

MINUTES

Lane County Commission for Children and Families
Serbu Youth Campus – 2727 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Eugene, Oregon

September 24, 2008
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Judith Hampton, Chair; Marty Beyer, Chuck Boyer, Elizabeth Clewett, Rich Cook, Sharri da Silva, Abigael Fender, Karen Hamilton, Teresa Kintigh, Kevin Maloney, Gail Parr, John Radich, Joachim Schulz, Shirley Swank, Phil Walker, Commission members; Alicia Hays, Diana Avery, Serafina Clarke, Robin Schaefer, Christine Rogers, DCF staff; Marilyn Miller, Lezlee Craven, Eric Van Houten, Heather Murphy, Jenny Alberty, Sally Wantz, Susan Sowards, Sue Norton, Karen Roth, Collette Kimble, Isabella Moses, guests.

ABSENT: Debi Farr, Mayor Kitty Piercy, Commissioner Peter Sorenson, Commissioner Faye Stewart, and Ryan Stroup, Commission members.

I. WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, PUBLIC COMMENT

- **WELCOME**

Ms. Judy Hampton convened the meeting at 5:37 p.m. and asked those present to introduce themselves.

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements from Commission members or guests.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Melissa Smith introduced herself and briefed the Commission on the slides that were being shown regarding the Lane County Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Metropolitan Affordable Housing Corporation's positive youth development mural project. She noted that the project involved approximately 20 young people from the community, who with the help of artist Steven Lopez, worked together to design and paint a mural. She reminded the Committee that they were all invited to the unveiling of the mural on September 30.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

a) Approve June 23, 2008 Minutes

Mr. John Radich, seconded by Ms. Hamilton, moved to approve the minutes from the meetings of the Commission on Children and Families held on June 23, 2008. The motion passed unanimously, 11:0.

III. CCF MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Kevin Maloney explained the process by which community members could become members of the Commission, and noted that five applicants had been reviewed by him and Ms. Sharri da Silva. He proceeded to introduce new Commission members Gail Parr, Rich Cook and Phillip Walker.

Ms. Parr noted she is currently employed as a case worker for the child welfare office and is excited to be serving on the Commission.

Mr. Walker noted he had retired in Oregon after working for several years for the Department of Children and Families and recently is volunteering as a crisis counselor at the White Bird Clinic.

Mr. Cook commented he had retired to the area after working for the State of Oregon for more than thirty years in a variety of leadership roles. He noted that he is a former Commission member from the early 1990's.

Mr. Maloney commented they were still searching for one more youth member to serve on the Commission.

Ms. Marty Beyer noted she had tried to recruit two young friends of hers without success.

Ms. Christine Rogers commented that the LCCCF had prior success in its recruiting efforts by making presentations at area schools. She encouraged the Commission to share recruitment ideas for engaging youth.

Ms. Alicia Hays offered the suggestion that it might be a good idea to try and recruit youth members from those students involved in the DCF mural project.

Ms. Hamilton asked if serving as a youth member on the LCCCF would count toward the students' 150 hour community/civil service requirements. Ms. Rogers confirmed that it would.

Ms. Hays noted she would explore possible other ways to increase recruitment efforts for the LCCCF.

Mr. Maloney, seconded by Mr. Boyer, moved to approve Gail Parr, Rich Cook and Phillip Walker as new commissioners for the Lane County Commission on Children and Families, and to reappoint Kitty Piercy, Shirley Swank, Judith Hampton, John Radich and Karen Hamilton as members of the Commission. The motion passed unanimously, 11:0.

IV. RUNAWAY HOMELESS YOUTH IN COTTAGE GROVE GRANT PRESENTATION

Ms. Diana Avery stated that approximately one year ago the LCCCF had applied to the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) with a proposal for a runaway and homeless youth initiative to be funded by the last cycle of the State legislature. She noted the grant for the Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) in Cottage Grove program had been approved and funded for half of its requested amount. She noted that the program had contracted with Looking Glass Youth and Family Services to provide case management services in the South Lane area as well as to provide dual diagnosis preventative services in the Oakridge/Westfir area.

Ms. Avery introduced Looking Glass representatives Eric Van Houten and Lezlee Craven who then proceeded to give an update to the LCCCF on Looking Glass' efforts with regard to their RHY contract.

Mr. Van Houten, speaking in his capacity as Program Director of Looking Glass, noted that Looking Glass currently oversaw services for the RHY program at the New Roads facility on West 7th Avenue and the Station 7 facility on Roosevelt Boulevard. He added that as of February of 2008 Looking Glass had expanded its services to include the New Roads Rural Project in Cottage Grove.

Mr. Van Houten provided a brief overview of the history of Looking Glass, noting that it was founded for the express purpose of providing care and assistance to runaway and homeless youth.

