

STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

March 5, 2011

MINUTES

Present:	Maricopa	Apache	Greenlee	Santa Cruz
	Bruce Brannan		<i>Vacant Position</i>	Tom Tellez
	John Fry			
	Nancy Harrell	Cochise	La Paz	Yavapai
	Florence Bellecy			
	Connie Koch	Patricia Schloss	<i>Vacant Position</i>	
	Linda Smith			
		Coconino	Mohave	Yuma
		<i>Vacant position</i>		Thelma Lundy
	Pima	Gila	Navajo	At-Large
	Richard Daidone			
	Julie Gasaway	Jo Foti		John Deneka
	Paul Hanson			Joe Jacober
	Warren Trask			Gene Manring
	Jen Stephens-	Graham	Pinal	David Leimsieder
	Cortum			Dennis Ichikawa
	Susan Ishmael			Valerie Van Auker
				Colette Chapman

Staff: Caroline Lutt-Owens, Bill Callahan, Charles Gray, Bruce Johnson, Esma Murrieta.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Linda Smith to approve the minutes of the Sept. 11, 2010 meeting. Motion was seconded, motion passed unanimously.

II. INTRODUCTIONS:

The following introductions were made: New At Large Members Valerie Van Auker and Dennis Ichikawa; New State Board member Susan Ishmael from Pima County; and Local Board members Charles Hancock, Dolores Michaels, Barbara Ferro, JT Sterling, Tiffany Matthews, Marc Terrill, Barbara Crawford, and Pat Kush.

Joe reminded everyone of the importance of signing the committee assignment sheets and e-mail update sheets, which were passed around.

III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The ballot was distributed. The proposed slate of officers included Connie Koch and Joe Jacober from District 1; Richard Daidone and Warren Trask from District 2; Jo Foti and Gene Manring from Districts Other Than 1 or 2; and no candidates for Any District. Nominations from the floor were opened. Bruce Brannan nominated Jen Cortum from District 2. A motion was made to designate all 7 candidates as the Executive Committee. The motion lapsed without any further action when it was noted that the election needed to proceed so that it would be clear which candidates were representing which districts. It was agreed that the top vote-getter from District 2 would be designated as representing that District, with the remaining two candidates being designated as filling the “Any District” slots.

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected later in the meeting.

Joe noted that Committee Chairs are invited to sit on the Executive Committee.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Executive Committee:

Joe Jacober delivered the following report:

The Executive Committee continues to meet quarterly, in person on State Board meeting days in March and September and telephonically in June and December.

Five attendance waivers were approved: Ann Donahoe, Gilda Czerwonka, Stephanie Fortier, Kyle Gray, and Peggy Stewart.

The number of children in care has decreased slightly. Bill will elaborate later during his report.

The Attorney Standards were discussed and Caroline will report on that during her report.

B. Advocacy Committee:

Jo Foti delivered the following report:

More than half of the committee members are new to the committee. The Kinship Adoption Education Resource Center was discussed. Health and Human Services Public Safety information was distributed to the committee.

A lot of time was spent discussing the pending legislation giving married couples preference in adoptions. The committee expressed opposition to bill. Although

individual committee members cannot represent the FCRB, they may contact their representative to express their disdain for this bill.

Finding 10 was also discussed.

C. Outreach Committee:

Linda Smith delivered the following report:

In the Tucson region, several volunteers chose not to be reappointed at the beginning of the year, increasing the vacancy rate in Pima County to 26%. Every board has at least three members, however. Four appointments are pending. Cochise boards are full. There are two vacancies in Pinal.

The committee's goals for the year have been met.

There used to be a quarterly award bestowed on an exemplary volunteer but that practice has subsided. There are two individuals in Pima County who are under consideration for a longevity award. Two types of recognition, one for longevity and one for superior performance, are being considered. A nomination form will be created by Linda, to be sent out with packets.

A business-card size flyer is being considered.

D. Continuing Education Committee:

Connie Koch delivered the following report:

The committee would welcome any new members who would like to join.

The committee has had two teleconferences to work on the education documentation form and the volunteer and board self-assessment tools. Regarding the assessment tools, the committee reached agreement on the tools. They will now go the PS staff for review, after which time the committee will review PS comments and approve a final instrument, which will then be submitted to the State Board for approval. The purpose of the assessments is to gather information on board functioning in order to improve performance. Aggregate results from all of the assessments will be compiled into spreadsheets which will eventually be posted on the website. Volunteers will receive 1 hour of training credit for completing the assessments. PS staff will review the assessments with their boards.

