

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council



KCFCCC Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2001, 12:00p.m. – 1:30p.m.

Wedgwood Christian Youth and Family Services Chapel
3300 36th Street, S.E.

ATTENDANCE

Members/alternates present: Sue Broman, Reverend Ellen Brubaker, Judge Nanaruth Carpenter, Candace Cowling (for Patti Nussbaum), Mary Dengerink (for Bonnie Huntley, Ph.D.), Beverly Drake, Richard Gritter (and David Van Rooy), Karl Hascall, Lynn Heemstra, Wendy Jackson (for Diana Sieger), Linda McDonald, Miles Murphy, Maria O'Hare, Barbara Terry, Mike Weiler (for George Woons), Mary Alice Williams, and Andrew Zylstra (and John Cole)

Members absent (with no alternate present): Tom Czerwinski, William Forsyth, Debra Holmes-Garrison, and Milt Rohwer

Others present: Bethanie Archbold, Mary Swanson (staff); Betty Blase, Janet Dietsch, Courtney Johnson, and Erin McGovern

I. Welcome & Approval of Agenda

Richard Gritter called the meeting to order at 12:15p.m. and welcomed the Committee members, staff, and guests. Mr. Gritter stated that as Erin McGovern of Kent ISD needed to leave early, the update on ASAP-PIE would be moved to the top of the agenda. It was the consensus of the Council to approve the agenda.

II. Approval of Minutes & Ratification of February Council meeting

Mr. Gritter stated that as there was not a quorum at the February Council meeting, the Council had decided to conduct business and place their decisions for ratification at this session of the full Council. Lynn Heemstra moved to approve the minutes of the February Council meeting and ratify the decisions made at that meeting. Mary Alice Williams supported. Motion carried.

III. Update on ASAP-PIE

Ms. McGovern stated that Kent ISD remained committed to moving forward on providing services to children ages 0-5, despite not being awarded the \$4.5 million grant. She stated that she has been hired by Kent ISD to coordinate its efforts in this area.

Ms. McGovern stated that there continues to be advocacy at the state level for supplemental funding. However, she stated that supplemental funding is not a likely outcome.

Ms. McGovern stated that an additional site (Otswego/Cheboygan) had been allocated funding by the State, as another site had not been able to use all of its funds. Ms. Jackson suggested that advocacy might continue to be important in case this opportunity arises again. Mr. Gritter stated that such dollars would most likely go to smaller communities.

Ms. McGovern stated that she would continue to keep the Council informed regarding the initiative.

IV. Revised Mission Statement

Mr. Gritter presented the proposed mission statement as created at the Council's April 11, 2000, strategic planning session. The proposed mission statement would read: "The Mission of the Council is to provide leadership to enhance the well being of children, youth, and families in Kent County so that they may achieve their greatest potential." Judge Carpenter moved to approve the proposed mission statement. Karl Hascall supported. Motion carried.

V. Recommended Bylaws Revisions

David Van Rooy, chair of the bylaws ad hoc committee, presented the revised bylaws as recommended by the Executive Committee. Mr. Van Rooy referred Council members to the summary of changes as distributed with the meeting packet, and highlighted the following changes:

- Section 2.1 Revised to reflect the Council's December decision on new membership.
- Section 2.3 The role of advocates was extensively discussed and defined.
- Section 4.2 The standing committees were revised and the rules more clearly defined. Mr. Van Rooy stated that a requirement had been added that all Council members or their designated alternates participate in either the Executive Committee or a least one standing committee.
- Appendix C The Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy Statement remains the same. Mr. Van Rooy stated that it was critical that all Council members become familiar with the statement.

Maria O'Hare moved to approve the bylaws. Reverend Brubaker supported. Janet Dietsch suggested that the Council consider the following changes to the revised bylaws (underlined words indicate additions):

- Section 1.3 (a) Change the wording to read: "Develop, implement, and maintain a countywide plan [...]." Amendment moved and supported.
- Section 1.3 (c) Change the wording to read: "Develop recommendations to allocate and expand resources and [...]." Amendment moved and supported.
- Section 1.4 Add that the Council may delegate duties to staff. After some discussion, the Council determined that it could not delegate its duties to

staff, but could delegate certain tasks. Therefore, the amendment was not made.

