

Nebraska Children's Commission
Forty-Seventh Meeting
April 3, 2018
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Southeast Community College, Room G1A
8800 O Street, Lincoln, NE 68520

1. Call to Order

Dave Newell called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Commission Members present (13)

Beth Baxter	Misty Frazier	Kelli Wacker
Jim Blue (9:10)	Kim Hawekotte	Paula Wells
Holly Brandt (9:10)	Terri Knutson	Bill Williams
Jennifer Chrystal-Clark	Felicia Nelson	
Vernon Davis (9:35)	David Newell	

Commission Members absent (5)

Teresa Anderson	Lisa Story	Janine Ucchino
Deb O'Brien	Susan Thomas	

Ex Officio Members present (7)

Michele Borg	Judge Linda Porter	Matthew Wallen
Jeanne Brandner	Julie Rogers	
Courtney Phillips (11:45)	Deb VanDyke-Ries	

Ex Officio Members absent (3)

Senator Kate Bolz	Senator Patty Pansing Brooks	Senator Merv Riepe
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A quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (3)

Peg Harriott.....	Child Saving Institute
Colleen Svoboda.....	Children's Hospital & Medical Center Foundation
Gina Hamm.....	PromiseShip

a. Notice of Publication

Chair of the Commission, David Newell, 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 on the sign in table near the entrance of the room.

3. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Paula Wells and seconded by Beth Baxter to approve the agenda as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (12):

Beth Baxter	Misty Frazier	Dave Newell
Jim Blue	Kim Hawekotte	Kelli Wacker
Holly Brandt	Terri Knutson	Paula Wells
Jennifer Chrystal-Clark	Felicia Nelson	Bill Williams

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (6):

Teresa Anderson	Deb O'Brien	Susan Thomas
Vernon Davis	Lisa Story	Janine Ucchino

ABSTAINED (0):

MOTION CARRIED

4. Consent Agenda

- a. [Minutes of the January 17, 2018 Meeting](#)
- b. [Juvenile Services Committee Member Nomination](#)
 - Juvenile Defense Attorney Representative (Voting):
 - Margene Timm – Deputy Public Defender, Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association
 - In-Home Services Representative (Voting):
 - Pat Sailors – Director of Crisis and Residential Services, Child Guidance Center
- c. [Psychotropic Medication Committee Member Nomination](#)
 - Teri Marti – retired education and parent with relevant practical experience

It was moved by Paula Wells and seconded by Kim Hawekotte to approve the Consent agenda as presented. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (12):

Beth Baxter
Jim Blue
Holly Brandt
Jennifer Chrystal-Clark

Misty Frazier
Kim Hawekotte
Terri Knutson
Felicia Nelson

David Newell
Kelli Wacker
Paula Wells
Bill Williams

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (6):

Teresa Anderson
Vernon Davis

Deb O'Brien
Lisa Story

Susan Thomas
Janine Uchino

ABSTAINED (0):

MOTION CARRIED

5. Chairperson Report

Dave Newell advised the committee members that an offer was extended and has been accepted by Chris Jones for the Policy Analyst position recently vacated by Bethany Allen. The members of the Search Committee were unanimous in the selection of Ms. Jones. Dave Newell thanked the office of the FCRO and especially, Kim Hawekotte for the assistance that was provided during the search and selection of Ms. Jones. Ms. Jones will begin her new duties on April 16, 2018. Ms. Jones is from northeast Nebraska and moved to Lincoln to attend college. She received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Nebraska Lincoln where she double majored in Psychology and English Studies. Ms. Jones has worked in children and family programming in the Lincoln area for the last ten years. She held many positions within the Nebraska DHHS Division of Children & Family Services- Protection & Safety in the Lincoln local and statewide Central Office. Ms. Jones was the Permanency Program Specialist at DCFS from 2014 to 2017, and most recently earned her Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification in process improvement through the Center of Operational Excellence while at DHHS.

Dave Newell advised the committee members that Director Wallen sent a letter dated February 10, 2018 to the Executive Committee of the NE Children's Commission requesting assistance regarding the IV-E Waiver that ends June 2019. Director Wallen stated this is a major priority for DHHS. At issue is the ability to get Kinship/Relative homes licensed so that federal funds may be used to assist with services for children in these homes. Discussion was held regarding the Nebraska Children's Commission's willingness to assist with this project however, the members agreed the Commission does not have the time or bandwidth to research, make recommendations to DHHS, or plan and execute implementation. Dave Newell suggested that Bill Williams and Peg Harriott form a workgroup that could work with DHHS on this request.

