

**Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council**



KCFCCC Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2015 12:00pm – 1:30pm
Kent County Admin Office – **Room 311**
300 Monroe Ave NW

Members/Alternates

Present:

Candace Cowling, Lynne Ferrell, Judge Patricia Gardner, Scott Gilman, Jack Greenfield, Lynn Heemstra, Adam London, Sharon Loughridge, Jacob Maas, George Meek, Julie Ridenour, Savator Selden-Johnson, Diana Sieger, Patti Warmington, Michael Zoerhoff, Ron Koehler (for Kevin Konarska), Sandra Ghosten-Jones (for Tom Czerwinski), Shannon Gardner (for Maureen Noe), Dynetta Clark (Sharon Loughridge Alternate), Kathy Freberg (Scott Gilman Alternate)

Members Absent:

William Forsyth, Cynthia Gladyness, Gary Lemke, Nancy Marshall, Teresa Neal

Guests:

Heather Boswell, Veneese Chandler, Tracie Coffman, Maureen Kirkwood, Rich Liberatore, Anthony Muller, Carol Paine-McGovern, Jim Paparella, Chuck Rose, Rebecca Rynbrandt, Donna Tefft, George Tyndall, Matthew VanZetten, Betty Zylstra

1. Welcome & Call to Order

Judge Gardner opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions were done. The agenda was reviewed and accepted.

The February minutes were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was provided by George Meek, second by Jack Greenfield – vote was UNANIMOUS.

2. Public Comment

Matthew VanZetten mentioned the agenda was revised to remove the KConnect topic due to the KConnect staff being ill with the flu. That item will move to a later meeting.

Additionally, Matthew acknowledged Sharon Loughridge for her service to our community and on the KCFCCC Council. She is retiring and will no longer be serving on the Committee. He mentioned that DA Blodgett/St John's Home has been a change advocate for many things under Sharon's leadership.

Matthew also thanked Kevin Konarska from KentISD, who is retiring and will no longer be serving on the committee. Judge Markowski will no longer be serving on the committee, but is not retiring.

Lynne Ferrell, will continue to serve on the KCFCCC, but will no longer serve as chair. Matthew thanked her for the many things she accomplished as chair.

Judge Gardner provided additional comments and thanked Sharon, Kevin, Lynne and Judge Murkowski.

3. **Food Club**

Betty Zylstra from Salvation Army Booth Family Services gave an overview of the new Food Club which opened January 27. The Food Club is a collaborative effort by partners from the Downtown Food Pantry at Westminster Church, United Church Outreach Ministry (UCOM), Salvation Army, Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, Access of West Michigan, Habitat for Humanity and Home Repair Services. Food Club is located in the Home Repair Services building at 1100 S. Division. Home Repair Services is both the fiduciary and the employer of record.

There are many partners in this program, which is now a Low-profit Limited Liability Company (L3C). The mission is a collaborative response to hunger, promoting food security, consumer choice and dignity. The goal is to help people move beyond crisis and become more stable, sustainable and food secure.

The Community Food Club provides households with an aesthetically pleasing environment, in a manner promoting dignity, partnership and stability. This is a three-year pilot and will measure food security, improve healthy living by providing nutritious food items consistently, increase household empowerment, dignity and self-reliance and increase community engagement and awareness of food security.

The program is consumer-driven. Households have an option to participate. People become members by paying a small fee. The hours are more user-friendly, Monday through Friday from 10-5:00, Saturday from 10-2:00. Each food is assigned a point-value, with healthier choices being less points. A member is eligible if they are under 200% of poverty. They must pay \$10 per month. Households get 60 points for a single person, two-three members gets 90 points, then it goes to 120 and the most is 150 for the larger families. It is set up like a small grocery store. Certain items are always available, such as milk, eggs and produce. The points must be spent within a 30-day period and do not roll over if they are unused. They can come as many times as they want as long as they have points available. This allows them to think and plan and shop.

The Food Club opened on April 9 and they currently have 311 participating households. Forty percent of the households have children. There are about 299 children within 128 of the households. People are returning to renew their membership.

The Food Club is funded by several foundations. It is also being evaluated by Grand Valley's Community Research Institute.

4. **Network180 Funding Status**

Network180 is in the implementation stage of about a \$5 million mental health service reduction for Kent County. At a recent public hearing about 150 people attended and shared their emotional distress on how this will impact their ability to care for their family members.

Scott Gilman shared that some of last year's General Fund cuts were restored due to some advocacy from County Commissioners and the provider network. He said the current crisis is due to bad policy and he is here to request support of this group, our County Commissioners and other elected officials to provide advocacy once again. Our region is one of the lowest paid regions in the State. This is due to discretion by the State on how the funds are divided.

Scott went on to ask the Council for support in advocating for network180 on this policy issue.

