Fort Macleod Early Learning & Childcare Society
Board Meeting Minutes
Date: July 21, 2026 **Time:** 1:00 PM – 1:40 PM MST **Location:** Virtual (Google Meet – Recorded)

Present: Mackenzie Hengerer (President), Keeley Odney (Secretary), Laura Yunick (Treasurer), Jesse Syrowitz (Vice President), Brianna Wolstoncroft (Executive Director, non-voting)

Regrets: Lee Holfeld (Director)

Recorded by: Keeley Odney (Secretary)

1. Call to Order & Opening

a) Meeting called to order by President Mackenzie Hengerer at 1:00 PM MST.

b) Quorum confirmed — four voting board members present (Mackenzie Hengerer, Keeley Odney, Laura Yunick, Jesse Syrowitz).

c) Board package — including agenda, June 23 minutes, ED report, incident reporting policy draft, and banking resolution — distributed in advance of the meeting.

d) Agenda approved as presented.

Motion to approve the July 21, 2026 agenda as presented.
Moved: Keeley Odney | Seconded: Mackenzie Hengerer | Status: Carried

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

a) Review of June 23, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes (unapproved).

b) No amendments noted. President acknowledged the June meeting's Treasurer's Report was deferred pending Laura's attendance and the posting of the operating line of credit; the full Treasurer's Report is presented in Section 4 of these minutes.

Motion to approve the June 23, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes as presented.
Moved: Laura Yunick | Seconded: Mackenzie Hengerer | Status: Carried

3. Executive & Officer Updates

a) President Report

- Portage College Partnership: Communication with Lisa Gingras (Portage College) is ongoing. The partnership remains promising and a flexible Fall start date is possible. The partnership details will be circulated to the board for review and approval.
- Incident Reporting Policy: A draft policy was included in the board package for review ahead of the meeting. To be discussed and voted on under Old Business (Section 5a).
- ATCO Community Energy Fund: No suitable charitable recipient was identified for the originally proposed security lighting application.
- Fort Macleod Rotary — Outdoor Space Signage: Fort Macleod Rotary requested a minor wording change to the donor sign. Sign text to be updated and sent for installation early August.

b) Secretary Report

- Maintaining board compliance binder with current and up-to-date records, including wage top-up reports for compliance.
- Payroll documentation and receipts are being entered into the compliance binder. Receipts from the program are collected by Keeley and matched against the accounting platform records alongside the Treasurer.
- Physical signatures: Board members are being coordinated for wet signatures on required documents. E-signatures accepted where appropriate, but physical copies preferred for future charitable designation.
- Banking resolution paperwork: Board resolution for ATB Financial debit card issuance and signing authority change (distributed in today's package) is to be printed, signed physically by board members, and delivered to the bank. Keeley to coordinate.

c) Executive Director Report – Kinder Roots Program

Enrollment & Staffing:

- July: three new enrollments (all full-time) and one new hire, bringing total current enrollment to 15 children. The program has been running just under 3 months.
- Projected: a minimum of three additional children expected by September/October, bringing projected enrollment to approximately 18 children. Capacity of program is 24 children.
- Several families have expressed interest in drop-in care; to be accommodated as capacity allows.

Reimbursement / Claims / Top-Up Status:

- The government deposit received July was for children's claims only (for the month of May 2026). This was not the staff Top-Up payment.
- Staff Top-Up payments for May remain outstanding with no payment received and no explanation provided by the Government of Alberta.
- Brianna completed mandatory claims training on July 13, 2026. A follow-up training session is scheduled for July 27, at which time she will directly raise the outstanding Top-Up payments with the government contact and report back to the board.
- Board noted concern that staff have raised the delayed Top-Up as a pay issue; funding agreement was signed under pressure from the Government of Alberta and payments have not been released. Board approved a motion to advance Top-Up wages from the operating line (see Section 4 — Motion).
- Action: If outstanding Top-Up payments remain unresolved after Brianna's July 27 training session, Mackenzie to prepare a formal letter from the board to the government funding contact voicing concern as non-profit organization.

Program & Communications:

- Heavy outdoor programming in July due to warm weather — water days, sensory activities, and water play.
- Current programming theme: The Very Hungry Caterpillar, inspired by the caterpillar art installed at the front of the building.
- ClassDojo is in effective use for parent communication.
- Brianna has been sharing non-identifying program photos for website and social media use; board encourages this to continue on a regular basis to showcase programming.

