

## **Nebraska Children's Commission**

Thirtieth Meeting  
January 22, 2015  
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Airport Country Inn & Suites, Platte Room  
1301 West Bond Circle, Lincoln, NE

### **Call to Order**

Beth Baxter called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and noted that the Open Meetings Act information was posted in the room as required by state law.

### **Roll Call**

Commission Members present: Pam Allen, Teresa Anderson, Karen Authier (10:35 a.m.), Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jennifer Clark, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Kim Hawekotte (9:45a.m.), Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Deb O'Brien, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab.

Commission Members absent: Diana Tedrow.

Ex Officio Members present: Julie Rogers and Vicky Weisz.

Ex Officio Members absent: Ellen Brokofsky, Senator Kathy Campbell, Senator Colby Coash, Senator Jeremy Nordquist, Judge Linda Porter, Thomas Pristow, and Kerry Winterer.

Also in attendance: Bethany Connor and Leesa Sorensen from the Nebraska Children's Commission.

### **Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Susan Staab to approve the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Gene Klein. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Teresa Anderson, Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jennifer Clark, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Deb O'Brien, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab. Voting no: none. Abstaining: none. Karen Authier, Kim Hawekotte, and Diana Tedrow were absent for the vote. Motion carried.

### **Chairperson's Report**

Beth Baxter gave a brief chairs report. Beth highlighted several of the events from the retreat on January 21. She also posted the results of the communication style presentation that was done by Senator Colby Coash at the retreat. Beth noted that Susan Staab had guests at the meeting. Susan then introduced the group of girl scouts who were attending the Children's Commission meeting as a part of a larger community service project for their Silver Award. The girls will be

working on the project to look at issues related to foster care and to design a community project that will be sustainable past their project involvement.

### **Legislative Update/Public Policy Report**

Bethany Connor reviewed the list of legislative bills of interest to the Children's Commission that had been introduced through Day 11 of the legislative session.

### **DHHS Update**

Vicki Maca provided a DHHS update, including an updated on leadership changes within DHHS. She noted that Joe Acierno, Sheri Dawson, and Tony Green are continuing to fulfill their original work roles and have added new duties. She noted that Joe Acierno is function as the Acting CEO of DHHS; Sheri Dawson is Acting Director of the Division of Behavioral Health; and Tony Green is the Acting Director of the Division of Children and Family Services. Vicki noted that the leadership transitions are going well, however the legislative session has been a busy time. Vicki noted that the group was waiting for the Director for Corrections to be named and for the DHHS CEO to be selected.

Vicki then gave an update on Alternative Response. As of January 5, there were 59 families active in the alternative response track. Vicki noted that there were 241 eligible cases reviewed. Of the 241 cases, 120 cases were assigned to the alternative track; and 121 cases were assigned to the traditional track. She also noted that there were 31 track changes. It was noted that DHHS is receiving direct feedback from the delivery process and noting lessons learned. Vicki noted that DHHS was having some challenges with the purchase of concrete items for the family because of the purchasing process within the state. It was also noted that the team who is evaluating the hotline calls have been doing follow up reviews of the way cases were handled. This follow up review has helped to clarify process enhancements and case decision making. DHHS is evaluating expanding the number of staff in on follow up case reviews to help with cross-training.

### **Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee Report and Action Item**

Kim Hawekotte and Bethany Connor gave the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee report. Kim and Bethany noted that the committee had taken the strategic plan and divided it into focus areas by monthly meeting. They noted that the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers (YRTC) were the focus for the January meeting. YRTC numbers are down, but more work will need to be done related to the YRTCs. The committee was specifically looking at education issues and youth re-entry into the community.

The committee will be looking at Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) in February; Community Based Services in March; Screening and Assessment Tools in April; and brining all the topics back together in May.

The Committee also had an action item. The Committee asked for Juliet Summers to be appointed to the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee to replace Sarah Forrest. A motion was

made by Candy Kennedy Goergen to appoint Juliet Summers as a voting member of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee. The motion was seconded by Gene Klein. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Teresa Anderson, Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jennifer Clark, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Kim Hawekotte, Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Deb O'Brien, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab. Voting no: none. Abstaining: none. Karen Authier and Diana Tedrow were absent for the vote. Motion carried.

### **Developing Data System Measures**

Jennifer Haight led a discussion with the Commission members on considerations when developing data system measures. The Commission looked at framing populations, system goals, and managing variation. Jennifer then provided the group with examples from data that was available from Nebraska. The Commission members then discussed issues related to identifying whole populations and asking the right framing questions as data is used to drive results.

### **Next Meeting Planning**

The Commission members discussed topics to be covered during the March meeting. It was decided that the Legal Parties Taskforce would need to provide an update on their work with the legislation related to Guardian ad litem. Karen and Beth indicated that the Financial Primer project that is being worked on with the Sherwood Foundation should be to review for approval around the time of the March meeting.

Vicky Weisz also announced that she would be leaving and that the January meeting was her last meeting. Vicky noted that her work e-mail address would remain the same.

The Commission members also continued the prioritization conversation from the retreat day regarding possible topics that the Commission will undertake. The Commission members requested that an online survey be constructed that would allow Commissioners to provide feedback on topics. The suggested categories for feedback were "Lead", "Monitor", or "Educate". The topics for the survey were identified during the retreat.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 17, 2015, from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by Mary Jo Pankoke to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Deb O'Brien. The meeting adjourned at 12:07 pm.