Matthew VanZetten shared that the KCFCCC Executive Committee suggested the KCFCCC, as the multi-purpose collaborative body, take formal position and request to the County Board of Commissioners that they become officially involved. This is unprecedented, but so is this situation. Matthew and Scott put together a historical document outlining this important issue. As Matthew continued, he went on to mention the different partnerships that have taken place with cooperation between network180, the County Board of Commissioners and many of our community funders and agencies.

Matthew provided a resolution that he is asking the KCFCCC to adopt. The goal would be to encourage our Board of Commissioners, who historically have not been aggressive to support a funding position, meet with Nick Lyons and Linda Zeller. This issue affects all of our work together from Child Welfare to Community Schools to Mental Health.

After additional discussion, the Council was asked for a motion to support this resolution. Julie Ridenour made the motion, support provided by Lynne Ferrell. After additional discussion, the motion passed, with only one amendment, that the names of the organizations represented on the Council be added to the resolution. UNANIMOUS

5. **Updates**

- a. **Strategic Planning** – Matthew VanZetten shared that through this long, laborious journey, an RFP was issued and a response was received from New North, who

has done a lot of design work with KConnect and others regarding how to recreate systems. The response was not what the committee was hoping for, so it has been the topic of discussions in determining what to do.

The Executive Committee decided the planning effort should revolve around system reform and adaptation, and not to create a new entity or initiative. Focus on refining what is already being done and improving upon it, taking advantage of opportunities as they arise. The Child Welfare Consortia, the Mental Health Work done with the System of Care Grant, we have taken work and tried to design it for the betterment of consumers that are being served.

Matthew has been asked to re-engage New North to amend their proposal and think about that kind of work in a new way. Also, to seek a few opportunities from IDO or other places in the country to give us some comparisons and then bring that back to the full Council via the Executive Committee as a recommendation. Matthew indicated he is currently working through that process. Hopefully by June there will be more information available.

After additional discussion on what this could mean for the structure and processes of the Coordinating Council, Judge Gardner said this will be an on-going discussion and will return to the agenda for the June meeting with an update.

- b. Child Welfare Consortia** – George Tyndall began, saying the consortia members continue to meet and have created a number of subgroups, getting more into the details from governance to finance to clinic service array. Plans are underway to visit an existing lead agency. The Grand Rapids Community Foundation is underwriting a trip to visit various agencies in Florida to look at the Eckerd System. They will see how their system operates, looking at how pieces of it could fit in our model, a Consortium agency. It isn't exactly the same, but will operate the same functions, has appropriate staffing, their service array, court interactions with their system and success variables. They have a CQI process that will be looked at along with dashboards and databases.

Savator Selden-Johnson mentioned an important piece of the development is around the actuarial group. PCG is doing a cost-analysis piece. This should give us a good picture of what a true quality case service will cost. There will be a risk reserve for the higher risk children. It will be a tiered-level design.

This will provide better information for establishing rates for Foster Care. Predictive analytics will provide information on successful reunification.

For her part of this update, Savator said Kent County was designated a champion county about nine months ago. Partners have been working to establish our form of Champion County. The State piece is called SOFAC. Kent County's is called EMT (Enhancing My Teams). It is a practice model supported by national consultants. This practice model focuses on engagement, teaming with the family

in a strength-based way.

Recently the DHHS staff underwent training on trauma assessment, with plans to eventually doing assessments with all children and hopefully a pilot for assessment for parents. The kickoff will take place somewhere in the end of April or early May.

Savator was asked about DHHS' efforts to re-look at Prevention programming and she responded by saying they were allocated with two Prevention staff members who will begin some traditional prevention work. They are looking at assessments for Substance Use Disorder, with expanded access to services. Along with that, there is a potential for a \$500,000 expansion of housing stabilization program and other prevention-related programs.

- c. **Community Family Partnership (System of Care)** – Kathy Freberg gave a brief update on this program. She said we are in the 6th year of the grant. She mentioned some of the programs that have sprung from the grant, adding that they just applied for an expansion and sustainability grant. It is \$1,000,000 a year for the next four years to continue the work that has been done, digging deeper with the children that Savator mentioned earlier, but also including those involved with DHHS, Juvenile Justice, Education and Mental Health. The grant will start October 1 if it is awarded to Kent County.

Kathy also noted that data from the Bi-annual stakeholders meeting will be presented at the June meeting.

6. Miscellaneous

- Candace Cowling – One thing Candace wanted to be cautionary about in this work is the potential for unintended consequences. For example, home stabilization programs, field workers learning that the only avenue to getting access to these programs is to report families to Child Protective Services. We need to be careful of that avenue.
- George Meek – He expressed concern that the information shared at these meetings never makes it to the local units. He mentioned that it touches everyone in Kent County. He feels there should be a way to share this information with the townships to share with their boards.
- Lynn Heemstra – Kids Speak will take place on April 24 at City Hall from 10:00 Am until Noon.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:34 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 2, 2015, at the Kent County Administration Building, Room 311.