

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council



KCFCCC Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009, 12:00pm – 1:30pm
MSU Extension Offices – **Room B**
775 Ball Avenue, NE

Members/Alternates Present: Susan Broman, Candace Cowling, Sandra Davis (for Tom Czerwinski), Lynne Ferrell, Jack Greenfield, Bob Haight, Lynn Heemstra, Paul Ippel, Ron Jimmerson, Jackie Klinestecker, Kevin Konarska, Rich Liberatore, Sharon Loughridge, Carol Paine-McGovern, Diana Sieger, Sandy Walls (for Cathy Raevsky), Patti Warmington, Andy Zylstra

Members Absent: Tom Czerwinski, Bev Drake, William Forsyth, Judge Patrick Hillary, Cathy Raevsky

Guests: Dona Abbot, Wayman Britt, Deb McCormack

1. Welcome & Call to Order

Carol Paine-McGovern opened the meeting with a welcome and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

A motion was made by Diana Sieger to approve the November minutes. Candace Cowling supported.
UNANIMOUS.

2. First Steps 'Next Steps Report'

Carol Paine-McGovern provided an overview and history of the First Steps 'Next Steps' report that will be considered by the Early Childhood Commission later in the month. She shared that the Executive Committee reviewed the report in December and prepared a list of questions for the Commission that requests clarification or information. Comments are due to the Commission no later than tomorrow – January 7, 2009.

Members discussed the Report and agreed with the Executive Committees observations regarding necessary questions. The following questions should be provided to the Commission:

- What is the plan for sustainability of the organization? How does this governance model strengthen the plan?
- How will this governance model ensure that alignment of services can occur and that systemic change issues dealing with the alignment of services and filling gaps identified are addressed?
- How will this governance model ensure that program dollars can be raised efficiently to expand necessary services?

- Where will the authority for the First Steps board come from? Will its authority allow it to do all that's envisioned?
- How will the First Steps board relate to the current community infrastructure? (i.e. KISD Board, Kent County BOC, n180 Board, United Way Board, Spectrum Healthier Communities, City Councils, non-profit organizations, et cetera)
- What is the role of the United Way in this governance model?
- What is the transition plan for moving to this governance model? What is the role of the Great Start Collaborative? The Parent Coalition? The Steering Committee? The KCFCCC? The KISD? Others?
- Has an organizational flow chart been developed? If not, is it possible to create one?

It was also shared that we should expect responses in writing.

Other general comments about the report included the following:

- There was understanding that this is another iteration for the early childhood work in the community.
- It is important to understand that this should not be another service providing organization. If for whatever reason it creates a program and operates it, it should only be to demonstrate that an initiative can work.
- Quality should be an essential component to any program considered.
- If a millage were to be considered, it would need to fund a continuum of services.

It was also agreed that it is the KCFCCC's responsibility to define a broad structure and plan for necessary services for children and families in the community. At this time, we may need to revisit how this can happen and define an underlying philosophy for necessary services.

3. **Systems of Care Grant**

Jackie Klinestecker of network180 provided an overview of the 2009 System of Care grant application. It would focus at a middle school level and include twelve sites whereby KSSN programming could expand throughout the County. Key partners include DHS, KISD, County, network180, City of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids PS, Kentwood PS, Comstock Park PS, Godfrey-Lee PS, Godwin Heights PS, Wyoming PS, and Cedar Springs PS. Other key components include cultural competency, blended services and funding, and reduced out of home placements. The total grant application is \$6,000,000 over six years.

Unfortunately, network180 did not receive the 2008 grant, but through that process a great deal was learned. Furthermore, throughout 2008 network180 continued to implement portions of a system of care so that network180 and DHS have partnered with a network180 liaison to the child welfare system. Network180 and the City of Grand Rapids Youth Master Planning process are coordinating efforts.

A motion was made by Diana Sieger for the KCFCCC to support the 2009 SOC grant application. Lynne Ferrell supported. **UNANIMOUS**

4. **Prevention Initiative Funding**

Matthew VanZetten shared that in November a meeting was held to discuss the \$30,000 reduction in cuts to the Prevention Initiative. Fortunately, network180 believed that they could supplement Early Impact funding through Medicaid dollars for children with Severe Emotional Disorders. Because Arbor Circle is an Early Impact provider that is credentialed currently with network180, it was agreed that network180 would work with them to increase their capacity for cases. Therefore, Early Impact received entire \$30,000 reduction.