Ms. Craven, speaking as the rural case manager for Looking Glass, provided statistical information and a brief overview of the Looking Glass New Roads Rural Project, noting that it had been in operation since March 18, 2008 and was currently serving kids from Cottage Grove, Creswell and surrounding rural areas, some of whom had been involved with the New Roads program in Eugene. She noted that the New Roads facility in Cottage Grove was currently providing educational assistance to youths in rural areas, in addition to shelter, crisis, and substance abuse assistance services through its affiliation with Station 7.

Ms. Craven commented that the New Roads Rural Project was making excellent and efficient use of the other social service agencies in Lane County as she was currently the only staff member employed at the Cottage Grove location. She believed that her efforts to improve and enhance the structure of the program would enable it to prosper well into the future.

Ms. Craven distributed to the Commission a copy of the referral form used in Lane County schools that counselors used to refer people to the Looking Glass programs.

Ms. Craven briefed the Commission on current enrollment figures for the New Roads Rural Project, noting that several of the kids were maintaining a healthy relationship with the program.

Ms. Avery wished to emphasize the prevention aspects of Ms. Craven's work in the New Roads Rural Project, adding that her program provided an excellent opportunity for social services programs in South Lane County to come together and provide preventative services to at-risk youth. She noted that Ms. Craven's success in the South Lane County area might also assist Looking Glass in expanding its efforts into the eastern rural areas of Lane County.

Ms. Craven maintained that it was very gratifying to her as a resident of Cottage Grove to be able find ways to maximize the program's limited funding in order to provide services for the youth of her community.

Ms. Hays explained for the benefit of the newer Commission members how the LCCCF had come to partner with Looking Glass in its efforts to address the problems facing runaways and homeless youth in Lane County.

Ms. Avery noted that the staff at Looking Glass had submitted a grant application the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Family and Youth Services Bureau for the Rural Host Home Pilot Project and were hoping to receive a response to the application by the end of the year. She thanked Ms. Hampton and Mr. Stewart for the joint letter they had submitted in support of the application.

Mr. Van Houten noted that the grant application for the Host Home project had focused on Looking Glass' success in South Lane County so that it could demonstrate to the federal government that the Looking Glass programs had produced measurable results.

Mr. Joachim Schulz noted he had heard that the number of homeless students in Oregon had increased dramatically since 2003. He asked the Looking Glass representatives if they had noticed any such increases in South Lane County and what the possible causes of such increases might be. Ms. Craven responded it was her experience that older kids in rural communities who in the past might not have been able or willing to seek assistance were coming forward more often.

Ms. Avery, responding to a question from Ms. Hays, said that the New Roads Rural Project was currently funded through June of 2009.

Ms. Hamilton asked if the various social services that the New Roads Rural Project had partnered with were providing adequate mental health or educational services or if they still had to send runaways and homeless youths to Eugene in order to provide the necessary assistance. Ms. Craven maintained that with regard to medical services the services currently being utilized were sufficient, but that with regard to shelter they were often forced to send kids to places in Eugene.

Mr. Van Houten noted that recent federal efforts to attack chronic homelessness rather than addressing situational causes of homelessness in families sometimes had negatively impacted the service delivery efforts of the Looking Glass programs. He then briefly described the difference between chronic homelessness and situational homelessness for the benefit of the Commission.

Mr. Van Houten recognized the excellent efforts of Parent Partnership and other statewide agencies that had helped to identify the scope of the needs of homeless youth in Lane County.

Ms. Craven described a recent example of a twelve year old boy who had received services from the New Roads Rural Project.

Ms. Hays thanked Ms. Craven and Mr. Van Houten for their presentation.

V. CHILD CARE UPDATE

Ms. Hays stated that the Community Comprehensive Plan for the DCF had been prioritized according to responses and input from the community and service providers to include improved child care opportunities for children less than three years of age. She noted that Ms. Serafina Clarke had been working with groups from Florence to address the issue of child care opportunities in that area.

Ms. Hays informed the Commission that she had gone before the Lane County Commission at their public on September 24 regarding Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects. She reported that both the Quality Child Care of Florence (QCCF) and Cottage Grove Family Relief Nursery (FRN) child care center projects had made it into the one available slot on the CDBG.

Ms. Susan Sowards provided a brief overview of the current state of child care opportunities in the Florence and Cottage Grove areas. She noted that Florence basically had no available child care centers and that two centers had closed in the past three years, despite the recent arrival of several large employers in that community. She stated that the Florence Area Coordinating Council had formed a work group

approximately one year ago which eventually became QCCF. She noted one of the reasons the Florence council had fostered the project with such expediency was a 2000 federal census statistic showing that 32% of families with children under five years old and 65% of female-headed single parent families in Florence were living below the poverty line.

