

Nebraska Children's Commission

Nineteenth Meeting
January 22, 2014
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Airport Country Inn and Suites, Platte Room
1301 West Bond Circle, Lincoln, NE 68521

Call to Order

Karen Authier called the meeting to order at 9:05 am 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, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Candy Kennedy-Goergen, Kim Hawekotte, Martin Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, Jennifer Nelson, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, and Becky Sorensen.

Commission Members absent: Nancy Forney, Janteice Holston, Gene Klein, John Northrop, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab.

Ex Officio Members present: Hon. Linda Porter, Thomas Pristow, Julie Rogers, and Kerry Winterer.

Ex Officio Members absent: Ellen Brokofsky, Senator Colby Coash, Senator Kathy Campbell, Senator Jeremy Nordquist, and Vicky Weisz.

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

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Mary Jo Pankoke to approve the agenda, as written. The motion was seconded by Beth Baxter. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Candy Kennedy-Goergen, Kim Hawekotte, Martin Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, Jennifer Nelson, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, and Becky Sorensen. Voting no: none. Nancy Forney, Janteice Holston, Gene Klein, John Northrop, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab were absent. Motion carried.

Approval of December 17, 2013, Minutes

A motion was made by Candy Kennedy-Goergen to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2013, meeting with a revision. A suggestion was made to add a sentence to the section on "Commission Feedback on Alternative Response Model" to state that: "Some Commission members didn't receive the e-mail because of Nebraska.gov e-mail issues." The motion to approve the minutes with revisions was seconded by Becky Sorensen. Voting yes: Karen

Authier, Beth Baxter, Candy Kennedy-Goergen, Kim Hawekotte, Martin Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, Jennifer Nelson, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, and Becky Sorensen. Voting no: none. Pam Allen abstained. Nancy Forney, Janteice Holston, Gene Klein, John Northrop, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab were absent. Motion carried.

Chairperson's Report

Karen Authier provided a brief chair's report. Karen gave Commission members an update on the status of the Nebraska Children's Commission website and provided a brief overview of the items on the agenda for the day. Commission members were also provided copies of testimony from the Health and Human Services Committee hearing that was held on January 9, 2014. Testimony copies were provided from Karen Authier, Nebraska Children's Commission; Thomas Pristow, Department of Health and Human Services; Kim Hawekotte, Foster Care Review Office; and Julie Rogers, Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare.

Legislative Update

Bethany Connor provided Commission members with a list of Legislative Bills that had been introduced prior to the Children's Commission meeting. January 22, 2014 was the last day for legislation to be introduced, so the list did not include all bills that might be of interest to the Commission. LB660 relating to the Lead Agency would be reviewed during the meeting. It was also noted that Commission members may want to take a look at LB790 which relates to Case Manager Training. A suggestion was made that the Commission may also want to add LB143 to the list. Karen stated that Bethany would check on the status of the bill and add it to the list as necessary. The Commission members discussed other legislation on the list. Karen noted that Bethany would also spotlight items on the list that relate to the Phase I Strategic Plan. The list will be updated and provided to Commission members at the February meeting. A list of scheduled legislative hearings for the legislation of interest was also distributed.

Karen also reminded Commission members that a Legislative Report Summary document had been e-mailed to them in advance of the meeting. She further noted that the document had not been printed due to the size of the document. An updated version of the reference document will be distributed as changes are made.

Update on Lead Agency Pilot

David Newell and Carolyn Rooker provided an update on LB660. Dave provided Commission members with information entitled "NFC At-A-Glance". The document provides information on NFC, including about the staff and performance measures. The information included a support letter from Jean Stothert, City of Omaha Mayor that was sent to Senator Campbell and the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature. The final section of the document included Eastern Service Area CFSR measures. Dave noted that LB660 was important as it would allow the eastern service area to stay the course and would provide stability.

Carolyn Rooker also noted that LB660 was important for maintaining stability in the Eastern Service Area. Carolyn noted that the legislation would allow NFC as the Lead Agency to continue to build on the momentum that had been created to date. She also noted that changing case management at this juncture would be detrimental.

Kerry Winterer provided feedback on behalf of DHHS regarding LB660. He noted that DHHS was concerned about LB660 because it created a legal issue since the legislature through LB660 would be dictating to the executive branch the terms of a contract. He noted that the Executive Branch choice on terms of a contract transcends any issues related to the Eastern Service Area.

