

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



---

**KCFCCC Meeting Minutes**  
**November 3, 2015 12:00pm – 1:30pm**  
Kent County Admin Office – **Room 311**  
300 Monroe Ave NW

---

**Members/Alternates**

**Present:**

Judge Patricia Gardner, Kristen Gietzen, Sandra Ghosten-Jones, Scott Gilman, Jack Greenfield, Lynn Heemstra, Ron Koehler, Adam London, Jacob Maas, Nancy Marshall, George Meek, Julie Ridenour, Patti Warmington.

**Members Absent:**

Candace Cowling, Lynne Ferrell, William Forsyth, Cynthia Gladyness, Gary Lemke, Teresa Neal, Savator Selden-Johnson, Diana Sieger, Michael Zoerhoff.

**Guests:**

Bert Bleke, Wayman Britt, Heather Boswell, Veneese Chandler, Julie Cnossen, Tracie Coffman, Maureen Kirkwood, Carol Paine-McGovern, Andy Soper, Shandra Steininger, George Tyndall, Annmarie Valdez, Matthew VanZetten, Betty Zylstra.

**1. Welcome & Call to Order**

Judge Gardner called the meeting to order and introductions were done. The agenda was reviewed and accepted.

After a review of the September minutes, a motion to accept them was provided by George Meek, second by Lynn Heemstra – vote was UNANIMOUS.

**2. Public Comment**

There was none.

**3. HQ, Arbor Circle & Homeless Youth**

Judge Gardner introduced Shandra Steininger and Andy Soper to give an update on HQ, and Arbor Circle's work on engaging homeless youth. Shandra said HQ was opened December 1, 2014 to youth who are runaway, homeless or in unsafe or unstable homes.

She distributed the year-end report for HQ. She mentioned there have been double the youth participate than originally expected. This points to a big need in the community.

Early on staff learned there was a need to have separate drop-in times for younger and older age groups. She said things are working well at HQ, with youth getting connected, feeling safe, having a sense of belonging and sharing of their experiences. Expansion of drop-in hours, age ranges and services connections have been part of the changes made.

Additionally, Shandra said having Arbor Circle onsite daily at HQ it has helped to reduce the social stigma associated with counseling, social work and therapy and has helped to get youth connected to those who can advocate for them. This partnership has been very important with a lot of positive outcomes.

Jack Greenfield from Arbor Circle added his comments, saying HQ has been an invaluable resource to the community in helping the homeless and at-risk youth to be comfortable and finding their way and making them feel welcome. He added that homeless youth are in a donut hole in our systems. HQ is helping them to make the necessary connections to become productive members of our community.

Julie Cnossen, Program Manager of Youth Services at Arbor Circle added her comments. She provided a handout that outlined the statistics of services provided to youth at HQ. The key themes that have been identified as gaps for youth are: affordable housing, food insecurity, fear of adult shelters, LGBTQ & specific needs and 35% pregnant or parenting.

Julie thanked the group for their interest in regular updates on HQ and added that they are positioned for making recommendations on how we could make progress toward ending homelessness and put safeguards in place for young people.

Andy Soper added his comments, saying that HQ and Arbor Circle are all in with these efforts and are fully engaging youth in the conversations. Data being collected will be enable response to trends as they happen. He added there is an open house on November 18 from 7:30 AM to 1:00 PM to celebrate the year. He invited the group to attend and see the space at HQ where the youth are going to be safe. He said the staff has expanded from one full-time and three part time staff and now there are ten.

#### 4. **Legislative Update**

Judge Gardner said the meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup> with the Legislators was successful. They saw an abbreviated version of the presentation that was given to the County Commissioners. There was discussion about K-Connect and the progress in gaining statistical measures to make good policy decisions for Prevention and other community services.

There were three items the Legislators were asked for help with:

- Child Welfare Performance Based Funding
- KSSN Model, support to continue growth
- Mental Health Funding Reform

Legislators asked for White Papers on the issues to give them the ability to continue to lobby for these efforts.

Matthew added this meeting was a testimony of the credibility of the Coordinating Council to receive the responsiveness.

