

Strengthening Families Act Committee Meeting

April 15, 2021

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Webex Online Video Conferencing System

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair of the Strengthening Families Act (SFA) Committee of the Nebraska Children's Commission (Commission), Jessica Rockemann, called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Roll call was taken through introductions.

2. Roll Call and Introductions

Committee Members present (10):

Deanna Brakhage	Pat Frost	Terri Knutson
Heather Colton	Stephanie Gardella	Sara Riffel
Vernon Davis	Ron Giesselmann (1:25 pm)	Jessica Rockemann
Misty Frazier	Brandy Gustoff	

Committee Members absent (6):

Payne Ackerman	Rebecca Daugherty	Tiffany Uher
Ashley Brown	Deb Shuck	

Non-Voting Members present (2)

Bailey Perry
Jeremy Behrends

Non-Voting Members absent (2):

Monika Gross
Deb VanDyke-Ries

A quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (7):

Crystal Aldmeyer.....	Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
Adam Anderson.....	Nebraska Children's Commission
Rhia Connley.....	Strengthening Families Act Committee Applicant
Jill Holt.....	Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition
Felicia Nelsen.....	Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parents Association
Laura Opfer.....	Nebraska Children's Commission
Susan Thomas.....	Nebraska CASA Association

a. Notice of Publication

Recorder, Adam Anderson, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meetings and Nebraska Children's Commission websites in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

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 Nebraska Children's Commission Website

3. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Jessica Rockemann to approve the agenda as presented. Stephanie Gardella seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Deanna Brakhage
Heather Colton
Misty Frazier

Pat Frost
Stephanie Gardella
Brandy Gustoff

Terri Knutson
Sara Riffel
Jessica Rockemann

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (7):

Payne Ackerman
Ashley Brown
Rebecca Daugherty

Vernon Davis
Ron Giesselmann
Deb Shuck

Tiffany Uher

ABSTAINED (0)

MOTION CARRIED

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

It was moved by **Brandy Gustoff** and seconded by **Sara Riffel** to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2021 meeting. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Deanna Brakhage
Heather Colton
Misty Frazier

Pat Frost
Stephanie Gardella
Brandy Gustoff

Terri Knutson
Sara Riffel
Jessica Rockemann

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (7):

Payne Ackerman
Ashley Brown
Rebecca Daugherty

Vernon Davis
Ron Giesselmann
Deb Shuck

Tiffany Uher

ABSTAINED (0)

MOTION CARRIED

5. Co-Chair Report

Co-Chairs Frazier and Rockemann reported that during the meeting and in the near future the committee will be looking at strategic planning and the direction for the Committee. Laura Opfer added that there will be planning and a survey upcoming that will address the direction for the Committee to take in the near future.

Rockemann answered a question regarding the scope of the SFA and requested that the governing statute be sent to the members along with the meeting minutes.

Laura Opfer noted that the work of the Subcommittees will be coming up to the Committee level.

6. SFA Statute Poll

Laura Opfer shared poll questions in the chat. Co-Chair Frazier posed the question if members would like to review the statute at a meeting or privately. Members responded that a high level review would be good, as well as personal review of the statute. Members shared links in the chat for YouTube Videos ([587 nebraska strengthening families act - YouTube](#)) and a link to Nebraska Court Improvement Project Video, ([587 Aging out of the System Youth Panel Sharing Lived Experiences on Aging Out - YouTube](#)) regarding the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act.

7. Normalcy Subcommittee

Normalcy Co-Chair Felicia Nelsen updated the Committee regarding the recent survey and one-on-one meetings with agencies that complete Normalcy Plans and Reports. She noted that reports are due at the end of November and plans are due at the end of April. The Subcommittee will review the plans in May or June. Nelsen continued, sharing a little bit about the timeline and duties of the Subcommittee. She added additional information about the goal of the feedback and meetings.

Nelsen shared that Co-Chair Tom McBride is retiring at the end of June. Nelsen shared McBride's thanks for the hard work of the SFA member's work, and she thanked McBride for his service to the Subcommittee and the SFA. Rockemann thanked McBride for his work on the Normalcy Subcommittee from the start. Laura Opfer shared how instrumental McBride was in the normalcy requirements in the statute.

Co-chair Rockemann asked members for volunteers for the Co-Chair position. Stephanie Gardella expressed interest and will transition to that position in the near future.

8. APPLA Subcommittee

Co-Chair Crystal Aldmeyer shared information regarding the duties of the Subcommittee and the upcoming meeting on April 27, 2021. She noted the upcoming work of the Subcommittee, noting that the Subcommittee will be looking at CYI Coaching Providers and the Youth Thrive Survey, in order to have a young adult specialist recommendation to bring up to the SFA Committee

Co-Chair Frazier added that it is important for all the Subcommittees to look at Racial and Ethnic Disparities and cultural components as a part of the larger Strengthening Families Act requirements. Specifically, Frazier noted that the Tribes are in need of Independent Living Services as well as transitional services, making the reminder to take Racial and Ethnic Disparities into account when developing goals and action plans. Co-Chair Rockemann added that report outs regarding

9. Youth Bill of Rights (LB357)

Laura Opfer noted that LB357 is on General File. Opfer communicated with Senator Hunt's office and noted that there is a pending amendment on file that changes the process that DHHS shall inform participants of their rights and puts into place a grievance process.

Opfer also shared information regarding the Open Meetings Act legislation LB 83, that passed on final reading and would affect future meetings under declared emergencies under the Open Meetings Act.

10. Trafficking Subcommittee

Sara Riffel noted that the Subcommittee is in the process of shifting Co-Chair duties over to Lauren Ward, from Children and Families Foundation. She added that the Tribal Population has been a recent focus in the work of the Trafficking Subcommittee. Stephanie Gardella noted recent information from CASA training regarding male trafficking.

11. New Business

Susan Thomas shared information regarding a pilot program called Host Home presentation by Krista Cook that allows for additional training and payments to rural homes. Sara Riffel shared in the chat regarding Host Home and would be willing to share information regarding the process in the future.

Laura Opfer shared information regarding the upcoming appointment process of the Children's Commission.

Co-Chair Frazier challenged members to think outside the box to make system improvements in improve racial and ethnic disparities.

10. Public Comment

Co-Chair Frazier opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

12. Next Steps

Next meeting will be on July 15, 2021, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Anderson