Commission members asked additional questions and provided input on family peer support, caseworker turnover, career ladders, and additional training that might be needed. It was also noted that the CFSR measures noted in the NFC handout might impact the work of the IT workgroup related to Whole Population discussions.

Kids Count Presentation

Carolyn Rooker, Chrissy Tonkinson, and Sarah Forrest provided a copy of the 2013 Kids Count report for Commission members. Chrissy provided highlights of the information that Commission members can find in the report. Carolyn indicated that if Commission members identify information that they would like to see added to a future Kids Count report that they should let her know.

Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee Report

Peg Harriott provided a written progress report on the work of the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee. The committee continues to: review the ongoing results of the DHHS pilot project; identify and complete additional work with the Level of Care Assessment tool to fully operationalize the instrument; and discuss implementation implications for current foster homes, supporting agencies, DHHS, NFC, and Probation. At the January meeting the committee worked on developing a transitional process for implementing the new foster parent rates (base rate and levels of parenting) in a manner that creates a “grandfathering” process. Peg also provided a list of draft recommendations that the group will work on in February to create final recommendations.

After Peg finished her presentation, Beth Baxter made a motion to accept the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee report and forward it to the Health and Human Services Committee by February 1, 2014, with a cover letter noting that the committee is moving in the right direction and that the Children’s Commission. At the February meeting the Commission will review a more specific timeline for development of deliverables for implementation of rates by July 1, 2014. The motion was seconded by Candy Kennedy-Goergen. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Candy Kennedy-Goergen, Kim Hawekotte, Martin Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, and Becky Sorensen. Voting no: none. Jennifer Nelson was absent for the vote. Nancy Forney, Janteice Holston, Gene Klein, John Northrop, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab were absent. Motion carried.

DHHS Report

Thomas Pristow provided a brief update on the unbundling of rates and the work that is being done by DHHS to comply with federal IV-E rules. Thomas also provided information on the work that is being done on Alternative Response (AR). The internal team at DHHS is reviewing the AR surveys to develop the Red Team concept that will be used when evaluating which cases will be assigned to the AR track. Thomas also provided information on the 5 AR pilot sites and the work that is being done to ensure that the statewide advisory group is in place.

Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee Report

Martin Klein, Sarah Forrest, Cindy Gans, Tony Green, Kim Hawekotte, Monica Miles Steffens, and Corey Steel provided information on the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee report that was provided to the Judiciary Committee on December 13, 2013. The panel provided information on the key points of the report and reminded Commission members that there is additional work that is being suggested to be completed by the Juvenile Services Committee. The panel also noted that it is important that the report continue to be looked at in total and not have the recommendations implemented piecemeal. The panel indicated that the Juvenile Services Committee intends to further develop the recommendations contained in the report. The committee will also be monitoring the development of legislation that will implement parts of the report recommendations. The Commission then discussed how the report should be voted on by Commission members – as a whole or endorsed section by section.

A motion was made by Marty Klein to have the Nebraska Children’s Commission accept and endorse the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee report with a cover letter that provides a caution that stakeholders view the report as a comprehensive document and not a stand-alone set of recommendations. The motion was seconded by David Newell. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Candy Kennedy-Goergen, Kim Hawekotte, Martin Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, Jennifer Nelson, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, and Becky Sorensen. Voting no: none. Nancy Forney, Janteice Holston, Gene Klein, John Northrop, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab were absent. Motion carried.

Phase II Strategic Plan Next Steps Discussion

Candy Kennedy-Goergen provided an update on the System of Care grant project. A statewide assessment report is available that will be sent to Commission members by e-mail. The next stakeholders meeting for the System of Care grant planning is scheduled for January 28 in Kearney. The information to register for the event will be sent with the assessment report e-mail. Candy noted that there are 10 core teams doing the planning and that the juvenile justice recommendations report would be shared with the appropriate group.

Karen Authier then reminded Commission members that they will need to be thinking about how the Commission workgroups can begin pulling ideas together to work toward Phase II recommendations. Commission members also discussed the need to determine whole population outcomes. The whole population discussion will take place at a future commission meeting. Karen then asked Commissioners to send her any suggestions they may have for moving forward.

New Business**Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Wednesday, February 19, 2014, 9:00am-12:00pm. Information on the meeting location will be sent at a later date.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Mary Jo Pankoke to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Becky Sorensen. The meeting adjourned at 11:59am.