

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council

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KCFCCC Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2018 12:00pm – 1:00pm
Kent County Administration Building
Room 311

Members/Alternates

Present: Candace Cowling, Ron Caniff, Tracey Fountain, Judge Patti Gardner, Sandra Ghoston-Jones, Scott Gilman, Jack Greenfield, Lynn Heemstra, Adam London, Jacob Maas, George Meek, Jackie O'Connor, Julie Ridenour, Savator Selden-Johnson, Diana Sieger, Matthew Van Zetten, Patti Warmington, Michael Zoerhoff.

Members Absent: Chris Becker, Melanie Beelen, Lynne Ferrell, Cynthia Gladyness, Yazeed Moore, Teresa Neal, Jim Paparella, Michelle VanDyke.

Guests: Veneese Chandler, Kristen Gietzen, Maureen Kirkwood, Kristyn Peck, Carol Paine-McGovern, Pam Parriott, Annemarie Valdez, Wende Randall.

1. Welcome & Call to Order

Adam London, Chairperson, called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

Adam asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the meeting, along with the minutes from the prior meeting. A couple of corrections to the minutes were noted. Motion was provided by George Meek, second by Ron Caniff– vote was UNANIMOUS.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Child Welfare Advisory Committee (WMPC) Update – Matthew provided some context on this topic.

Savator Selden-Johnson shared a document containing January, February and March CPS Complaints, Investigations, Preponderance Findings and CPS Ongoing Cases.

She also provided a handout that is shared with judges on a quarterly basis. These topics include investigation counts, removal data, trends and comparisons. She stated that there are higher removals at this point in their fiscal year than there have been in the last few years.

Savator explained the issues DHHS staff face in making assessments for children. Ultimately, the goal is to determine what is best for children and their families. She said that about 60-70% of children do not return home after being removed. DHHS tries to do a relative placement to keep them connected to their families. She added they are currently looking at doing research around disproportionality of children of color in the system. They hope to learn if Kent County is in the ball park of other urban areas. Once the information is available, it will be brought back to the Council.

There seems to be more referrals now due to key factors such as an increase in reporting of domestic violence and an increase in homelessness. The current lack of affordable housing drives more removals.

Kristyn Peck provided the next part of the report. She said the data she is sharing comes from the 6-month mark of the existence of the WMPC. The Permanency Outcomes are established by the Federal DHHS and Children's Bureau. They are passed down to the States. She said they don't expect to see significant progress on these outcomes until years 2, 3 and 4. Kristyn continued, explaining the outcomes outlined in her presentation.

She continued, reviewing the five performance measures chosen by the WMPC for Fiscal Year 2019. They are:

- Increasing community-based placement over residential
- Transitioning youth currently in residential or institutional to community-based placements
- Increasing relative placements
- Holding partners accountable for licensing the number of homes determined by the Federal calculator used in the State of Michigan
- Increase face-to-face contact with case workers with the parents of children monthly

Kristyn thanked the Council and the members of the Child Welfare Advisory Committee for their support and guidance. Here are some of the areas where that feedback has been incorporated:

- Enhanced Foster Care handout outlining the changes to the Foster Care contracts
- Increase recruitment of African-American foster parents due to the high population of African-American children in foster care
- Reinstated court orientation training of new Foster Care case workers
- Data collection with foster care workforce on retention to develop a baseline and determine what is happening and figure out some solutions

After additional discussion on the data and how it was gathered, Adam thanked Kristyn for her report.

- 4. ENTF Update** – Sandra Ghoston-Jones said there have been some changes with the Grand Rapids Coalition to End Homelessness and the Continuum of Care. As a result, some staff reassignments have taken place. The work is continuing to be done and the needs of those needing help have not been forgotten.

Wende Randall began her update, saying that group is due for a strategic planning process. A Homeless Call to Action letter was distributed a couple of weeks ago. One thing mentioned in the letter is that housing and homelessness impacts families in a significant way.

She said the Coalition met today with many guests attending. They discussed what the Strategic Planning process could look like and what the scope may be.

