

## Nebraska Children's Commission

Thirty-first Meeting  
March 17, 2015  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Country Inn and Suites, Lincoln Room  
5353 North 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE

### Call to Order

Karen Authier called the meeting to order at 9:03 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 (9:07), Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jennifer Clark, Kim Hawekotte, Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab.

Commission Members absent: Teresa Anderson, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Deb O'Brien, Diana Tedrow.

Ex Officio Members present: Ellen Brokofsky, Judge Linda Porter, and Julie Rogers.

Ex Officio Members absent: Dr. Joseph Acierno, Senator Kate Bolz, Senator Kathy Campbell, Tony Green, and Senator Patty Pansing-Brooks.

Also in attendance: Bethany Connor, Joselyn Luedtke, Carolyn Rooker, Melissa Schaefer, Juliet Summers, and Chrissy Tonkinson.

### Consent Agenda Items

Gene Klein made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, the January 22, 2015 Nebraska Children's Commission Meeting Minutes and the Children's Commission Suggested 2015 Meeting Dates. The motion was seconded by Mary Jo Pankoke. Voting yes: Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Jennifer Clark, Kim Hawekotte, Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab. Voting no: none. Pam Allen, Teresa Anderson, Candy Kennedy-Goergen, Deb O'Brien, and Diana Tedrow were absent. None abstained. Motion carried.

### Approval of Agenda

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

**Chairperson's Report**

Karen Authier gave a brief chairperson's report. She noted the resignation of Commission staff and noted that the position would be posted soon. She also noted that Pam Allen would be leaving the Commission as her family is moving out of state. Karen thanked Pam for her service to the Commission. Karen also updated the Commission on the progress of the Child Welfare Financial Primer. Karen noted that Bethany Connor would send out a survey regarding issues that need Commission attention on Wednesday as a follow up to the January Commission meeting and retreat.

**Kid's Count Report**

Chrissy Tonkinson gave a brief overview of the Voices for Children's Kids Count Report. She highlighted some child welfare and juvenile justice data of interest to the Commission. One important change to the report this year was that juvenile justice information was given its own section, to highlight the importance of the juvenile justice system. She also noted that she was able to provide more detailed data upon request, and encouraged the Commission to contact her with data requests.

**Legislative Update and Action Item**

Kim Hawekotte, Juliet Summers, Joselyn Luedtke and Bethany Connor provided the Commission with a Legislative update. The panel gave an update on bills identified as areas of focus and interest to the Commission. The panel identified the bills that were designated as priority bills or had been placed on the General File.

**Legal Parties Taskforce Update and Action Item**

Kim Hawekotte provided an update on the Legal Parties task force. She noted that the Legal Parties' report on Guardian ad Litem Legislation had been forwarded to the legislature, and Bethany Connor had testified in a neutral capacity on behalf of the group at the hearing for LB15. She noted that Senator Krist had introduced a LB502 proposing a family court pilot project that will be changed to a Legislative Resolution. The Legal Parties task force will look at family and juvenile court models to ultimately create a product of substance in the form of recommendations or a resource tool. Kim encouraged any members with any input on the issue to connect with her.

**Lead Agency Taskforce Update and Action Item**

Beth Baxter provided an update from the Lead Agency Taskforce. She noted that the taskforce had met once and established values and key areas of focus. The taskforce is dedicated to creating recommendations in an expeditious manner. The Commission had been given an opportunity to review the Taskforce's written update and purpose statement in advance of the meeting. The Commission came to an informal consensus that based on the written update, the taskforce should move forward as identified in the purpose statement.

**Workforce Work Group Report and Action Item**

Susan Staab led a discussion on the Workforce Work Group's report. The Commission supported the areas identified in the report and also identified the external work environment, external stakeholders such as universities, and determining the causes of retention and turnover as additional areas for the workforce to consider. The Commission also supported adding a

clarification of the definitions of “compassion fatigue” and “vicarious trauma.” Discussion also led the Commission to consider the use of a third party to conduct a comprehensive workforce study to examine these issues. Many potential recommendations can be implemented through policy or practice change and may not need legislative intervention. Representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services and Nebraska Families Collaborative were requested to give presentations in response to the recommendations of the Workforce Workgroup. Gene Klein made a motion to receive the report with the recommendations that DHHS and NFC respond, and that the recommendations for a legislative study or interim study be changed to recommend a comprehensive evaluation. Dale Shotkoski seconded the motion. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jennifer Clark, Kim Hawekotte, Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski and Susan Staab. Voting no: none. Teresa Anderson, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Deb O’Brien, and Diana Tedrow were absent. None abstained. Motion carried.