The education documentation form will be revised to include a statement that says: "Six (6) hours of training credits are required per year (eight (8) hours in a DCSD-sponsored conference year). It was noted that this form is to be used for claiming training credit for non-FCRB sponsored training; training credits for attending FCRB-sponsored events, such as brown bag lunches with judges, are automatically recorded by staff. The education documentation form will be included in packets. Connie's

motion to approve the education documentation form was seconded and passed unanimously.

- IV. ELECTION UPDATE:** The new Executive Committee will consist of Connie Koch, Joe Jacober (District 1), Jen Cortum (District 2), Jo Foti, Gene Manning (District Other Than 1 or 2), Warren Trask, Richard Daidone (Any District).

The floor was opened for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Bruce Brannan nominated Jen Cortum for Chair. Gene Manning nominated Joe Jacober to serve another term as Chair. Votes were cast and collected to be tabulated. The State Board Chair serves a two-year term, all other Executive Committee terms are one-year.

- V. OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no old business.

- VI. NEW BUSINESS:**

No new business was brought forward.

- VII. PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT:**

Bill delivered the following report:

Statistical update: There are currently 9,254 children under active review. This number has fluctuated between 9,300 and 9,500 for most of the past year. Everything mentioned here is available on the website (www.azfcrb.org), including statistical trends, number of children in care broken down by county and board, etc.

A board was recently added in Mohave County, but one was disbanded in Coconino County. A new board, Maricopa 50 was recently established.

Carolyn Smith, a supervisor in Phoenix, resigned last month to take a job in Maryland. A recruitment to replace her has been completed and interviews are scheduled in mid March. Karen Barge, a PS in Tucson, resigned in December and was replaced by Tara Aragon, a new PS who worked for the Maricopa County Juvenile Court for 12 years prior to returning to her hometown of Tucson.

The two Phoenix office MSW interns from ASU are coming to the end of their internship. We will be getting summer interns to replace them.

Technology: the DCATS (Dependent Children's Automated Tracking System) database that we use is extremely antiquated and primitive. The AOC has retained the services of a business analyst to document all of our business practices as a precursor to moving up to the much more modern JOLTSaz database. The business analyst has been observing boards and work flow. For years we have maintained a "wish list" of functionality that we would like to have in a database. For example, sending out packets via a secure

website, to be accessed by volunteers who have their own individual log-on ID, would expedite the packet process and decrease expenses tremendously.

There has been some discussion within the National Foster Care Review Coalition, of which we are a member, that the Child and Family Services Review process conducted by the Children's Bureau of the US Department of Health and Human Services is being revamped. When they review a state (AZ was last reviewed in 2007), they pick a random number of cases and assess permanency, safety, and well-being. The concept of the federal reviewers partnering with organizations like the FCRB, which review the cases of *all* children in out-of-home care has been broached. These discussions are in their infancy.

Regarding packets, there was a comment that many people still prefer paper packets. It was noted that sending packets via disc is much less costly to the program. The process is ongoing and evolving.

ELECTION UPDATE: Jen Cortum was elected State Board Chair. The floor was opened for nominations for Vice Chair. Linda Smith made a motion to designate Joe Jacober as Vice Chair by acclimation. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Caroline delivered the following report:

There is no news on the budget. FCRB has some vacant positions which would hopefully allow us to absorb any funding decrease without having to lay off staff. At the moment neither FCRB nor the other DCSD programs are facing budget cuts, but that could change.

There has not been a high volume of child welfare-related bills at the Legislature this year.

Justice Brutinel has been appointed to the Supreme Court and will continue serving as the Chair of the Court Improvement Advisory Workgroup.

There will be a conference regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act on April 12th. There are 300 registrants.

We now have attorney standards for child representation in dependency cases. While they were being crafted, the Court Improvement Workgroup collaborated with a committee called "Victims in the Court", which was simultaneously working on similar issues. The drafted standards were presented to the Committee on Juvenile Courts (COJC). The Arizona Judicial Council (AJC) approved the standards in December. The Chief Justice made them effective via Administrative Order on Feb. 1, 2011. A rule petition to have them codified in court rule has been filed. There is an accelerated comment date of April 1, 2011.

IX. CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no public respondents.

X. MISCELLANEOUS:

Joe reminded everyone that May is National Foster Care Awareness Month. There will be A variety of activities around the state including an event at Cityscape in downtown Phoenix.

Joe thanked the Board for letting him serve as Chair for the past two years.

The new Executive Committee met to select a retreat date.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 P.M. The next State Board meeting is September 10, 2011.