In additional discussion, Ms. Dietsch stated that she believed that Early On was required by its contract to have representation on the MPCB. This role, however, may be filled by Kent ISD. The Early On representative and staff will check into the requirements.

Candace Cowling asked for clarification on the role of alternates on the Executive Committee as outlined in sections 2.3 and 4.1. Ms. Archbold stated that individuals, be they either members or alternates, are elected to the Executive Committee. Therefore, an alternate could be elected as an individual to the Executive Committee, but an elected member could not have their alternate represent them at Executive Committee meetings. Mr. Van Rooy clarified that neither voting privileges nor representation in the Executive Committee was transferable.

Ms. Drake requested that the wording be adjusted in these two sections to clarify the distinction. The motion was amended to approve the bylaws with the discussed changes and amendments. Motion carried.

VI. Discussion on Committee Structure & Responsibilities

Ms. Archbold stated that the Executive Committee wished to seek the Council's input on Committee recruitment and responsibilities. Ms. Archbold presented the committee overview as found in the meeting packet. The overview outlines current standing committees, purpose, membership and recruitment, and timeline for implementation. She asked for Council members' input on the overview.

Mr. Gritter stated that under the new structure, standing committees would be of greater importance. Standing committees will be doing the actual work of the Council.

Andrew Zylstra asked whether this committee structure superceded the old committee structure and, if so, what were the committees being eliminated. Wendy Jackson stated that the planning and budget committee would be eliminated, but the advocacy committee would be retained.

Ms. Cowling asked where the mid-year ages would fall (e.g., a child that was 20 months old). Judge Carpenter suggested that the age divisions be amended as follows:

- Prenatal Care & First Year of Life (ages 0 to 1)
- Early Childhood Education & Care (ages 1 to 5)
- Elementary School Years (ages 5 to 10)
- Middle & High School Years (ages 10 to 18)
- Ongoing Family Support (18+)
- Advocacy

Mary Alice Williams asked for clarification on the role of the committees. Ms. Swanson stated that the committees will create an action plan based on the Kent County Family, Youth, and Children's Services Plan, then work on implementing the plans.

Mr. Zylstra asked about the allocation of Strong Families/Safe Children (SF/SC) funds under the new structure. He questioned whether two committees might compete over the dollars. Ms. Lewis Jackson stated that the SF/SC dollars are currently allocated for the next three years. She stated that the way the process is structured, the Executive Committee will retain authority to allocate those dollars. Mr. Zylstra stated that there might be a future need to flesh out the committees' role in regards to such grants.

Ms. Heemstra stated that the key to the committees would be to avoid duplicating existing resources. She stated that the committees would be expected to link with existing collaborative efforts to identify how to link those efforts to the Council. She stated that it would be crucial to recruit the right people to serve on the committees.

VII. Committee Preferences Sign-up

Ms. Swanson passed around a sign-up sheet for Council members and alternates to indicate their preferences for committee assignment. Mr. Gritter will take individuals' preferences into account when making assignments.

Ms. Cowling asked why the advocacy committee was not included on the sign up sheet. Ms. Archbold replied that the advocacy committee was a standing committee before the restructuring. Its members consisted of the advocates and consumers. She stated that the purpose of this committee was to advocate to the Council on behalf of children and families. Ms. Archbold stated that she would speak with the original members of the committee to discuss whether they would like to continue as a committee, or whether they felt their purpose could be served by working through the new committee structure.

Ms. Heemstra stated that she felt that advocacy should continue to be a strong component of the Council's actions. Ms. Archbold stated that it was important to clarify that the role of the advocacy committee has always been to advocate to the Council and to agencies for services to children and families. She stated that this was different from legislative advocacy. She stated that the Executive Committee was currently working on a plan for the Council's role in legislative advocacy and leadership.