Ms. Sowards explained QCCF was seeking grant funding in order to reduce the cost of care at its planned child care center. She noted the QCCF Board of Directors had already adopted a strategic plan, a work plan, and a timeline for the child care center project.

Ms. Sowards stated that the FRN, which had been incorporated in 1994, was primarily designed to serve the child care needs of teen parents and school district staff in the Cottage Grove area, and that vacant lots had become available and that a generous donor had purchased a nearby home to become expanded resources for the FRN. She noted that the FRN had applied for a start up grant from the Oregon Community Foundation to fund the expansion of the program.

Ms. Heather Murphy elaborated on the origins of the FRN program in Cottage Grove, noting that in her capacity as Director of the FRN she had been approached to lend support for the opening of a child care center devoted primarily to infant care. She explained that while the FRN was happy to lend its support, it was not itself a low-income child care center capable of providing the services needed by the community. She commented that upon learning that the donated house contained space ideal for infant care she had gone to the board of the FRN who wholeheartedly supported the notion of creating an infant care center. She explained one of the reasons the plans for the infant care center under the FRN had proceeded so quickly was that the FRN had a well-developed organizational and administrative infrastructure to support such a facility. She summarized saying that the FRN infant care center, while a new venture for the organization, would be a small, well-funded enterprise run by well-trained individuals.

Ms. Jenny Alberty, speaking in her capacity as Vice President of QCCF, explained her group had been conducting a feasibility study of child care needs in the Florence area which had indicated a strong need for infant and early childhood care. She noted the QCCF had been incorporated and had by-laws adopted approximately one year ago, and in the intervening time had made great progress towards the goal of increased child care opportunities.

Ms. Alberty stated QCCF representatives had approached the Siuslaw School District Board of Directors on September 10 to request some portion of their property on which to develop a child care center.

Ms. Alberty noted there was currently no teen parent or infant care programs in the Florence area.

Ms. Alberty commented QCCF had successfully drawn up a budget that would allow them to create and maintain a quality child care center for low-income families.

Ms. Alberty explained that current plans for a QCCF child care center called for the use of modular classrooms, as they would be the most cost-effective option.

Ms. Sally Wantz, President of QCCF, noted that in her position as a Human Resources Manager at the Three Rivers Casino-Hotel in Florence she knew of many families in the area who were seeking improved child care opportunities. She noted that the QCCF had been meticulous in its planning of the proposed child care center and that the Ford Family Foundation, one of QCCF's primary benefactors, had been insistent that the child care center be planned very carefully in order to keep costs down.

Ms. Alberty said the QCCF had been working with Fred Meyer, Safeway, and several other business and community leaders in the area in order to determine the best ways to proceed with the child care center.

Ms. Wantz noted she had a relationship with the Vice President of Siuslaw Bank and mentioned it as one possible way to initiate a relationship between the bank and the QCCF.

Ms. Sowards noted that the feasibility study previously mentioned by Ms. Alberty had been distributed by Lane County employers to their respective employees, which had served to alert many business leaders of the need for improved child care opportunities in the first place. She added that the QCCF was applying for a \$10,000 Ford Technical Assistance grant to assist her continued efforts to plan the QCCF child care center effectively.

Ms. Wantz noted the Ford Family Foundation was very keen on rural communities and was particularly interested in finding ways to assist the community of Florence.

Ms. Hays acknowledged Ms. Sue Norton for her work regarding child care opportunities in both Florence and Cottage Grove, as well as in other communities such as Oakridge. Ms. Norton said it was wonderful to have a Florence resident such as Ms. Alberty spearheading the QCCF's efforts.

Ms. Hamilton asked if QCCF had been working with any elements of the Lane County division of the national Head Start program. She noted that it might be beneficial for the QCCF to review the CDBG grant materials authored by Head Start as there was a lot of similar research involved in their grant submissions. Ms. Wantz answered she had indeed had discussions with Head Start personnel and that she was anxious to partner up with them to solicit their input.

Ms. Hays thanked the QCCF and FRN representatives for their respective presentations.

Mr. Radich implored the QCCF and FRN representatives to keep up the good work.

VI. OCCF REVISIONING FEEDBACK & DISCUSSION

Ms. Hays introduced Oregon Commission on Children & Families (OCCF) staff member Marilyn Miller, who proceeded to brief the Commission on the current status of the revisioning efforts within her organization.

Ms. Miller noted she was new to the State of Oregon and that she had actually attended the State's Revisioning Retreat as an OCCF member from Multnomah County in September of 2007. She explained that the retreat had been attended by more than one hundred State and local employees and was focused on determining where they collectively wanted to take the Commission system. She was asked to take the lead on the revisioning efforts shortly after being hired on by the State.