At the steering committee meeting later this month, there will be further discussion on their input as well as what was contained in the Call to Action letter and then a recommendation for next steps will go to the full Coalition meeting later at the end of the month.

United Way has provided internal resources during the staffing transition to allow them to continue with data processing and funding applications and reporting. Some individuals have been identified to fill the vacated positions.

After continued discussion on communities that have solved the homelessness issue, Matthew VanZetten said we need to be open to learning about what these communities have done and to do some research before determining how to proceed.

- 5. Community Mental Health Update** – Matthew shared that Commissioner Stek and Jeff Labun from the LRE to the Finance Committee of the Board of Commissioners to talk about an auxiliary internal service fund. An acceptable risk fund must be created by June 30 for the State to allow maintaining public governance of the regional finance system. The State is requiring between \$2 million and \$4 million in capital is raised to maintain governance.

Matthew said that between Network180 taking funds from their General Fund, the Community Foundation is working through their board process in an attempt to pledge money. The Kent County Board of Commissioners is being asked for money as well. Ottawa County is participating as well as many of the local agencies.

On June 19, the County Finance Committee will receive an action request for \$1.5 million to appropriate into this auxiliary ISF Fund. This would be a communal pot. In March 2019, the books will close on this Fiscal year, so we will know how much will need to be added from that funding. There is a conversation going on regarding the pay back, which would be a year or two. There will be a vote later this month where it will hopefully be moved to the full Board of Commissioners on June 28. He expects there will be a management company in place by October 1. An RFP was released, proposals submitted for review and they are getting ready to make a recommendation.

Scott added there will be a vote this morning. The private management company will be determined by this vote and then next year on 10/1, they will be responsible for providing the Risk ISF if the money goes over budget. The big concern is that funding will be reduced, and we are uncertain what the management company's responsibilities will be. The goal is to have a public board to give them influence on the rate setting process. It's looking better than it did.

Scott Gilman added that the LRE has a new board member, Judge Patti Gardner.

6. **Strategic Planning Update** – Sandra Ghoston-Jones provided a handout. She said the Executive Committee of the KCFCCC did not meet the last month due to scheduling issues. She reported to the full Council that the Executive Committee is still working on it. The handout gave an overview of the kinds of questions that have come up that are part of the discussions they have been having. Hopefully when they next meet, the discussions will continue. That meeting will be a work session where the intended outcome will be a plan of action to bring back to the Council. The focus of this group has been on children and families of all different ages.

Sandra hopes to have a good discussion at the next full Council meeting.

7. **Miscellaneous**

- a. **Scott Gilman** – Network180, the Kent County Health Department and the Region 6 Emergency Preparedness Coalition have been working to integrate mental health services and providers into the County's Emergency Preparedness Plan. On June 22, there is a tabletop drill (flyer to come via email later). It will specifically focus on Mental Health and for mental health and human service providers. The goal is to run a real drill next year. The flyer will provide the information for anyone interested in becoming part of the tabletop drill.
- b. **Matthew VanZetten** – Matthew shared that the Millage Subcommittee met and is recommending to the finance committee that an Early Childhood Millage be put on the ballot for November this year. Changes were made from the recommendation of First Steps for .25 mil for a period of 6 years and the County General Fund should continue to contribute from the Prevention Initiative for services.

For the next steps, on June 19 it goes to a work session of the Full Board of Commissioners and then at the Finance Committee, there will be an action request for it to be approved and then move on to the full Board of Commissioners for a vote, on June 28.

On July 26, the LHR Committee will see the same action request and will vote on it to move forward to the board on the 28th, where they will review it collectively.

Candace Cowling added that where it goes from there is that the Board could decide to do it as recommended, change it from the recommendation or not do it. She added that the amount was set in an effort to make sure that it passes. It was also done through the

lens of the constituents who are saying they are tired of taxes. Details are also available on [firststepskent.org/Frequently Asked Questions](http://firststepskent.org/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions).

8. **Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 4, 2018, at the Kent County Administration Building, Room 311.