

STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD
June 4, 2016
MINUTES

Roll Call.

Present: Baca, Marty; Bevans, Elaine; Bigos, Carol; Blum, Charlie; Brewer, Larry; Condon, Mimi; Currey, Jean; Daidone, Richard; Davies, Betty; Endres, Arthur; Gasaway, Julie; Hanson, Paul; Harrell, Nancy; Ishmael, Susan; Koch, Connie; Magnuson, Cheryl; Matthews, Tiffany; McAlpin, Tom; Miller, Marilyn; Moreno, Ina; Romanski, David; Sumner, Amber; Thibeault, Jessica; Warren, Pam; VanAuker, Valerie; Warren, Pam.

Absent/Excused: Brannan, Bruce; Davis, Cathy; Kennedy, Jim; Kimball, Peggy; Kolzow, Jakki; Leite, Elizabeth; Lundy, Thelma; Manring, Gene; Mathews, Chelsey; Ross, Linda; Ruegg, Kevin; Wiesenthal, Steven.

Staff Present: Brown, Tiffany; Devlin, Karla; Foster, Natalie; Gray, Charlie; Guizzetti, Sandy; Lutt-Owens, Caroline; Lazere, Steve; Murrieta, Esma; Olbert, Belinda; Rocc, Kara

Guests/Local Board Members Present: Baker, Peggy; Carter, Gary; Decker, Jodi; Huff, Jane; Packer, Holly; Woods, Larry.

Liz Barker Alvarez with First Thing First provided the training.

Connie Koch called meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Motion: Approve to accept minutes from March 5, 2016. **Action:** Approve; **Moved by:** Currey, Jean; **Seconded by** Harrell, Nancy.
Motion passed unanimously.

II. INTRODUCTIONS:

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

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Executive Committee:

Connie Koch delivered the following update:

- One attendance waiver was approved by the committee.

B. Best Practices Committee:

Valerie VanAuker delivered the following update:

- The Best Practices committee met two times since the last State Board meeting.
- The committee has completed the first goal in the strategic plan:
 - Goal 1 - Review existing mechanism for interested parties to provide information to the board to identify opportunities for improvement.***
 1. FCRB Meeting Notice to Foster Families – Currently in the hands of the IT Department to fit into the current format and it has been translated into Spanish.
 2. Arizona Statewide Newsletter - Reaching Foster and Kinship Families, which came out in December of last year.
 3. Reaching Case Managers - Pima County had already started a campaign to reach DCS case managers; as a State, the Committee provided input on what needs to be included for trainings of Case Managers
 - Goal 2 - Develop a survey to assess whether local board members feel connected to the State Board***
 1. The purpose of this goal was to assess how well local board members feel connected to the State Board. Because this process was rolled out a short time ago, the committee decided to recommend this goal be carried over to next year.

C. Outreach Committee:

Tom McAlpin delivered the following update:

- The Blanket the State Campaign that was initiated in mid-September 2015 in an effort to fill Board vacancies continues.
- FCRB volunteers, FCRB staff (in both the Phoenix and Tucson office), the Courts Communication Office, the Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, the CASA Outreach Specialist and the FCRB State Board Outreach Committee have headed the committee's call to action to identify and recruit new volunteers for the FCRB program.
- Since October 2015, the Phoenix Region (which serves nine counties) has mailed out over 360 applications.
- Since September 2015, the Tucson Region (which serves six counties) has mailed out over 190 applications.
- The AOC continues to experience about an 8-9 week turnaround period by DPS as they work to complete our fingerprint background checks. This is due to retirements, vacancies, etc. at DPS.
- To compensate for the delay in the processing of fingerprints, the FCRB program has adjusted its application procedures to allow for observations to be scheduled while they wait for fingerprints to be completed. This is allowing them to route people for appointment as soon as the background check is completed.
- The FCRB continues to have applicants at various stages of the appointment process, including fingerprint processing, observations and the Court's formal appointment.
- Since the March State Board meeting, the current vacancy rate for Boards covered by the Phoenix Region has dropped from 27% to 19%, and the current vacancy rate for Boards covered by the Tucson Region has dropped from 19% to 18%.

- For the Phoenix Region, if all the applicants who have observations or appointments pending were cleared out, they would have a 13% vacancy rate. For the Tucson Region, if all the applicants who have observations or appointments pending were cleared out, they would have a 7.5% vacancy rate. Keep in mind the numbers addressed include the impact of having to create 4 new Boards in Maricopa County and 3 new Boards in Pinal County.
- The Outreach Committee adopted and implemented the Regional Program Manager's (Sandy Guizzetti) suggestion to have the committee focus all of its energy/resources on a different county each month to fill the vacancies. The committee has saturated Gila, Pinal and La Paz counties between March and May.
- The Outreach Committee continues to make significant progress in reducing our vacancy rate and are looking forward to driving our vacancy rate even lower!

Diversity Campaign

- The committee has adopted a goal with the State Board to begin working on refreshing the FCRB's Diversity Plan.

