

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council



KCFCCC Meeting Minutes
Tuesday January 11, 2022 12:00pm – 1:30pm
Kent County Administration Building
Room 310

Council Members/Alternates

Present: Michelle VanDyke, Diana Sieger, Candace Cowling, Eileen McNeil, Lynne Ferrell, Scott Smith, Madelyn Hall, Savator Selden-Johnson, Chris Becker, Adam London

Council Members Absent: Jacob Maas, George Meek, Jackie O'Connor, Misti DeVries, Bill Ward, Ron Koehler, Tracey Fountain, Leadraine Roby, Judge McNabb, Jennifer Campbell, Lisa Lowery, Shaunte Paul Oliver

Council Partners/Guests: Karen Lezan, Carol Paine-McGovern, Keenan King, Nakia Kyler, Sonia Noorman

Kent County Staff: Paul Petr, Katie VanHevel

1. Welcome & Call to Order

Adam London called the meeting to order at 12:03pm.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes of November 2, 2021

While a motion was made to accept the agenda and minutes from November 2, 2021, quorum was not met so they will need to be approved at a future Council meeting.

3. Public Comment

There was none.

4. New Members

- Deborah McNabb, Circuit Court Family Division Judge
- Jennifer Campbell, Private Agency Representative,
- Lisa Lowery, Private Funding Representative
- Shaunte Paul Oliver, Private Funding Representative
- Madelyn Hall, Private Funding Representative

5. West Michigan Partnership for Children – Sonia Noorman, CEO & Nakia Kyler, Chief Engagement and Equity officer, gave a PowerPoint presentation to explain WMPC's history, successes, challenges and best practices as well as next steps to secure additional years of funding past September 2022. They are currently working with the state to put new boilerplate language into the legislature and will be looking for advocacy from Council members to be communicated to KCFCCC members at a later time.

Sonia will provide information at a later time on statistics for families who are fostering.

Additional follow up questions and conversation included:

- **Licensing for LGBTQIAP families:** all agencies are required to follow the contract and allow these families to be licensed. If this is not happening, WMPC needs to be notified.
- **Reduction in kids in CPS from 2019 to 2021:** Centralized intake was restructured and managing oversight of only removing kids when needed has led to those coming into the system each month to drastically decrease. In addition, work is being done in identifying and removing barriers to reunification.

Savator Selden-Johnson advised children of color are 3.5 times more likely to be screened in for investigation. She advised looking at community conversations will allow to get a better sense of how we assess children of color and if we are being culturally and racially informed in our responses. Furthermore, there needs to be awareness brought to the use of prevention instead of removal and building trust with families who have mistrust of the system.

6. Agency Updates

Michelle VanDyke- The first round of funding was \$39 million, in December 2021 they received \$4 million and last week they received an additional \$10 million dollars. They are distributing about \$1 million a week for rentals, utilities and internet with about 3,600 applicants still in the que. Applicants can apply online, call HAP, or walk-in to participating location to work with a case manager to apply. The process looks for minimal qualifications with a 74% approval rate. Each family approved averages about \$5,500 in assistance.

Kennan King- K-Connect is working on an initiative for culturally responsive educators and looking for partners. He will share additional information with the group as a follow up.

Karen Lezan- She thanked the County for their support through the Prevention Initiative grant and Ready By 5 Millage. KISD Bright Beginnings was able to expand their home visiting and play groups with 20 additional play grounds being offered this year.

Adam London- The executive committee is reviewing the Operating Procedures to be more reflective of current Council practices as well as looking to provide a proposal to hire an outside consultant to assist with strategic planning.

7. Miscellaneous- none.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 12:57PM. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 1st, 2022 at 12pm.