Staff Training & Meetings:

- Staff meetings discussed: recommended cadence is every other month minimum. Board noted employment standards requirements — staff called in for an after-hours meeting are entitled to a minimum three-hour pay call-in, or overtime if they worked that day under the 8/44-hour ruling. First staff meeting to include guidance from the board and potentially Lee's staff training development component.
- ED to consult with staff on preferred meeting format and timing; Hand in Hand's model (monthly evening meeting with food) noted as a reference. Board to receive update on staff meeting structure to coordinate Board support during first meeting.

Supplies & Sponsorship Wish-List:

- Immediate program supply needs identified: non-perishable snacks as additional food programming top-up (bear paws, fruit snacks, baby snacks for infants), bottles, extra water bottles, blankets and nap supplies, extra clothing, and small pools or sprinklers for summer outdoor programming.
- Action: Brianna to forward itemized supply list to the Early Learning email for board distribution and community sponsorship/donation review.

4. Treasurer's Report

Laura presented the Treasurer's Report for June and July 2026 (deferred from the June 23 meeting).

- Current account balance as of July 21, 2026: $44,861.34. This figure includes the operating line of credit and reflects accounts payables made from June – July 21st.
- Alberta government payroll remittances have been set up for automatic payment to avoid non-compliance penalties.
- Only one government direct deposit was received during this period — the July 17 children's claims payment (month of May) No staff Top-Up payments have been received from May – July 2026.
- The operating line of credit provides sufficient capacity to bridge payroll and Top-Up payments while government reimbursement is pending.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for June and July 2026 as presented by Laura Yunick.
Moved: Mackenzie Hengerer | Seconded: Keeley Odney | Status: Carried

Motion — Staff Top-Up Wages:

The board discussed the outstanding May and June staff Top-Up wages owed to staff for the month of May and June. The Government of Alberta has not yet released despite the signed funding agreement being in place since initial program licensing approval in May 2026. To protect staff income and program stability, the board agreed to advance these Top-Up payments from the operating line.

Motion to approve payment of outstanding May and June staff Top-Up wages on the upcoming payroll run (Payday July 24, 2026), advanced from the Society's operating line of credit, on the agreement basis that the Alberta Government funding agreement is signed and in place for the Kinder Roots Program.

Moved: Mackenzie Hengerer | Seconded: Jesse Syrowitz | Status: Carried

5. Old Business

a) Incident Reporting and Governance Policy — Approval

- The Board Incident Reporting Policy was circulated in advance of the meeting as part of the July board package. The policy establishes accountability for incident reporting from the ED to the board, defines Category A (Critical) and Category B (Reportable) incident thresholds, and confirms the ED's obligations to both provincial licensing (Child Care Licensing Portal) and the board.
- The board acknowledged that the ED must continue to follow all provincial licensing requirements. In addition, the board requires notification for incidents involving medical attention beyond basic first aid, serious injuries, or violence and harassment — items that could affect staff, children, or the licensed operation of the program.
- ED confirmed she had reviewed the policy and supported its adoption.
- Policy records to be maintained by the Secretary (Keeley Odney) for AGM and compliance purposes.

Motion to approve the Incident Reporting and Governance Policy as presented.
Moved: Jesse Syrowitz | Seconded: Laura Yunick | Status: Carried

b) Personnel Committee — Formal Establishment

- The board formally established the Personnel Committee as an ad-hoc sub-committee to support the Executive Director in HR and personnel matters.
- Confirmed committee members and roles:
  - Jesse Syrowitz — social and community support lens
  - Lee Holfeld — early learning and staff development lens
  - Mackenzie Hengerer — HR governance lens
- The committee does not operate on a set meeting schedule; it is convened as needed. Key use cases include: providing a board witness during staff conversations, supporting the ED when a parent or staffing issue requires board presence, and responding when licensing gives 48–72-hour notice requiring both the ED and a board member to attend.
- Committee members must declare and recuse themselves from any matter where a conflict of interest exists (pecuniary or personal).
- Jesse Syrowitz noted the value of having the structure in place proactively rather than trying to establish it under pressure during a serious event.
- The committee's terms of reference are captured in the Personnel Committee Policy (GOV-002). The committee will be formally adopted at the AGM. In the meantime, licensing will be able to identify the committee contacts if required.

c) WestCo Cares — Outdoor Infant Space Accessibility Project

- President and Brianna met with WestCo Cares representatives at the site. No response has been received from WestCo Cares since the visit.
- A thank-you email was sent to WestCo Cares following the visit. The board will continue to monitor for correspondence and review alternate grant options for conversion of the play space for infants connected to the building premises.