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 meets once a month via telephone.
- They are working on finding elements and revising them in hopes to roll out the statewide training late 2016 into 2017.
- Lunchtime board training have been reestablished. They are discussing the five types of case plan goals that the committee has researched, revised, and put together.
- This month the committee plans on assigning the members of the committee to define and detail the types of placements for kids in care. Completion goal of September 2016.
- The committee will continue to define and create monthly board packets with training items that have been identify as a need.
- The committee continues to try to find ways to bring more board members to the monthly calls.

IV. OLD BUSINESS: N/A

V. NEW BUSINESS: N/A

VI. PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT:

Steve Lazere delivered the following report:

- Congratulated the committee members on their efforts.

- Staffing:
 - Tucson office is fully staffed.
 - Phoenix office:
 - Mara Ruetten has filled the vacant PSIII position.
 - One PSI position will open in July due to a resignation
- Statistics:
 - The FCRB is currently serving over 15,200 kids, which is about a 7% increase from this time last year.
- Board Growth:
 - Pinal 11 opened May.
 - Maricopa hasn't had to open new boards.
 - In rural counties, FCRB had to increase the number of months in which they are conducting reviews (Apache and Mohave).
 - Gila number of months in which they conduct reviews has been decreased.
 - YA01 will now meet eight times a year.
- Appreciate all the work board members are doing.
- Overall FCRB has 145 boards statewide.
- Change in case review protocol:
 - Effective July 1, 2016 the program will no longer reading back interested party statements. The interest party statements will be included the report as they currently are. This is due to board growth and the number of reviews being done in a day. This will allow board members to spend more time reviewing cases and on the Finding & Elements. It is a big change for the program and there will be circumstances where a statement will need to be read back. New staff will continue to do read backs as it helps them learn the position. Steve will meet with the supervisors over the next few weeks in order to address special situations that may come up. DCS will also be notified of this change. A statement will be crafted that will be read at the beginning of the review so people understand the transition.
- Case Manager Tracking: 
 - Steve reviewed DCS CM Tracking Feb. '16 – April '16 handout with committee.
 - DCS has given FCRB 1 ½ hours to talk to new case managers during their training.
 - Recommend suspending case manager tracking for the following counties based on their positive case manager attendance:
 - Apache
 - Cochise
 - Coconino
 - Gila
 - Graham
 - Greenlee
 - La Paz
 - Navajo
 - Santa Cruz
 - Yuma

Motion: To suspend case manager tracking in the following counties: Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Navajo, Santa Cruz and Yuma. Tracking can be reinstated at any time as the need arises. **Action:** Approve; **Moved by:** Endres, Art; **Seconded by** Bevans, Elaine.
Motion passed unanimously.

- State board goals:
 - The 2016 State Board Goals was handed out and reviewed with the state board members.

VII. DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Caroline Lauth-Owens delivered the following report:

-  Legislative session updates:
 - The extension (Sunset) bill has been extended for eight years.
- Modification to the bill:
 - The bill now allows a judge to appoint child welfare agency (but not DCS) staff to FCRB boards. This will begin July 1, 2016.
 - State board composition:
 - Currently the state board is made up of seven at-large members and one local member for every three boards. The new state board composition will now be made up of three at-large members and one local board member for every ten boards. This is due to the Auditor General's concern, during the Sunset Audit, that our state board was too large compared to other citizen boards and other working boards.
 - No county can have more than six members per county.
 - All counties, whether they have ten boards or not, must have at least one state board member.
 - These changes take effect July 1, 2016.
 - Internal discussion will take place on how to reduce our board. It will most likely be done by attrition.
 - If a board members term expires, we are recommending them stay on with committees and observing the state board meeting, if interested. If there are more than the required number interested in being a state board member (after terms expire), we may have to provide the presiding judge in the county a list of interested members and they will make the decision on appointment, similar to how at large members are appointed.
- Staffing:
 - AOC had a request in to the legislature for new FCRB staff. The request was not granted. However, the AOC is committed to finding funding for two new Program Specialist III positions; one for the Phoenix office and one for Tucson office. The new positions will be available July 1, 2016.
 - Over \$700,000 of the staffing budget comes from other funds that AOC has found for the program.

- SURGE:
 - The \$3 million was approved and will be distributed to the 15 county courts for use on dependency cases. AOC is working with the counties, who opted in, to provide a plan on how they are going to use the funds. The funds are being distributed based on the number of children they have on open petitions as of January 1, 2016. Two counties have declined the grant: La Paz and Greenlee County. This is a one-time grant that will be distributed over a two-year period. Counties can start getting their money July 1, 2016, if they are ready, and then they'll get quarterly disbursements.
- Caroline handed out a list of bills that the Governor signed that are focused on child welfare for the members review offline.

VIII. CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no public respondents.

Connie thanked committee chairs and the members of the committees for all the great work they are doing.

Suggestion: Mimi Condon suggested that new placements receive notice in the mail as to what to look for in the coming months, what the board is about, what they can do to help/prepare.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn at 12:30pm. **Action:** Approve; **Moved by:** Brewer, Larry. **Seconded by:** Thibeault, Jessica.

Motion passed unanimously.

Future meeting dates:

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