

STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD
March 5, 2016
MINUTES

Roll Call.

Present: Baca, Marty; Battaglini, Karen; Bevans, Elaine; Bigos, Carol; Blum, Charlie; Brannan, Bruce; Brewer, Larry; Burnell, Susan; Daidone, Richard; Davies, Betty; Endres, Arthur; Gasaway, Julie; Hanson, Paul; Harrell, Nancy; Ishmael, Susan; Kennedy, Jim; Kimball, Peggy; Koch, Connie; Lundy, Thelma; McAlpin, Tom; Mathews, Chelsey; Miller, Marilyn; Moreno, Ina; Romanski, David; Ross, Smith, Linda; Sumner, Amber; Thibeault, Jessica; Warren, Pam; Condon, Mimi; Foti, Jo; Ruegg, Kevin; Kolzow, Jakki; VanAuker, Valerie; Wiesenthal, Steven.

Absent/Excused: Anderson, Yolanda; Currey, Jean; Davis, Cathy; Leite, Elizabeth, Magnuson, Cheryl; Matthews, Tiffany; Manring, Gene

Staff Present: Ames, Jennifer; Devlin, Karla; Foster, Natalie; Gene, Charmayne; Gray, Charlie; Guizzetti, Sandy; Lutt-Owens, Caroline; Lazere, Steve; Murrieta, Esma; Olbert, Belinda

Guests/Local Board Members Present: Bohling, Linda; Burnell, Susan; Enderle, Jan; Johnson, Anne; Kunkel, Judith; Phillips, Donna; Ryan, Karen; Wallen, Lina; Westby, Dick.

Connie Koch called meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. January Contreras provided the training.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Motion: Approve to accept minutes from September 12, 2015. **Action:** Approve; **Moved by:** Bevans, Elaine; **Seconded by** Ross, Linda.
Motion passed unanimously.

II. INTRODUCTIONS:

Nine local board members observed today's state board meeting.

III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

The slate of candidates consists of: Koch, Connie (two-year term ends 2017); Smith, Linda; VanAuker, Valerie; Brannan, Bruce; Gasaway, Julie; Baca, Marty; Manring, Gene.

No additional nominations from the floor.

Motion: Approve the slate as listed. **Action:** Approve; **Moved by:** Smith, Linda; **Seconded by:** Brewer, Larry.
Motion passed unanimously.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Executive Committee:

Connie Koch provided a brief update of the Executive Committee's morning meeting. Four attendance waivers were approved by the committee. Connie also recognized the committee chairs and vice chairs for the great work they have been doing.

B. Best Practices Committee:

Valerie VanAuker provided the following update:

- Valerie recognized the hard work done by the committee
- They have been focused on their first goal, which is to review existing mechanisms for interested parties, to provide information to the board identifying opportunities for improvement. They have revamped the notification letter to provide more friendly language. The letter is now sitting in the IT department for the next step.
- Shared The Statewide newsletter with the committee. This is great way to get the word out regarding the importance of the FCRB and what it's all about. The letter the committee wrote was published in the January edition.
- Working on reaching out to case managers and a survey for state board members.

C. Outreach Committee:

Tom McAlpin provided the following update:

- Recognition was given to Charlie Gray and the committee.
- The Blanket the State Campaign was initiated in mid-September in an effort to fill Board vacancies.
- Our volunteer base has headed our call to action to identify and refer someone to become a Board member.
- Heather Murphy (the Courts Communication Officer) has been a guest on a local radio show promoting the FCRB and initiated article publications that has driven in application requests to our program.
- The Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court has been referencing the FCRB during speaking engagements which has driven in application requests to our program.
- Staff in both the Phoenix and Tucson regions have attended several different events in which they have set up a table/booth and engaged potential volunteers.
- Since October 1, 2016 the Phoenix Region (which serves 9 counties) has mailed out over 300 applications.
- Since September, the Tucson Region (which serves 6 counties) has mailed out over 140 applications.
- The FCRB continues to experience about an 8-9 week turnaround period by DPS as they work to complete the fingerprint background checks. This is due to retirements, vacancies, etc. at DPS.
- There are a plethora of applicants at various stages of the appointment process, including fingerprint processing, observations and the Court's formal appointment.
- The current vacancy rate for Boards covered by the Phoenix Region is 27% and the current vacancy rate for Boards covered by the Tucson Region is 19%.
- We should begin to see the vacancy rates begin to decline as applicants make their way through the process, which can presently take between 3 and 4 months.

- For the Phoenix Region, if all the applicants who have observations or appointments pending were cleared out, we would have a 16.5 vacancy rate. For the Tucson Region, if all the applicants who have observations or appointments pending were cleared out, we would have a 13.5 vacancy rate.
- In addition to this, we just had 19 applicants clear their fingerprint background check. Observations will be scheduled for each of them in the coming weeks.
- We presently have 21 applicants waiting for their fingerprints to clear.
- The numbers just shared include the impact of having to create 4 new Boards in Maricopa County and 2 new Boards in Pinal County.
- Program staff have met and are nearing a series of decisions that will assist in streamlining the appointment process to assist in overcoming some of the delays it has been experiencing.
- A suggestion was made by the Regional Program Manager (Sandy) to have the committee focus all of its energy/resources on a different county each month to fill the vacancies. There are 15 counties in Arizona and if the committee concurs (we will be talking about this at our meeting today), we can prioritize the counties and proceed with this plan.
- All said, we have made significant progress in reducing our vacancy rate and are looking forward to driving our vacancy rate even lower!