Ms. Miller commented that a work session had been conducted in April of 2008 to finalize the revisioning recommendations of the OCCF while at the same time reviewing the vision statement, mission statement, and guiding principles of the organization.

Ms. Miller explained that Phase 1 of the resultant revisioning recommendations was ultimately focused on the philosophical framework that was approved approximately three to four months ago, while Phase 2 was primarily focused on the action items necessary to foster the broader concepts outlined in the first

phase. She said OCCF had approved both sets of recommendations, but emphasized that most of the recommendations were relatively broad, particularly with respect to Phase 2, and that subsequently the interpretation and execution of the action items was somewhat flexible.

Ms. Miller expressed one of her primary purposes in attending the LCCCF meeting was to listen to the Commission's reactions to the OCCF revisioning recommendations. She explained that part of the revisioning group's efforts since the September 2007 retreat and subsequent work session in April had been had been to review and more clearly explain the functions and focuses of the OCCF. She noted the results of those efforts were detailed in the OCCF functional components document entitled "*Oregon Commission on Children & Families: Invest in Results*," copies of which she then distributed to the Commission. She proceeded to highlight for the benefit of the Commission the primary elements of the document, which addressed Policy Development, Community Mobilization, Service Development and System Development.

Ms. Hampton noted that, in the interest of time, it might be a good idea for Commission members to submit questions and responses to the revisioning recommendations to Ms. Hays or Ms. Rogers who would then forward them on to Ms. Miller.

Ms. Hays noted the Executive Committee of the OCCF had been skeptical about the feasibility of implementing all of the revisioning recommendations as they were quite extensive.

Ms. Miller said she would be happy to come back to the LCCCF later and discuss the revisioning recommendations further once the Commission members had an opportunity to review the materials and provide feedback.

Mr. Radich had asked how the OCCF's focus on prevention had been broadened to the point that it was now only a sub-category under the Guiding Principles section from Phase 1 of the revisioning recommendations. Ms. Miller noted that while the OCCF still maintained a focus on prevention, the OCCF viewed prevention as a principle that should be followed along the age continuum and not just in early childhood.

Ms. Beyer asked if the OCCF's efforts to fully adopt and further implement the revisioning recommendations at the State level would have any immediate affect upon LCCCF. Ms. Miller replied that she did not know of any immediate effects such adoption might have, but that one positive benefit might be that it could provide a measure of consistency among county-level family commissions.

Ms. Hays commented that she had taken note of how other county commissions similar to the LCCCF functioned or did not function and was very pleased with the current state of the LCCCF.

Ms. Hamilton maintained that it was somewhat affirming that the LCCCF had already managed to prioritize many elements of the revisioning recommendations.

Ms. Miller noted that there some rural counties in Oregon that were particularly starved for resources and which would have considerable challenges in assimilating the revisioning recommendations. She noted that open communication between the county-level family commissions might be one way to address that problem.

Mr. Cook noted the revision recommendations were very ambitious and felt it would be important to determine exactly what was within the local control of the LCCF OCCF and what inter-departmental issues might be outside of it. He asked Ms. Miller what action plans might be considered to address those issues outside of the LCCF's OCCF's control. Ms. Miller replied that the OCCF had expanded a children's collaborative to include members from various social services agencies. She also noted that in her short time as an OCCF member, she had noticed an increasing willingness for disparate agencies to work together. She added that timelines for action plans related to the revisioning recommendations were currently being drafted.

Ms. Miller commented that it would be very valuable if the Commission could prioritize those items they felt were most important in providing their feedback to the revisioning recommendations.

Ms. Hampton restated her request for Commission members to provide their responses and input regarding the revisioning recommendations to Ms. Hays or Ms. Rogers.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Hays reminded the Commission of the upcoming Brain Development Conference as well as the 2008 Youth Gang Prevention Intervention Conference.

Legislative Update

Ms. Hays noted that the LCCCF staff had spent the summer meeting with State legislators and that some of the topics discussed with them included the policy option packets that had originated from the LCCCF's initiative to work with DHS in providing better intervention specialists in DHS offices.

Future Meetings Calendar

Ms. Hays noted that the next LCCCF meeting would be on October 22, 2008 and that the November meeting had been rescheduled to November 19, 2008.

Executive Meetings

Ms. Hays noted that the Executive meetings were currently being held at noon on the first Monday of each month. She added that times for the Executive meetings could be changed if they did not work with Commission members' schedules.

Ms. Hays noted she would be happy to discuss with any Commission members a recent newspaper article regarding campaign issues.

Ms. Hampton, noting no further business to be discussed, adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)