Further discussion followed regarding the inference in a previous meeting that DHHS had been unresponsive to requests for information. Director Wallen asked if that was the case and if so, what information was needed. Jeanne Brander said possibly it came from a discussion around caseloads. Relative/Kinship home licensing was also mentioned. Deb VanDyke-Ries asked that Mary Ann Harvey be a part of the team working on Relative/Kinship home licensing project.

6. Legislative Discussion

Dave Newell provided copies of [LR451](#) introduced by Senator Kate Bolz. The purpose of the study is to examine the work of the Nebraska Children's Commission and evaluate the need for the commission's continuation and any revisions to its structure and purpose. Discussion followed on LR451, LB702, LR 418, and LB41.

7. Strategic Plan Discussion

Dave Newell reminded the members of the Commission of the work that was done at the meeting in January towards the strategic plan and the need for that work to continue. He reintroduced Colleen Svoboda to the members and the group moved into the [strategic planning session](#). Colleen Svoboda agreed to firm up the goals and vision based on the conversations today. She will also make an attempt to put together an Action Plan and will forward the notes from today's meeting and a proposed Action Plan to Dave Newell for distribution to the Commission members. No decisions were made at this time. Additional time is needed to move forward and complete a strategic plan.

8. Lunch

The Commission agreed to a working lunch so that progress could be made on the strategic plan.

9. DHHS Update

Director Wallen advised the Commission members that the Department put through three bills:

- **LB 702** – Change provisions relating to children’s health care coverage and Title IV-D child support modification procedures. Presented to the Governor on March 29, 2018.
- **LB903** – Change provisions relating to the Nebraska Community Aging Services Act and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Act. Placed on Final Reading on April 3, 2018.
- **LB924** – Change provisions of the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act, the Occupational Therapy Practice Act, and the Uniform Credentialing Act. Has been filed.

Director Wallen advised that in July or August of last year DHHS had 40-45 vacancies. That number has been reduced to 14. He further stated that 20 additional positions have been repurposed. He also noted that the Department has 80 people hired who are not yet carrying a full caseload.

10. Probation Update

Jeanne Brandner provided [information](#) on the Recidivism Rates for Nebraska Juveniles. The information provided in the packet was for Adults and not Juveniles. Ms. Brandner will send the correct information the Commission members at a later date. Jeanne Brandner advised the members that there is a 24-24% recidivism rate for juveniles.

Ms. Brandner also provided copies of the [Annual Report for the Juvenile Services Division](#). The report indicates a decrease in youth entering into probation. There has also been a great amount of work on Service definitions. The Juvenile Services Division is struggling with provider rates. Out-of-home placement will be a major focus for next year. Ms. Brandner stated there has been a small decrease in this area but much more work needs to be done. She further stated there has been a small uptick in out-of-state placements.

11. Committee Updates

- Bridge to Independence Advisory Committee Update*
This committee did not hold a meeting thus no update was provided.
- Juvenile Services Committee Update*
Kim Hawekotte stated this group did a great job for 2-3 years but only 10% of their efforts came to fruition and 90% was left sitting on a shelf. This group will be meeting next week and will be working on; 1) high utilizers of services, 2) youth and family engagement, and 3) transitions.
- Strengthening Families Committee Update*
Mr. Davis had to leave the meeting early thus no update was provided.

12. Public Comment

Dave Newell asked that members of the community wishing to comment identify themselves. There were no members of the community present.

13. New Business

There was no new business.

14. Upcoming Meeting Planning

- July 31, 2018
- November 14, 2018 (moved up a week to avoid conflicts with holiday travel)
- A date for the retreat needs to be finalized.

15. Adjourn

Bill Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:18 p.m. and was seconded by Holly Brandt. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (11):

Beth Baxter
Holly Brandt
Jennifer Chrystal-Clark
Misty Frazier

Kim Hawekotte
Terri Knutson
Felicia Nelson
Dave Newell

Kelli Wacker
Paula Wells
Bill Williams

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (6):

Teresa Anderson
Vernon Davis

Deb O'Brien
Lisa Story

Susan Thomas
Janine Uchino

ABSTAINED (0):

MOTION CARRIED