

STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

March 6, 2010

MINUTES

Present:	Maricopa	Apache	Greenlee	Santa Cruz
	Florence Bellecy Bruce Brannan	Peggy Kimball	<i>Vacant Position</i>	Tom Tellez
	John Fry Nancy Harrell	Cochise	La Paz	Yavapai
	Carole Kemps Connie Koch	Patricia Schloss	<i>Vacant Position</i>	Karen Dansby
	Marilyn Miller Margaret Monteith	Coconino	Mohave	Yuma
	Donna Reid David Romanski			Thelma Lundy
	Pima	Gila	Navajo	At-Large
		Jo Foti	Thelma Gray	Colette Chapman John Deneka
	Julie Gasaway Paul Hanson	Graham	Pinal	Joe Jacober David Leimsieder
	Lori Levitan Jen Stephens-Cortum	Ann Johnson	Julie Bierbaum Merna Oakley	Gene Manring
	Richard Daidone Warren Trask			

Staff: Bill Callahan, Sandy Guizzetti, Linda Bednarek, Charles Gray, Bruce Johnson, Carolyn Smith, Carissa Moore, Esma Murrieta and Cathy Metrick

Local Board Members: Jan Cahill, Andrea McCoy, Ann O'Hara, Stan Rykowski, Don Vacca

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2009 MEETING. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION PASSED. (1001)

II. INTRODUCTIONS:

The following introductions were made: Florence Bellecy, MC 44; Carole Kemps, MC 18; Margaret Monteith, MC 02; Richard Daidone, Pima 17; Julie Gasaway, Pima 19; Dave Leimsieder, Pima At-Large; Lori Levitan, Pima 8; Warren Trask, Pima 7 and 11.

Joe and the board congratulated Charlie Gray on the adoption of his son, Mason.

A committee sign-up sheet was circulated. Joe asked that all volunteers chose a committee on which to serve.

The candidates for the Executive Committee introduced themselves. Carole Kemps asked that her name be removed from the ballot. Joe asked for nominees from the floor. A first-round ballot was distributed to all state board members. Board members were asked to vote for: one candidate from District I; one candidate from District II; and two candidates, from any District but I and II.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Executive Committee:

Joe Jacober delivered the following report:

The Executive Committee reviewed an attendance issue for Glenna Lesure MC 29. She will receive a certified return receipt requested letter to clarify her status.

The committee reviewed the FCRB Child and Case Activity Report. Bill delivered a staff and program updates and legislative update.

B. Advocacy Committee:

Bruce Brannan delivered the following report:

The Advocacy Committee discussed the legislative agenda. They discussed ways of communicating about the legislative issues that affect the children and families. They agreed to send an email to FCRB members to determine if they would be interested in receiving legislative updates. If the volunteer does not wish to receive this information, they can ask to be removed from the Advocacy email distribution list.

The committee discussed the legislative process and received an update on the following bills:

HB 2148 this bill addresses the preference of married couples over single people for adoption purposes. This is moving in the House.

A Bill for the Rights of the Foster Parents has passed the Committee of the Whole and the House and now is going to the Senate.

HB 2419 addresses siblings being allowed to see each other on a regular basis. This is moving in the House.

HB 2501 requires that in order to remove a child from a prospective permanent adoptive placement, CPS must submit evidence that the prospective placement received at least 30 days notice of the hearing. This bill passed the House and was referred to the Senate.

SB 1035 requires the guardian ad litem to meet with the minor at least once after the petition to terminate parental rights has been filed and before the initial hearing. Bill has passed the Senate and goes to the House.

SB 1152 Foster Children's Rights. This bill is not moving.

SB 1395 allows any person to request the court to release transcript and information on any Child Protective Services proceeding that has been closed by the court. Previously, this information could be requested only in cases that resulted in fatality or near fatality. The court must consider the child's best interest, privacy and safety in ruling on the request.

SB 1442 allows the parent or the guardian of the child at the time of removal to decide the placement of the child, unless Child Protective Services determines that the placement is not safe or presents a threat to the child. There is no activity on this bill.

