

Nebraska Children’s Commission Meeting

November 14, 2023
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Carol Joy Holling Center
27416 Ranch Road
Ashland, NE 68003

1. Call to Order

Chair Misty Flowers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM She asked attendees to introduce themselves. Roll call was taken by Adam Anderson through introductions.

2. Introductions and Roll Call

Commission Members Present (10)

Jarren Breeling	Sara Hoyle	Susan Thomas
Misty Flowers	Melissa Nance	LaShawn Young
Ron Giesselmann	Felicia Nelsen	
Richard Hasty	Lana Temple-Plotz	

Commission Members Absent (2)

A’Jamal Byndon	Vernon Davis
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Commission Ex-Officio Members Present (5)

Jennifer Carter	LaDonna Jones-Dunlap	Deb VanDyke-Ries
Monika Gross	Judge Amy Schuchman	

Commission Ex-Officio Members Absent (3)

Senator Beau Ballard
Senator Carol Blood
Senator Myron Dorn

Roll call was taken through introductions, and a quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (13)

Payne Ackerman	Strengthening Families Act Committee Co-Chair
Amanda Adams	Nebraska Children’s Commission
Crystal Aldmeyer	SFA APPLA Subcommittee Chair
Erin Aliano	4 Leaf Solutions
Adam Anderson	Nebraska Children’s Commission
Trisha Behrens	FCRRC Agency Rate Workgroup Co-Chair
Stephanie Bizzarri	SFA Normalcy Subcommittee Co-Chair
Mikayla Findlay	Nebraska Legislative Office
Jackie Meyer	FCRRC LOR Workgroup Co-Chair
Keenan Page	B2i Sustainability Workgroup Chair
Tammy Sassaman	JSC YRTC Workgroup Chair
Ivy Svoboda	AR Oversight Workgroup Co-Chair
Heather Wood	B2i Data and Evaluation Workgroup Chair

a. Notice of Publication

Recorder for the meeting, Adam Anderson, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meetings Calendar and Nebraska Children’s Commission websites in

accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The publication would be kept as a permanent attachment with the meeting minutes.

b. *Announcement of the placement of Open Meetings Act information*

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for public inspection and was located at the sign-in table and on the Children's Commission Website.

3. Approval of the Agenda

It was moved by Richard Hasty and seconded by Sara Hoyle to approve the agenda as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (10):

Jarren Breeling	Sara Hoyle	Susan Thomas
Misty Flowers	Melissa Nance	LaShawn Young
Ron Giesselmann	Felicia Nelsen	
Richard Hasty	Lana Temple-Plotz	

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (2):

A'Jamal Byndon	Vernon Davis
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MOTION CARRIED

Note that the order of items in the minutes will not be reflective of the original agenda.

4. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- a. [August 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes](#)
- b. [Member Nomination Report](#)

It was moved by Lana Temple-Plotz and seconded by Richard Hasty to approve the Consent Agenda items. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (10):

Jarren Breeling	Sara Hoyle	Susan Thomas
Misty Flowers	Melissa Nance	LaShawn Young
Ron Giesselmann	Felicia Nelsen	
Richard Hasty	Lana Temple-Plotz	

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (2):

A'Jamal Byndon	Vernon Davis
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MOTION CARRIED

5. Commission Membership & Vacancies

Adam Anderson noted that Kathy Dinkel has resigned from the Commission. He also shared that there have been no updates regarding the status of appointments or a timeline moving forward.

6. Legislative Update

Policy Analyst Amanda Adams shared that all statutory committee reports have been submitted and shared that Senator Hansen invited the Executive Committee to a meeting to discuss priorities. Adams shared that during the meeting with Senator Hansen, Therapeutic Family Care (TFC) was discussed as not being implemented yet, and that TFC should be open to all eligible youth. Adams continued, noting the next recommendation to the Senator revolves around getting access to certain data from DHHS and how changes might be needed to NFOCUS to access that data. Adams also noted a recommendation regarding court forms and surveys was made. Vice Chair Melissa Nance added that there was additional discussion regarding the Alternative Response (AR) report. She was hopeful in the way Senator Hansen responded. Adams noted that Senator Hansen will be looking at cost of living increases or another formula across the board. Adams speculated that this will come up during the next legislative session. Richard Hasty shared his thoughts regarding Senator Hansen's thoughts on streamlining regulations. Chair Flowers agreed that the Senator is interested in reducing red tape and increasing efficiency. Jennifer Carter shared that she believes that there is a benefit to having the Commission present information to the full legislative HHS committee as outlined in statute. Adams will share the statute with Mikayla Findlay regarding the presentation to the full HHS Committee.

Lana Temple-Plotz discussed the potential and importance for the Commission to be the managing entity regarding the implementations of the 1173 workgroup recommendations. Adams would like the Commission to review the recommendations with the full Commission after the release of the report. Temple-Plotz and Adams suggested gathering an ad-hoc group to review the recommendations. Jennifer Carter added that the Commission would need to work with senators if legislation is needed.

