricity bills. Given that we are flat-funded, this will be discussed at the cash flow meeting. One of the programs most affected is Senior Nutrition, we are going to the county to negotiate a higher per meal rate.

Nancy Turo discussed the list of proposed changes to the bank signers: Removal of Kathleen O'Brien and adding Nancy Turo and Brenda Curing as they transition to their new role.

President Cecile requested a motion to approve finance committee minutes, Paula Freedman motions to approve, Steve Hodgins seconds, motion carried unanimously.

Executive Directors report:

Carolyn Brown reported that we are still working through the challenge to weatherization funding. In New York State there was a shift of our weatherization funds to reimburse clients for their higher energy costs instead of funding Weatherization programs. We are hopeful the program will be funded. Weatherization funds have been restored in the single budget proposal put together by the NYS Senate and Assembly.

The Head Start program that served the Jamesville Correctional Facility is paused but the clients will continue to be served on the Head Start Home Visitor caseload. Since the pandemic it has been challenging to get the space and have full programming at this site, we could not work the issues out with the current correctional facility administration.

Westside FRC capital improvement project is a major project. We are putting plans in place for codes and city approval soon. We are learning a lot, the process has been complicated but we are hopeful to accomplish it.

We have been waiting to hear from HS the date of our review. It is scheduled for May 4th. We are confident in our team, but this will be a big lift for them to put together all the documentation needed for the review.

For many years, we have been talking about building awareness of PEACE, Inc. in the community and we are seeing much improvement. Recently, we were at the Lender Expo and we got two call outs from the presenters about PEACE, Inc.

Program Reports:

Judge Cecile highlighted data points from the Program Reports included in the board packet. Including: a) there is a family that was homeless who we helped find housing; b) Reentry found a person a job at Green Hills, this person had not been employed for 4 years.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Adjournment:

President Cecile adjourned the meeting at 5:16pm