The committee reviewed their goals from 2009:

1. To utilize the Finding 10 which addresses the needs that are not being met, or service gaps or system problems contributing to the needs of the child that are not being fulfilled. This Finding was the result of Governor Napolitano's CPS Oversight Committee.

There is Finding 10 report that continues to be refined which will detail the cases that experience these problems. The report will provide a breakdown for the various problems and the number of cases under each Finding.

2. Develop a quarterly communication tool, email, e-packet or share issues, statistics and training information with all volunteers. The board member packet CD is now used for this purpose also.
3. Develop and maintain a professional relationship with the court in each county to ascertain what the FCRB is doing well and how it could improve. This varies by county, but there is still work to be done.
4. Invite state legislatures to state board and local reviews. This would be done to familiarize them with the FCRB and our responsibilities.
5. Develop guidelines to clearly define the difference between advocating as a citizen and advocating as an FCRB volunteer. Warren Trask developed six guidelines which have been modified and approved by the Advocacy Committee. Guidelines are:
 - Because of standard confidentiality policies, there are to be no comments specific to individuals, including CPS and mental health personnel.
 - Comments, observations and suggestions shall be based on the member's direct observation, but maybe reinforced by information from the FCRB associates.
 - Ideally comments should be focused on what can be done effectively. How can the system operate more effectively?
 - The impact of the problems and/or solutions suggested should be identified as potential or probable benefits as opposed to expressions of certainty.

- It is suggested that statistical information/handouts should be reviewed and approved by the program manager before such documents are given to a state elected or appointed official or the press.
 - Any position expressed regarding pending legislation should be clearly identified as a personal opinion not an FCRB position.
6. Identify one or two issues on which the program is taking a position. We compile and distribute to all the volunteers the list of legislative bills that impact the social welfare policy and individual citizens for whom we advocate.

Monthly conference calls will continue while the legislature is in session. The calls are scheduled for the **fourth Monday of each month at 11:00 a.m.** Staff is investigating the possibility of using an 800 number for this purpose. There is also the possibility of using freeconferencecall.com which is inexpensive. For those who are interested in participating in the conference call, and are not on the Advocacy Committee, please contact Linda Bednarek, Carissa Moore or Bruce Brannan.

C. Outreach Committee:

Jen Cortum delivered the following report:

Esma Murrieta is working on recruitment and outreach in the Tucson area. The staff and some volunteers will participate in a parade and event in Marana on March 20. Additional volunteers are needed.

There is also another community event scheduled for March 26 and volunteers are needed. Please contact Esma in the Tucson Office for information on both events.

A number of FCRB PSAs have been distributed and aired in the Tucson and Mohave areas. They have generated considerable interest.

There is a radio spot in Yuma which is preparing to run and a prospect for a TV interview in the Yuma area.

FCRB Flyers have been posted in a number of coffee shops. If you would like flyers to post please contact Charlie or Esma. You are asked not to alter the flyer in any way.

Foster Care Awareness Month is scheduled for May. May 8 at the Phoenix Zoo there will be a celebration for Foster Care Awareness Month.

The staff created a Media Alert that will be distributed. The first alert will address Foster Care Awareness Month. The committee will work on this to be sure to have a series of these. There will be other alerts developed to go out to the newspapers or other potential targets.

The committee will meet telephonically on the **third Thursday of the month from noon to 12:30 p.m.** Contact Charlie or Esma for more details.

D. Continuing Education Committee:

Connie Koch delivered the following report:

Carolyn Smith now facilitates the committee with Bruce Johnson.

In February the Tucson Office conducted a training on the Psychological Evaluations. The committee is looking into putting this training video on e-packets.

The Supervisory staff is in the process of finalizing the revisions to the Findings and Elements. Once the technical aspects to DCATS are resolved, training for all staff and volunteers will be delivered.

Trainings and materials will now be on the e-packet. Staff are exploring the possibility of keeping the training information on the CD for longer periods of time so the boards that do not meet every month will have an opportunity to get credit for the training.

The volunteer training reports are now on the FCRB website and will be updated quarterly. Volunteers will now be able to see the number of training credits they have accrued.

