

STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

March 3, 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Roll Call.

Present: Bellecy, Florence, Bigos-Wheeler, Carol, Brannan, Bruce, Crawford, Barbara, Daidone, Richard, Deneka, John, Endres, Arthur, Foti, Jo, Fry, John, Gasaway, Julie, Giaquinto, Laura, Goldberg, Carolyn, Hanson, Paul, Harrell, Nancy, Ichikawa, Dennis, Johnson, Ann, Kimball, Peggy, Kirschbaum, Ellen, Koch, Connie, Levitan, Lori, Lundy, Thelma, Marnring, Gene, Matthews, Tiffany, Miller, Marilyn, Molever, Nancy, Morris, Karen, Nelson, Andrea, Romanski, David, Smith, Linda, Stephens-Cortum, Jen, Tellez, Tom, Terrill, Marc, Trask, Warren, VanAuker, Valerie, Willis, Olinda.

Absent/Excused: Dansby, Karen, Ishmael, Susan, Sterling, JT

Staff Present: Caroline Lutt-Owens, Bill Callahan, Sandy Guizzetti, Linda Bednarek, Charles Gray, Bruce Johnson, Natalie Foster, Karen Gilreath, Tara Aragon.

Jen Stephens-Cortum called meeting to order at 12:44 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

 **Motion:** Approve Minutes from September 10, 2011 **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Smith, Linda, **Seconded by** Lundy, Thelma. **Motion passed unanimously.**

II. INTRODUCTIONS:

New Board Member introductions: Barbara Crawford, Art Endres, Carolyn Goldberg, Tiffany Matthews, Karen Morris, Andrea Nelson, Marc Terrill, Olinda Willis, Laura Giaquinto, Ellen Kirschbaum, Nancy Molever

Chair Announcements:

Committee roster sign-up, sign-in sheet, and email sheet is being passed around. Introduction of Natalie Foster, Administrative Assistant for Dependent Children's Services. Joe Jacober asked Jen Stephens-Cortum to thank the Board for the experience of serving on the State Board, and good luck to all.

III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

 A bio of each candidate, along with the ballot has been given to each Board member. The Board will need to select two candidates from District 1, one candidate from District 2, and two candidates from any District, except I and II. There is one floor nomination from Jo Foti nominating Bruce Brannan from District 1. Bill Callahan asked the Board to add Bruce Brannan to the ballot, under District I. Mr. Brannan gave the committee a brief bio of himself. After

results are tabulated, there will be another election for two candidates from any district. Staff collected all ballots to tabulate the results of the election.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A.  **Executive Committee:** Jen Stephens-Cortum (Chair) announced that Cheri Holgerson, from Tucson FCRB, will be retiring in July. The Executive Committee talked about being mindful of what volunteer resources board members could offer FCRB in terms of assistance; for example, clerical work and making phone calls. Two attendance waivers were approved. One was from Pima and one was from Cochise.
- B.  **Advocacy Committee:** Florence Bellecy (Chair) reported that 21 bills are being tracked by AOC. Linda Bednarek provided the committee a brief summary of the bills being tracked. The committee wants to create a campaign that drives more enthusiasm for local board members to speak or write to their legislator regarding some of the bills. A consideration is for each State Board member to take the time with their local boards to inform them of some of the bills that are currently being looked at or tracked. It was suggested to take the first few minutes of a board meeting to talk about some of the bills in House and Senate. Another idea is to create an outreach to Program Specialists and discuss some of the Advocacy Committee's focus, especially those bills that are of importance to FCRB. Advocacy would like to see a link placed in the newsletter so anyone can get details of a House or Senate bill that is under consideration. A request was made to Outreach to put a quarterly flyer into local board member packets to allow those members to voice concerns they are hearing on their boards. If you are interested in current legislation that is being tracked, contact Linda Bednarek. She will be providing an update every Friday on where those bills are in the House or the Senate.
- Finding 10 was discussed and has been in the Advocacy Committee for some time and progress is being made. Finding 10 was designed to identify the service gaps and system problems which are inhibiting a child's path to permanency. In the last meeting CEC requested a compilation of the data regarding those elements for a six month period, July 2011 – December 2011, be compiled so they could see exactly what the data was telling them. The data was a comprehensive breakdown that showed 9,820 children were reviewed and 10 elements were highlighted. The committee found that there was no statistically significant data because the frequency with which elements are being selected is extremely low, sometimes only .25 – 1.3%. That tells us that data is not being gathered during the local board meetings. The decision was made that Bill Callahan and his team are going to take another look at Findings 10. First, they are going to try to pare down Findings 10, or possibly restructure Findings 10, and educate board members and Program Specialists to identify those findings. There are a total of 27 elements and those may need to be consolidated even more to make it easier to answer.