Jack Greenfield asked for a follow-up briefing that could be distributed to the group to continue to spread the message to Legislators going forward.

Judge Gardner will make sure the White Paper will be shared with the group.

## **5. Welcome Home Baby Update**

Anmarie Valdez began with comments about First Steps, saying they are committed to advocacy and transitioning programs. She turned the update over to Heather Boswell to provide more information. Welcome Home Baby nurses see families in three local birthing hospitals in Kent County. Families are offered a one-time home visit by a Welcome Baby Nurse to offer information on key maternal infant issues. The goal is to connect home visiting services and resources for newborns and children and their families offered by other providers in the community. A document with the specific details was distributed to the group.

Heather related some of the details provided on the document. A final plan is expected by early 2016.

## **6. Lakeshore Regional Partners/network180 Update**

Scott Gilman said since the last meeting where he reported the CEO and CIO had resigned, an interim CEO has been appointed and they are in the process of recruiting a new CEO. Additionally, the State's review of operations by an external managed care company is due to conclude this week. The State will receive a report with recommendations on the functioning of the LRP. There will likely be a recommendation for a corrective plan of action along with recommendations for the governance structure.

Additionally, Scott talked about the inequity the West side of the State faced in the funding structure. There is a new formula that has been released that is based on morbidity. This will provide our community with more money than the original funding structure provided.

## **7. West Michigan Partnership for Children Update**

A handout was distributed by George Tyndall for his update. He shared a brief review of this initiative. Kent County has been serving 100% of children in foster care through the privatize agencies for a year now. This program places children in the community who need foster care into the best scenario possible by exploring the child's needs with members of the Partnership prior to placement. George stated the entire program is based on outcomes. He described the Mall Concept that has been developed for the Child Welfare Consortia. The key thing desired within this consortia is the flexibility to be

creative, to design new services and provide a unique service to a client or family to achieve better outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being.

The other big thing to keep in mind is that this is about performance-based contracting, not privatization of child welfare.

When asked what the timetable for implementation, Gerooge said it's pretty hard to speculate. There are some things that need to happen at the State level to make this possible. Matthew VanZetten explained some of the hurdles that need to be overcome. Matthew said the goal is July 2016.

## **8. Pay for Success/Social Impact Update**

Matthew said the Coordinating Council worked to convene people in our community that we knew were working on Pay for Success efforts, to learn from each other. Spectrum Health and their Strong Beginnings program is the one in our community who is most ready by working with the State of Michigan and the Fellow provided by Harvard. In January or February a deal will be executed with private investors to expand the Strong Beginnings program.

## **9. Miscellaneous**

a) **Lynn Heemstra** announced the ELO Network is having their Annual meeting on Friday. Please plan to come if you can. Some community leaders will be recognized and accomplishments of the ELO Network over the last year and future plans will be discussed. The meeting will take place at 8:00 AM at the Highlands Golf Club. Breakfast at 8:00 AM, meeting starts at 8:30 AM.

b) **George Meek** asked about the increase of guns and shootings and heroin deaths. He wanted to know if any of these impact the work of the KCFCCC.

Adam London answered that Heroin is part of a bigger problem that is being seen right now with opioids. Heroin deaths are on the rise. This year to date there have been about 20 Heroin deaths, where in 2009 there were only nine. There are 30 or 40 cases pending toxicology right now and a couple of months left in the year.

In addition to Heroin deaths being on the rise, other opioids, OxyContin, Percocet and Vicodin deaths are also on the rise. These overdose deaths are not all intentional, many are accidental. There is a large issue with opioid over-use. Adam said this is an issue that is the topic of much discussion.

Adam related that despite what the news is showing, shooting deaths are down over the last couple of years.

Judge Gardner suggested adding this topic to the next agenda for this group.

c) **Jack Greenfield** distributed invitations to the Open House for The Bridge on November 4. This facility provides services for runaway and homeless youth.

d) **Matthew VanZetten** mentioned that in today's handout there is a list of Medicaid providers associated with this region. There are now six providers in the region.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 5, 2016, at the Kent County Administration Building, Room 311.