Mr. Zylstra stated that, ideally, all standing committees would be advocates for change within the community.

VIII. Update on Violence Prevention Assessment

Ms. Archbold referred the Council to the update included in their meeting packets. She stated that Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) had approached staff in December to offer the program to the Council. Since that time, she had met with MPHI, the Violence Prevention Coalition, and Kent ISD to explore the feasibility and benefits of hosting such an assessment in our community. She stated that all three partners have expressed interest, and the Violence Prevention Coalition has agreed to serve as the lead agency and fiduciary.

Ms. Archbold stated that the Marquette Human Services Collaborative Body (HSCB) had hosted the program last summer. According to a representative of the HSCB, the assessment proved useful in a variety of ways:

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- It exposed differences in perceptions regarding youth violence in the community (i.e., that of the Sheriff vs. that of the youth themselves).
- It helped the diverse group of individuals and agencies identify common priorities.
- The final report can be used as a tool for policy-making and obtaining grant funds.
- The HSCB has appointed a workgroup to prioritize the recommendations contained in the report. Once priorities are identified, the HSCB will move forward on implementing the recommendations.

IX. Administrative Items

A. Vacancies

Mr. Gritter stated that he had received letters of resignation from Rosemary Allen and Bernice Morehead. Both have resigned due to other responsibilities. Mr. Gritter stated that the Board of Commissioners will make appointments to fill the vacancies in May. If anyone knows of any individuals who may be interested, they may contact Ms. Archbold at (616) 336-2593, or the Board office at (616) 336-4270 for an application.

Ms. Archbold stated that the two positions are for consumers/advocates. She stated that the Executive Committee was especially interested in recruiting parents or other direct consumers. She asked the agencies to encourage parents or consumers who may be interested to contact her or the Board office for an application.

B. Strong Families/Safe Children Update

Ms. Archbold referred Council members to the expenditures report in their packets. She noted that all agencies were basically on track with their expenditures, and that she would continue to work with FIA to ensure that all dollars were either spent or reallocated.

Ms. Archbold stated that all reallocation are due to the local FIA at the beginning of June, and to the State FIA July 1, 2001. She stated that the Executive Committee would be working on a process to allocate the remaining \$6,903.12 of discretionary funds, and hoped to bring a recommendation to the full Council at their June 5, 2001, meeting.

C. Child Protection/Community Partners Update

Ms. Swanson distributed the CP/CP expenditures report. Ms. Archbold stated that the Council had the responsibility for fiscal oversight of the CP/CP expenditures as well. She stated that all agencies receiving CP/CP dollars were also on track with their expenditures.

X. Other Business

A. Safe Home Safe Kids Campaign Update

Ms. Heemstra updated the Council on the Safe Home Safe Kids campaign. She stated that the theme for the month would be "A Kids Safe Garage." She stated that the campaign was looking for volunteers to staff their booth at the Women's Expo. She asked that anyone interested contact her at (616) 456-4353.

B. Mr. Gritter's Retirement

Mr. Gritter stated that Wedgwood had selected his successor. Gary Ellens, MSW, will begin next Tuesday, and will officially take the reins on May 1, 2001. Mr. Gritter stated that although he is retiring from his position at Wedgwood, he will continue to serve on the Council until the end of the year.

Mr. Van Rooy announced to the Council that Mr. Gritter was the recipient of the Michigan Federation of Private Child Agencies leadership award. Mr. Van Rooy stated that this is a prestigious award and that it was fitting that it be awarded to Mr. Gritter.

C. Service to Children Awards

Ms. Cowling announced that the annual Service to Children Awards ceremony, which celebrates services designed to prevent child abuse and neglect, would take place on April 24, 2001, 5:00pm - 8:00pm. She welcomed Council members' attendance.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:25p.m. **The next Kent County Family and Children's Coordinating Council meeting will be Tuesday, June 5, 2001, from 12:00p.m. – 1:30p.m. at the Wedgwood Christian Youth and Family Services Chapel, 3300 36th Street, SE.**