There is one lobbyist assigned to DCSD, Amy Love. Arizona Legislation Information System, ALIS.GOV, is something one may sign up for and it's an easy way to communicate to the legislators about different programs and to find out additional information. The Advocacy Committee is hoping to have a small section in the newsletter about how to enter into ALIS. The committee will take a look at the links and how they function.

- C. Outreach Committee:** Linda Smith (Chair) – The Phoenix office continues to make strides towards filling vacancies in Maricopa County, including the staffing of new boards that have been created to meet the increasing number of children who have entered foster care. The committee discussed the prospect of reviewing a diversity plan in an effort to identify methods and organizations that can be outreached to, in an effort to improve the diversity on the boards. As part of this effort the committee discussed developing a training/seminar for all volunteers that speaks to cultural awareness. The committee discussed utilizing using an email list and newsletter to reach out to the existing volunteers to raise awareness of our state board committees and initiatives. The committee created 200 applications for the Phoenix office.
- D. Continuing Education Committee:** Paul Hanson (Chair) - The committee is still working on a self assessment form. The committee wants to give people who are considering becoming board members a glimpse into the board preparation process and what the reviews are like. They are considering doing this through video, perhaps on You Tube. It could also address new board members who have not gone through New Board Member Orientation training yet, but are participating in reviews. It is expected that this will help with board member retention because they'll get an idea of what to expect. There was also a concern raised regarding the lack of communication with new applicants about where they are in the application process. For instance, they put their application in and then there is no feedback during the process. A suggestion was made to possibly provide a contact phone number or have a card dropped in the mail with status information. A volunteer could handle this notification process. The FCRB is creating paper packs for certain boards and CEC would like to address issues of why they need paper packets. Currently MC 3 is an electronic board; they are using a thumb drive instead of a CD for board packets. It's much faster to create packets, it reduces postage costs, and there are no scratched CD's. Google Documents also has a way to download documents to things like tablets, with no postage cost. Security needs to be researched. Another idea is to have a tablet with all case notes loaded on it kept in the board rooms. This technology makes the documents searchable. A tablet is neater and cleaner than a stack of papers and there is not a screen separating the parties. MC 3 wants to experiment with this option. A couple ways to handle volunteer notes is to scan them and make them part of the electronic packet. The other way is to allow volunteers to retain their notes. CEC will have to look at what security issues and/or audit issues this may cause. CEC reported that the PaperPort installation is completed. PaperPort is an electronic file organizer.

V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

Ballot results: District 1 is Connie Koch and Bruce Brannan, District 2 is Warren Trask, any district other than I or II is Jo Foti and Gene Manning. A second ballot was distributed to select two people who were not selected the first time to represent any district. Second election results: Linda Smith and Tiffany Matthews

Vice Chair Nominations: One nomination was taken from the floor. Bruce Brannan nominated Jo Foti.

 **Motion:** To close floor nominations and approve Jo Foti as Vice Chair, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Endres, Arthur, **Seconded by** Terrill, Marc. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. OLD BUSINESS: No old business discussed

VII. NEW BUSINESS: No new business discussed

VIII. PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT:

Bill Callahan delivered the following report:

1. The statistical report is generated every Monday morning. Currently under active review FCRB has 5,790 cases and that pertains to 9,783 children. AZFCRB.org also has the statistical reports posted.
2. Staff updates
 - a. Cheri Holgerson, from the Tucson office, is retiring in July. We are currently working on farming out her duties.
 - b. Angela Tapia, PS III, came from CPS and started January 23, 2012.
 - c. February 21, 2012, Autumn Norton started as FCRB's Administrative Secretary.
 - d. Vicky Solie, formally Administrative Secretary, was promoted to PS1. She will be assigned one board and other needed duties.
 - e. PS III, Jen Bress, left to take a job at Scottsdale Healthcare.
 - f. We are currently recruiting for the open PS III position. The 1st reviews will be March 5 and 2nd interviews will be March 13.
 - g. Maricopa County has seen a substantial increase in numbers. There have been over 800 more cases over the past 2 years, with no additional staff. Currently, FCRB is fortunate to have two interns from ASU, which has been a tremendous help. They are here two days a week and they help facilitate boards and take statements. We are looking at expanding our intern presence. We currently have two Masters Level interns who are here Tuesday and Thursday. We are now looking at getting two Bachelor level interns who would be here Monday and Wednesday.

- h. In addition, since Maricopa's numbers are so high, Tucson has helping the Phoenix office by assisting with case registration, facilitating boards, and handling duty coverage.
3.  FCRB has had volunteers helping in the office; however, we still find ourselves in a position to have to reach out to our board members to help out even more. We currently added board MC 56 and had to get another room at the Mesa courthouse (judge's dining room).
4.  On March 16, 2012, there is meeting at Durango on the Cradle to Crayons initiative involving CASA and FCRB. There will be a training April 21, 2012, at ASU and 80 board members replied to Bill's request that they want to attend that training on the needs of children in the 0-3 age range. Specialty boards were also discussed with Judge Ballinger, however this would be difficult to structure since 30% of the cases are 0-3 years old. A possible solution is to train everyone, rather than training certain boards to be experts on 0 – 3 cases. For a number of years, various counties have been working on focusing their efforts on the 0-3 population. What we have learned is that the majority of kids in care that fall into that age group are the ones to more likely end up back in care. Judge Ballinger got the support of his board of supervisors; he has judges that have committed to staying in juvenile court for the rest of their careers. In addition, Judge Ballinger secured a fairly new facility near Durango; it's a vacant facility that the county owns. He wants to set up services and visitation that can be supported out of that facility. The program is not well defined yet, but it's focusing on the 0-3 population and the idea is to getting services quickly to families. They are possibly looking at another cadre of volunteers to help with this program and help staff visitations at the centers.

IX. DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Caroline Lantt-Owens delivered the following report:

1. Court Improvement is working on their strategic plan. The strategic plan is what provides the court with federal funding to continue the Court Improvement Program. It consists of three federal grants; training, data, and a basic grant. Those grants fund some of our court improvement staff and trainings. The strategic plan was submitted to the Feds, and we are waiting for final approval.
2. Budget: We're not expecting any cuts in our programs, which means FCRB will stay funded at its current level, and staffing levels will remain unchanged. Regarding CASA, the State Office funds all of the local CASA programs. Generally they get a check at the start of the fiscal year. Last year, checks weren't cut until three months into the fiscal year; this year we helped the counties to streamline some of their budgets. In the past few years, CASA has always experienced a sweep in their budget. However, it appears there will be no sweep this year.
3. A new initiative being worked on is the Dually Adjudicated Youth, or Crossover Youth. Those are the youth that are in both the delinquency and dependency systems. Part of the Court Improvement strategic plan has some work tied into that population. Another initiative Caroline spoke briefly about

is the ability to apply for an AZ team to go to Georgetown over the summer for a week to get training on this population. The expectation is to come out with a capstone project that has to be implemented within the year in Arizona.

4.  Director Carter just sent out a new email announcing that he established a new blog. It can be accessed through the DES website www.azdes.gov and go to the lower left side, click on picture of Director Carter to get to his site.
5. Highlighted the following bills being tracked by the courts: HB2249, HB2721, SB1098

▶ ACTION ITEM- Forward Director Carter's email to state board members.

X. CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no public respondents.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

 **Motion:** To adjourn meeting, **Action:** Adjourn, **Moved by** Smith, Linda, **Seconded by** Brannan, Bruce.
Motion passed unanimously and meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

The next State Board meeting is September 8, 2012.