Members discussed adding a special meeting in the week of December 11 for the purposes of recommendations regarding the 1173 workgroup.

7. Strategic Priorities Update

Amanda Adams noted that the Commission is on track for its current priorities and that further discussion will be had during the Committee portion of the meeting.

8. DHHS Update

Camas Holder shared updates from the Department of Health and Human Services. She noted that on September 14th Steve Corsi was hired as DHHS CEO. She added that Dr. Alyssa Bish is the new CFS Director starting December 28. She continued, Alger Studstill is no longer with DHHS and Kathleen Stolz is the new interim Deputy Director. Holder noted that Laura Opfer will remain with Policy and Legislation. Holder shared information regarding the Epiphany Group surveying DHHS projects for red tape and efficiency. She noted that the group is also looking at all code agencies, and not just DHHS. She shared that the 1173 finance and practice model report is up on the website and shared how the report looks to push towards the prevention system. Holder also shared additional information regarding the warmline, which gives an additional option for calls that don't meet the level of Hotline intake. She added that a warmline would be eligible to pull IV-E funds. Holder continued, noting that she has taken over coordination of the Therapeutic Family Care implementation, and that the information will be up on the website for comment.

Members discussed the streamlining process of the CFS Specialist position. Holder shared that DHHS will look at prevention outside the structure of child welfare, utilizing family resource centers. She added that there are challenges when calls are screened out but then unable to share that information with community providers. Members discussed the difference between Alternative Response and prevention, which is being discussed at the DHHS level.

Members discussed TFC. Holder noted that TFC would be initially offered to youth that are in the Nebraska Caregivers Responsibility tool levels 4 and 5.

9. Probation Update

Amanda Adams shared information regarding the leadership changes at Juvenile Probation. She noted that Kari Rumbaugh has taken on the role previously held by Jeanne Brandner.

10. Committee Updates

a. Alternative Response Committee

AR Co-Chair Monika Gross shared the rationale for submitting a special report outside the confines of the NCC Annual Report. Gross shared specifics regarding the recommendations in the report.

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Melissa Nance to approve the Alternative Response Advisory Committee Special Report. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (10):

Jarren Breeling
Misty Flowers
Ron Giesselmann
Richard Hasty

Sara Hoyle
Melissa Nance
Felicia Nelsen
Lana Temple-Plotz

Susan Thomas
LaShawn Young

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (2):

A'Jamal Byndon

Vernon Davis

MOTION CARRIED

b. Bridge to Independence Advisory Committee

B2i Co-Chair Richard Hasty shared information regarding the most recent meeting of the B2i Committee. Keenan Page shared information regarding the work of the Sustainability Workgroup, and Heather Wood shared information regarding the work of the Data and Evaluation Workgroup. Page and Wood gave brief overviews of the scope of each of the workgroups.

c. Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee

FCRRC Co-Chair Felicia Nelsen noted that the next meeting will be December 12, and the Committee is currently waiting for information regarding TFC implementation.

d. Juvenile Services Committee

JSC Co-Chair Deb VanDyke-Ries shared information regarding the work of the Committee. She shared that the Access to Services workgroup has been very active developing recommendations regarding Community Treatment Aide services and looking at Managed Care Organization case management coordination. VanDyke-Ries also shared that Tammy Sassaman and Pat Connell will be looking at the Juvenile Justice Continuum soon. She noted that if there is interest in joining the work to please reach out.

e. Strengthening Families Act Committee

Co-Chair Ron Giesselmann shared that at the most recent meeting the Normalcy Subcommittee had received their Normalcy reports and is working to address some of the concerns into the writing of the Normalcy Reports. Co-Chair Ackerman added that often the reports aren't updated or examples given. Giesselmann continued, noting that the APPLA Subcommittee is examining drivers licenses and insurance for foster youth. Lastly, he shared information from the Trafficking Subcommittee, noting that the Subcommittee relies on the Attorney General for championing the anti-trafficking work. He highlighted recent trafficking arrests and

convictions. Misty Flowers shared the Attorney General also has a new Tribble Liaison for missing and murdered Indigenous persons.

f. Lived Experience

Amanda Adams shared that the workgroup has met once and discussed taking recommendations to the families for input and then bringing the information back to the Committee or Commission for discussion. This will allow for lived experience voice anonymously, but also without the fear that something may change within the family's case. She noted this will also attempt to bridge the gap of attendance at meetings when families may not be able to attend.

11. Public Comment

Misty Flowers opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

12. New Business

Misty Flowers opened the floor for new business. There was none.

13. 4 Leaf Solutions LLC Presentation

Erin Aliano, from 4 Leaf Solutions was given the floor to guide the Commission and guests through exercises and presentations to aide moving forward the strategic priorities of the Commission. Chair Flowers added information regarding how the presentation will help elevate the work of the Commission and Subcommittees.

14. Upcoming Meeting Planning

- a. February 13, 2024
- b. May 14, 2024
- c. August 6, 2024
- d. November 12, 2024

15. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:08 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Anderson