5. **Child Welfare**

Carol Paine-McGovern shared that it is important for the KCFCCC members to realize that there are many changes occurring in the child welfare arena as a result of recent statutory changes and the Children's Rights Settlement. Savator Selden-Johnson was schedule to present a portion of the information regarding Children's Rights, but was unable to do so due to an unexpected conflict.

Dona Abbot from Bethany Christian Services shared that as part of the 2008 State Budget, Kent County is to create a pilot whereby DHS would move to a 100 Percent Purchase of Service model. Historically, Kent County's child welfare system services have been approximately 95 percent privatized. This legislation will move the system to 100 percent. As such, an Implementation Committee has been formed looking at necessary changes to make this occur. A plan needs to be provided to DHS no later than June 1 as to how this will occur.

Wayman Britt shared that the Prevention Initiative Community Assessment noted a significant increase in abuse and neglect rates within Kent County over the past 20 years and especially since 2003. There are many reasons for this from changes in legislation, to a worsening economy, to more staff aware of services and referring more to CPS.

One result has been the growth of the County Child Care Fund. In the past six years, the Circuit Court side of the Child Care Fund has grown a total of 7.65%, a little over 1% a year. Yet, the DHS side of the Child Care Fund has grown a total of 87.45%, over 14% a year.

Britt noted that the County believes that the 100% Purchase of Service work has an opportunity to assist in gaining an understanding of the growth and limiting it. Key attributes that the County is reviewing and looking for include -

- **Data Analysis** – We believe that Extended Reach and more timely data reports can provide Kent County DHS, the Court, private agencies and our office with macro level data to guide us in reviewing necessary policy and procedure changes. Having all agencies on board with Extended Reach is essential to making this happen.
- **In Home Care Programs** – We believe that programs like MST or Therapeutic Foster Care can reduce expensive Institutional Care costs. From our review, these programs are more effective in the long-term, maintain familial relationships, and are less expensive.
- **System of Care** – Whether network180 and the community receive the System of Care grant from the federal government, Kent County believes the principles involved are important. Cultural Competency for staff, reduced out of home placement, braided funding, effective mental health and child welfare services. All of these are important.
- **Court Involvement** – Key to the success of the Purchase of Service work is alignment with the Family Court judges and Court Administration. Timelines and services need to be closely reviewed and changes considered when data demonstrates delays.

- Evaluation – Selecting a quality evaluator for the 100% Purchase of Service work that can provide necessary program improvement measures, data analysis and best practice research will move the system forward. The County truly believes that this can be a catalyst to change and discussion.

Britt concluded by noting that the County Administration is closely monitoring the Child Care Fund and desires to work with the child welfare community to make necessary changes that will improve the outcomes for children and families in the community in a cost effective manner.

6. Ongoing Family Support Committee

Jack Greenfield provided an update on the Ongoing Family Support Committee. It was the Committee's recommendation to disband due to the completion of its charge and work. OFS has been able to provide substance abuse training historically, and due to changes at network180 these trainings have been institutionalized through the CCISC and providers are receiving more timely training than the Committee provided. Similarly, the Committee members worked together to determine if there was a method to reduce the costs of procurement by working together. Unfortunately, the necessary financial numbers did not materialize.

Greenfield noted that the Committee believes it was successful for the time it met, but that it is important to recognize when you have accomplished your goals and conclude your work rather than meeting just to meet.

Paine-McGovern noted that the Executive Committee thanked Jack for his work and the Committee for recognizing that they have been successful and the courage to say that they should conclude their work.

7. Youth Master Plan – Carol Paine-McGovern

Jackie Klinestecker provided an update on the work of a countywide Youth Master Plan. At this time, she and Lynn Heemstra have met several times to discuss how they will be able to coordinate work with the City's Master Planning process. Additionally, membership for the Committee is being identified as well as a change to complete the work.

More information will be provided in the months ahead.

8. Establishment of a KCFCCC Nominating Committee

Carol Paine-McGovern reviewed the process for electing the 2009 Executive Committee (April 2009 – March 2010). A nominating committee needs to be created to provide a recommended slate of members for voting in February.

Patti Warmington and Sharon Loughridge agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee. Members accepted this by consensus.

9. Public Comment

There was none.

10. Miscellaneous

11. Adjournment

Next Council meeting: Tuesday, February 3, 2009, 12:00pm – 1:30pm
MSU Extension Room B