

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council



KCFCCC Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 13, 2005; Noon – 1:30 p.m.
Kent / MSU Extension Offices
775 Ball Avenue NE

Chairperson: Carol Paine McGovern

Staff: Matthew VanZetten

Members/Alternates Present: Susan Broman, Tony Campbell; Candace Cowling; Arlen-Dean Gaddy; Judge Pat Hillary; Paul Ippel; Patti Nussbaum; Carol Paine-McGovern; Cathy Raevsky; Mary Alice Williams; Andy Zylstra; Randy Zylstra (for Gary Ellens)

Members Absent: Tom Czerwinski; Beverly Drake; Lynn Ferrell; William Forsyth; Laurie Gardner; Debra Holmes-Garrison; Diana Sieger; Mike Weiler

Others Present: Dona Abbott; Wayman Britt; Janay Brower; Ben Emdin; Kathy Freberg; Jack Greenfield; Lynn Heemstra; Sharon Loughridge; Kayla Morris; Matthew VanZetten

I. Welcome & Call to Order

Carol Paine-McGovern welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Matthew VanZetten as the new KCFCCC Coordinator. A motion was made by Patti Nussbaum to accept the meeting agenda and the June 7, 2005 minutes. Paul Ippel supported. **UNANIMOUS**

II. Safe Haven Project

Carol Paine-McGovern introduced Judge Dan Zemaitis from the 17th Circuit Court Family Division to learn about a grant that the Court may make application.

Judge Zemaitis stated that the purpose of the Safe Haven grant would be to provide a safe place for the exchange of children when there are issues surrounding domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, or stalking between parents. Currently, there is no place in the County that the courts can utilize to guarantee a safe exchange.

At the present time, there are four pilot programs throughout the State in Kalkaska/Antrim County, Jackson County, Muskegon County and Oakland County. The Committee writing the grant – which includes representatives from the Prosecutor's Office, Friend of the Court, Court Administrator's Office, Citizens Advisory Committee, Judiciary and Safe Haven – visited Muskegon County to learn more about what a project in Kent County may look like.

Regarding the need for such a facility, Judge Zemaitis noted that in the past 60 days, Family Court judges conducted a point in time count where they identified 37 occasions where they could utilize such a location.

One of the challenges of the grant application is to identify funding to replace the grant if it were to be discontinued. The grant application is for \$350,000 per year for two years. Over the next few months, the Committee will be working on this effort.

The grant deadline is February 1, 2006.

III. Council Updates & Information

- a. Housing Continuum of Care/Community Collaborative Statewide Meeting – Matthew VanZetten provided an overview of the June 30 statewide meeting between Continuum of Care representatives and Community Collaborative representatives. Representatives from Kent County that were at the meeting included himself, Commissioner Mast, Wayman Britt and Sister Maureen Geary.

VanZetten noted that the State's policy academy on homelessness is driving the desire by the State to have Continuums of Care and Community Collaboratives work more closely together. The State's hope is that a better connection between mainstream systems and the homeless service providers can be established.

- b. ENTF/KCFCCC Collaboration – VanZetten discussed how the June 30 statewide meeting encouraged representatives from the ENTF and KCFCCC to meet and discuss how they may be able to work more closely together. This led to an August meeting where VanZetten, Commissioner Mast, Wayman Britt, Carol Paine-McGovern, David Schroeder and Sister Maureen Geary met to discuss possible collaboration. VanZetten noted that the group decided it was important not to impede each other in current initiatives, but that there may be better ways to communicate. To that point the group decided that the coordinators would start to meet on a monthly basis. Additionally, annual reports would be made to each body and a link established between each body's website. The Continuum of Care also intends to seek the KCFCCCs endorsement of its Vision to End Homelessness.
- c. KCFCCC Survey – Carol Paine-McGovern noted that every two years or so, the KCFCCC conducts a survey of its members and that the Executive Committee has decided that this Fall a survey will be conducted. Paine-McGovern stated that a survey has been distributed to you for comments to make sure that it meets the needs of the Council. Comments can be sent to VanZetten. It is expected that the survey will be distributed by October 1 and should be returned to VanZetten by October 15.
- d. KCFCCC Applications – Carol Paine-Mc Govern notified members that KCFCCC Applications are now available on the Kent County website. There will be four consumer-advocate positions available and two funding positions.

IV. Committee Updates

- a. Children's Partner's Executive Committee – Susan Broman provided an overview of the Children's Partner's work in the past few months. The subcommittees are finalizing their strategic plans. Also, the Early Childhood Commission has met twice and heard from the

president of High/Scope to learn about its findings in early childhood education. Broman noted that no other community in the United States has attempted to institute a systematic countywide approach to early childhood learning.

- b. School Age Services Committee – Matthew VanZetten stated that the Committee expects to have focus groups completed by the end of October with a report hopefully by the end of the year.
- c. Youth Connections – Patti Nussbaum noted that the MOU has been signed and there is a meeting next week.
- d. On-Going Family Support – Jack Greenfield shared that the Committee has scheduled the next round of substance abuse training sessions (Phase I - October 14; Phase II – October 28). Additionally, the Committee is working on completing its Annual Report.

V. Public Comment

Carol Paine-McGovern asked if there was public comment. There was none.

VI. Miscellaneous

Lynn Heemstra provided an overview of the Golden Shoe Campaign and encouraged everyone to participate.

Cathy Raevsky noted that focus groups regarding infant mortality rates have been conducted.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

The next KCFCCC meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 1, 2005** from noon to 1:30 p.m., in Service Room A at Kent County MSU Extension offices (775 Ball Ave. NE).