d) Sponsorship Packages and Donation Wish-List

- Executive Director is still developing formal sponsorship package concepts. Supply needs have been identified (see Section 3c — Supplies & Sponsorship Wish-List) and will be shared via the Early Learning email.
- Laura noted that only the clothing donation post has been shared publicly to date; additional supply requests have not yet been posted but would benefit the Kinder Roots program as a non-profit organization.
- Board discussed the importance of presenting donation asks in a manner that reflects fiscal responsibility as a non-profit. Community members and grant bodies respond positively to programs that demonstrate thoughtful stewardship and reporting methods.
- Action: Executive Director to forward supply wish-list to the Board Early Learning email. Board to compile and distribute to community contacts and sponsorship targets.

6. New Business

a) Staff Training Update

- Executive Director completed mandatory claims training on July 13. Follow-up session scheduled July 27.
- Executive Director completed the Alberta Government Grant Writing course (free) and is exploring additional in-depth grant writing training opportunities. The board supports her pursuing further training where suitable and communicated in advance for approval.
- Lee has expressed interest in facilitating a future staff training session with staff. Board to coordinate scheduling with Brianna and Lee once the staff meeting cadence is established.

b) Programming Update — Kinder Roots

- Current theme: The Very Hungry Caterpillar, inspired by the program's exterior rock artwork.
- July programming has centered on outdoor activities — water days, water sensory play, and outdoor exploration given warm summer temperatures.
- Supply needs to support programming themes have been identified and will be shared through the donation/sponsorship wish-list (see Section 3c).

c) Security Cameras — 1819 2nd Avenue Location

- Board discussed vendor options for security camera installation at the Kinder Roots site.
- Jesse Syrowitz recommended Securecom (Lethbridge-based), noting they installed the security system at his former office. They are experienced with camera placement for programs serving vulnerable populations and are expected to be responsive and reasonably priced.
- Telus was considered but noted as likely cost-prohibitive; their contracts typically require longer terms.
- A Calgary-based vendor was noted as quoting approximately $1,000 for equipment only.
- Minimum board requirement: at least 10-14 days of recorded footage for incident review capability.

- Brianna noted she had already consulted with licensing on permissible camera placement locations during their initial visit and sees this beneficial for the security and safety of children and staff.
- No budget motion made at this time; Mackenzie to obtain formal quotes from Securecom and Telus and present options to the board before formal financial motion would be proposed by Board.

d) QuickBooks Online

- The board confirmed the transition from Wave to QuickBooks Online (QBO) for all accounting, accounts receivable/payable, and payroll processing.
- Reasons for transition: Wave has significant limitations including delayed payroll processing (funds processed after 10 PM rather than on the designated payday), inconsistent payment timing, and limited customer support.
- Brianna has begun entering staff information into QBO.
- Action: Board to complete QBO transition; communicate system change to parents/guardians and provide updated statements.

e) Website and Communications

- Brianna shared water plays photos for the website and social platforms. Board encourages a regular cadence of non-identifying program photo submissions from Brianna to the Early Learning email for website and social media use.
- Collaboration with Hand in Hand, Wild Roots, and out-of-school care continues through our shared resources.

f) 360 Program Review — Staff, Family, and Waitlist Survey

- The board agreed to conduct a 360-program review as part of strong non-profit reportable requirements and as a general program improvement tool.
- Three survey groups identified:
    - Staff — program experience, support needs, and team feedback
    - Current families — program experience and satisfaction
    - Tour and waitlist contacts — onboarding experience, waitlist process, and what would influence enrollment decision
- Surveys to be anonymous. An online platform (such as SurveyMonkey or similar) to be used. Results to be shared with all staff and board; individual identifying comments will not be shared publicly.
- Timeline: President to distribute surveys within one week; collection window of approximately one week following distribution.
- Action: President to prepare and distribute survey instruments to all three groups; share results with staff and board once collected.

g) Charitable Status — Update

- President provided an informational update on the charitable status application timeline. A local organization that applied in September received correspondence in July — approximately 10 months.

- The board intends to begin the charitable status application process once key program elements are in place (Portage College partnership). The application is expected to take 8–12 months.
- No formal motion at this time. President will initiate the process and involve the full board, as signatures will be required.

7. Meeting Schedule Planning

- Banking resolution paperwork to be printed and signed physically by board members (Keeley coordinating); to be delivered to ATB Financial.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Moved: Mackenzie Hengerer | Seconded: Jesse Syrowitz | Status: Carried

Meeting adjourned at 1:40 PM MST.