Diversity Campaign

- A request has been made by the Program Manager (Steve) for the committee to begin working on refreshing the FCRB's Diversity Plan. He would like us to set a goal of increasing our diversity by 10%. To achieve this we will gather reports for each county and use those as our starting point. We have discussed this several times over the years but want to nail this down this time around as it came up in our audit.

Committee in General

The Outreach Committee continues to facilitate monthly conference calls on the third Friday of every month at noon.

D. Continuing Education Committee:

Mimi Condon provided the following update:

- The committee has been meeting monthly by telephone.
- They have done a survey of FCRB board members on what they would be interested in for training ideas. Their work is based off that survey.
 - Working to develop and institute detailed findings and element training for 2016/2017, based on staff availability, cost, and training locations
 - Developed lunch time board trainings and detailing the five types of case plan goals.
 - Continue to develop lunch time board trainings that define and detail the types of placements for kids in care.
 - Define and create board packets

V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

Vice Chair Nominations:

Linda Smith nominated Valerie VanAuker. Valerie accepted nomination. No other nominations given from the floor.

Motion: To close floor nominations and approve Valerie VanAuker as Vice Chair. **Action:** Approve nomination.
Motion passed unanimously.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

DCS Case manager tracking update

VIII. PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT:

Steve Lazere delivered the following report:

- Steve acknowledged the supervisors for their work on the committees.
- Staffing: Both offices are fully staffed. Covered new staff that have come on since the last state board meeting.
- Boards: There has been an increase in number of boards in the urban areas (Maricopa 62-65 and Pinal, specifically). Pinal 9 and 10 will open in the very near future and 11 will probably open sometime in the summer. Most other counties have remained with the same number of boards. There has been a 10% increase, since January 2015, in the number of kids the FCRB is serving. FCRB is currently servicing 15,350 kids and has 143 boards statewide.
- Website: In December 2015, a webpage that was devoted to the state board was rolled out. It provides information about the state board, dates of the meetings, assignments of state board members to local board members, and announcements. It is also a good resource for local board members. Steve will send out the password again.
- An updated training request form will soon be available on our website
- Board packets will eventually be available through the "cloud" instead of flash drives and CD's. We have 4 pilot boards (MC49, SC01, GI02, CH04) testing this.
- Self-Assessments process: Last year, each Program Specialist was to conduct one self-assessment with one of their boards. This year, they will do two self-assessments, with two boards, starting in March/April.
- Due to board growth, reviews will be held at an additional location in Chandler starting in March.
- Fatality Review: The document has been completed but needs to be vetted. It will be introduced at the June State Board meeting. It will be an ad hoc committee.

IX. DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Caroline Lantt-Owens delivered the following report:

- Caroline thanked everyone for their work in their committees.
- In the past, the FCRB published an Annual Report. This report is no longer published due to budget cuts. Conversations have begun to possibly get these reports published again. Senator Bradley also realizes the importance of an annual report. He is interested in getting us some funding to be able to publish this report in the future, although it may not happen this session.
- FCRB Bill-Sunset Audit: In December, Caroline and Bruce Brannan presented at the Legislature. The audit was accepted and the committee approved to move it forward. The bill was passed unanimously, out of the House, for an 8 year extension. The bill then moved to the Senate where an Amendment to the bill was added. Approval of the amendment would allow judges to appoint anyone who works for a child welfare agency to be a local FCRB board member. The bill will then go back to the House since an amendment was added. We are expecting one more amendment to be dropped. This amendment would change the composition of our state board. Currently, the state board is comprised of 7 at-large members and one representative for every three boards we have. Counties that don't have three boards still have to have one representative. Today, if our state board was fully staffed, we would have 57 members. The amendment would change the overall number of state board members to 3 at-large members instead of 7. It will also become a 1:10 ration; 1 representative to 10 boards. It will also cap the number of representatives from each county to 6. If this change took affect today, we would have a board of 25 people. If this amendment passes, we will not ask board members to leave. Instead it would slowly reduce in size due to attrition. The auditors also expressed a concern that the state board was too large in size to manage.
- Caroline provided a handout of the bills that we are tracking.
- Court budget request, termed Surge: The idea is that if we could have a surge of money put into the dependency system on the judicial side, we might be able to address the backlog that is happening in court. The local juvenile courts are requesting a one-time budget request of \$3 million. While it is a one-time infusion of money, it would not have to be spent in one year. We are asking for two years to use the \$3 million and after two years there would be an evaluation. If the impact was worth it, we would go back and ask for more. If granted, the \$3 million would come to the AOC and we would identify local courts (big and medium courts) and have them give us a plan on what they are going to do to move cases forward based off the money they receive. The plan must be approved before they receive the money.
- Safe Reduction Workgroup Committee: They have been meeting for a little over a year. The Chairs are Judge McNally and Director McKay. The committee is working closely with Casey Family. Maricopa County has divided their workgroup into 6 different committees to look at targeted services.

X. CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no public respondents.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn. **Action:** Approve; **Moved by:** Smith, Linda. **Seconded by:** Brewer, Larry.

Motion passed unanimously.

Future meeting dates:

- *Saturday, June 4, 2016 State Board Meeting (in person)*
- *Saturday, September 10, 2016 Executive Committee only (telephonically)*
- *Saturday, November 5, 2016 State Board Meeting (in person)*