The 2010 annual training requirement for volunteers will be six hours.

The committee discussed training credit opportunities and how trainings are evaluated for credit. The discussion focused on consistency among the program staff when entering training hours. It was suggested that staff should check other websites to determine how they give credit, e.g., CASA.

Discussion was also held on the amount of training credits for substituting on a board.

The committee agreed it is important to encourage volunteers to diversify their training by exploring different mediums, video, books, workshops, etc. Also volunteers should explore different topics.

Significant changes to the website are being postponed since the AOC is launching their new website with a new format. It is necessary for FCRB to wait until this is completed. The FCRB staff has gone on the website and removed all of the dead links and old or inaccurate information.

Volunteer feedback on the Prep Sheet was received and compiled for review. Carolyn and Bruce are reviewing the feedback and will redesign the form. Carolyn presented the first draft to the committee, and they shared their ideas. The committee liked the condensed Findings and Recommendations section, but the committee wanted more space to document Concerns/Recommendations. They also liked the Interested Party/Relation section. Staff are reviewing to see if this section can be automated or written in by the board. They are also revising the form to allow for multiple fathers. The committee suggested that there be a section for Psychological

Evaluations and the date received. Carolyn will develop another draft of the Prep sheet and will share with the committee. Then it will be forwarded to all volunteers for comment.

IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

District I – Bruce Brannan
District II – Jen Cortum
Any District but I and II – Jo Foti and Gene Manring
Any District – Warren Trask and Connie Koch

Nominations for Vice Chair – Gene Manring, Joe Foti, Jen Cortum
Gene Manring was elected Vice Chair for 2010. Joe Jacober will complete the second year of his term as chair.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

No old business was brought forward.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

Bruce spoke about the off-site FCRB locations and the lack of phones and adequate space in the review room. Bruce felt this needed to be brought to the attention of the AOC Director. Bill stated that we now have blackberries for some of the rural locations to address the phone and communication problem. Bill reminded everyone that the FCRB quarters off site are determined by the presiding juvenile court judge, and it is safer to have a room in a county or court building and be sure of security.

Pinal County has a small room with no phone, and there are security issues.

It was suggested that since this is a local issue the affected counties should meet with the staff and form an ad hoc committee and address the issues. Joe felt that the program should follow through with this suggestion. Bill agreed to do this for Pinal County and asked that Merna participate. Sandy stated that the issue of the FCRB quarters in Pinal was an agenda item in her upcoming meeting with the judges. She stated it will be a priority. It will be scheduled in April.

VII. PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT/ DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Bill delivered the following report:

The Executive Committee reviewed the current Child/Case Activity Report. There are currently 9,218 children in 5,495 active cases statewide.

Maricopa 48 board will open shortly. There is justification for another board, but staff is waiting and working on coverage issues. Porscha Davis recently resigned. To assist with board coverage, Tucson will now facilitate the Gila boards beginning in March.

The National Foster Care Review Coalition comprised of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Kentucky, South Carolina, Delaware, New Jersey and Oklahoma is conducting a survey on placement stability. There are 12 questions and the first two focus on ethnicity and demographics. The survey asks if there have been any moves during the last 12 months excluding the initial move; were the reasons provider related; were the resources not available through the placement; was the change related to behaviors of the child. The Arizona FCRB will be applying the survey to 2 boards a month for each program specialist. This should provide a sample population of 40 percent. The survey began February 1 and will run until July 31. This will not impact the board members, since the program specialist collects the necessary data.

Bruce Johnson demonstrated the new AOC website. This will be available on March 17. The new website has been done in a different format, and all divisions of the AOC will work from this standardized format. Divisions will no longer design their website with an individual look. AOC staff have been asked by ITD not to make any revisions to their division web page until the migration is completed. No date was provided as to when our web page will be fully migrated.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS:

Local board members, Jan Cahill, Don Vacca and Stan Rykowski were introduced.

Joe thanked all attendees and extended his thanks to all of the local volunteers for the wonderful work they do.

Joe asked that all members of the 2010 Executive Committee meet to schedule a date for the Executive Committee Planning Session.

VII. CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no public respondents.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 P.M.