#### **Next Meeting Planning**

Gene Klein indicated he needed to leave the meeting, and requested that the next meeting be discussed. He noted that his organization, Project Harmony, has trained workers on Alternative Response and would like to host the next meeting at his organization to provide information about the training onsite. He noted that Project Harmony could hold the meeting in their conference room and provide lunch. The Commission came to the consensus that the next meeting would be held at Project Harmony.

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

Kim Hawekotte and Bethany Connor provided an update of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee. The Committee’s last meeting covered the subject of community services and services available at the YRTC’s and included presentations by the staff psychologists. Kim Hawekotte noted that the Structure Committee report contained the recommendation that all Committees be chaired by at least one member of the Commission. Kim has accepted a nomination of Co-Chair for the OJS Committee, and been approved by the Committee. David Newell made a motion for the Commission to appoint Kim Hawekotte as Co-Chair of the OJS Committee, seconded by Andrea Miller. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jenny Clark, Gene Klein, Norman Langemach, Andrea Miller, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Stabb. Voting no: none. Teresa Anderson, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Deb O’Brien, and Diana Tedrow were absent. Kim Hawekotte abstained. Motion carried.

#### **System of Care Grant Update and Action Item**

Beth Baxter updated the Commission on the status of the System of Care Grant. She noted that the grant is a wonderful opportunity to enhance available services and supports. Mary Jo Pankoke made a motion for the Commission to support the Department of Health and Human Services and the Governor’s office in moving forward with the System of Care Grant, seconded by Pam Allen. Voting yes: Pam Allen, Karen Authier, Beth Baxter, Holly Brandt, Jennifer Clark, Kim Hawekotte, Norman Langemach, David Newell, Mary Jo Pankoke, Dale Shotkoski, and Susan Staab. Voting no: none. Teresa Anderson, Candy Kennedy Goergen, Gene Klein, Andrea Miller, Deb O’Brien, and Diana Tedrow were absent. None abstained. Motion carried.

### **Data Technology Workgroup**

David Newell provided an update on the Data, technology, accountability and reporting workgroup. He noted that the next meeting will be a three hour meeting at the Foster Care Review Office on April 29<sup>th</sup> to follow up on the Chapin Hall presentations from the January Children's Commission meeting and retreat.

### **Barriers to Permanency Report**

Kim Hawekotte led a discussion on the Barriers to Permanency Report. She provided copies of the report to the Commission. She noted that because the report recently came out, many members have not had time to read it. She asked that the members read the report and at the next meeting the stakeholders involved in the creation of the report will hold an informative panel on the Barriers to Permanency project.

### **DHHS Operations Update**

Vicki Maca provided an update on DHHS operations. She noted that the Department is very busy and Tony Green, acting Director of CFS, is testifying before the Appropriations Committee and could not attend the meeting. Alternative Response is implemented at five pilot sites, and 142 families have been served. The first formal report will be released in December. Many of the families served have experienced chronic neglect with poverty related stressors. DHHS is working with Federal partners on the new CFSR measures and preparing for the Federal Review to ensure that the measures are met.

### **Probation Report**

Ellen Brokofsky gave a Probation update. She noted that JDAI has been making a difference in some areas, including reducing the numbers in the YRTC's in Kearney and Geneva. Probation is working with CSG to improve court process and services.

### **Next Meeting Planning**

The Commission members discussed topics to be covered during the March meeting. It was decided that the Barriers to Permanency Project would hold a panel. The Lead Agency taskforce will provide an update. The Department of Health and Human Services and Nebraska Families Collaborative will provide a response to the Workforce workgroup report. The Data, Technology, Accountability and Reporting workgroup will provide recommendations. Additional topics of focus will be alternative response and evidence based practices definitions.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Tuesday, May 19, 2015, from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by Mary Jo Pankoke to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Norman Langemach. The meeting adjourned at 1:29 pm.