



FINAL

DHS Children, Adults and Families
Child Welfare Advisory Committee
Future Issues Work Group
October 12, 2011

Attending: Janet Arenz, Mike Balter, Iris Bell, Pamela Butler, Lois Day, Leola McKenzie, Carrie Rasmussen, Mickey Serice

ANNOUNCEMENTS, AGENDA REVIEW

- Balter: The purpose of today's meeting is to set the November CWAC agenda, vet issues brought to us for CWAC consideration and hear from the agency. Carrie Rasmussen, as chair of the CJA Subcommittee and Pamela Butler as chair of the Safety in Foster Care Subcommittee do need to be part of FIWG. This work group is voluntary for those who are interested in doing the extra meeting, but he recommends the subcommittee chairs be automatic members of FIWG. It is not required in the bylaws, but would like to have as practice. Do others agree?
- All: Agreed that subcommittee chairs should be automatic FIWG members.
- Arenz: It will help foster the right agenda and they can also give updates to FIWG that may not need to be reported to the full CWAC.
- Pearson: CWAC membership terms for Mike Balter and Leola McKenzie end in November 2012.
- Balter and McKenzie: Both are agreeable to continue to serve on CWAC as long as doing so continues to meet Erinn Kelley-Siel's needs.

ACTION:

- **All agreed that one of the responsibilities of subcommittee chairs is to sit on the FIWG.**
- **Erinn Kelley-Siel will be notified of the willingness of Mike Balter and Leola McKenzie to continue on CWAC for another term.**

MINUTES

The August 10, 2011, FIWG minutes were approved.

REVISION TO CWAC FOUR PRIORITIES

- Serice: Lois initially had offered at the August FIWG meeting to work on a draft revision, but further thought caused her to reconsider because she felt that work is a committee task, not an agency staff task.

- Balter: Agreed with Lois' decision. In essence, we need to add a phrase about engaging families and communities either within each priority or in an umbrella statement.
- McKenzie: Suggested for #2: Promote policies and practices that engage families and community to prevent foster care placement.” The current language needs to be changed for some of these priorities to clarify that CWAC identifies strategies, etc. We do not prevent foster care placements as an advisory committee. We can promote practices that do.
- Balter: That is a start, but we may want something bigger – a place to ensure family engagement.
- Arenz: Suggests we go with an overarching statement about promoting policies, practices and strategies.
- McKenzie: Add something about engaging families.
- Balter: Suggested maybe adding a new priority about engaging families and communities as another filter equal to the other four.
- Arenz: Offered to prepare a first draft that she will route to FIWG by email for review.

ACTION: Janet Arenz will draft an overarching statement about engaging families and communities that will interface with the four priorities. The draft will also revise the four priorities to show that the role of CWAC is to promote the policies and practices that lead to the desired goals. It will be reviewed by FIWG and presented to CWAC for approval at the November meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Calendar

- Serice: For the November legislative interim days, the legislature has not asked for a child welfare report.
- Balter: Following the last revenue forecast, has the Governor asked agencies to prepare for more reductions?
- Serice: Yes.
- Balter: We need to be aware of that and if there will be another round again after the December forecast.
- Serice: DHS and OHA are preparing information that will go out to communities for comment. The departments' response is due on November 16

to Legislative Fiscal Office. We will share it with CWAC as soon as it is available.

- Balter: We will add a note on the November agenda for an update – even if the update will only be to say when it will be shared with the public.
- Butler: Asked that the Shoulder to Shoulder Conference on November 1 be added to the calendar.

Dashboard

- Balter: No report needed. This is a standing agenda item to check if staff or a CWAC member are seeing any trends. If the dashboard changes in the future, a refresher may be needed.

BRIEFINGS

Legislative Update

- Balter: Include any consequences of the last session and what may be anticipated in the February session.
- Serice: On the child welfare side, there is legislative activity around Differential Response. An update will be presented to the legislature in February. An update to CWAC is timely for November.
- Balter: What about the hiring of domestic violence advocates?
- Serice: We are moving forward with allocating those positions and can have a report in November. These advocates will be for both child welfare and self sufficiency clients. We will update on where they will be assigned, who they will advocate for and the number of positions.
- Rasmussen: Is it one per county, one per judicial district, or some other allocation?
- Serice: He is not sure, but will find out. Is quite sure it is not one per county or judicial district.

Federal Policy Discussion

- Balter: Is not sure of the priority of this agenda item or if there will be information for a report.
- McKenzie: The General Accounting Office will be publishing a report on the de-linking of Title IV-E funds. She can report on that.

- Serice: The GAO recently surveyed states on psychiatric meds. During their exit conference, they outlined what would be in their report expected in December or January.
- Balter: The CAF concept papers on 1) youth to adult transition and 2) keeping kids safely out of foster care have been on hold for a long time. He recalls they were part of an attempt to get a unified message to the feds so advocates could point in the same direction. It was something Erinn Kelley-Siel was trying to pull together when she was the CAF assistant director.
- Serice: He will check with Erinn.

ACTION: Remove the concept papers from the CWAC agenda for now. They can be added later if activity resumes.

OR-Kids

- Serice: Janel Pettit presented to CWAC once before and is willing to do so again from the technical side. Lois Day and Jerry Waybrant are involved on the practice side. It would be a good time for an update on how things are going.
- Balter: Please include information on any benefits that are seen and how payments are going.

CWAC SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN'S JUSTICE ACT (CJA)

- Rasmussen: The subcommittee met on September 13. Most of their meeting time was spent on a presentation by Tina Morgan about Lane County's Safe and Together Project. It allows child witnesses of domestic violence to be seen in a child assessment center. It dovetails nicely with Differential Response and the placement of DV advocates in DHS offices. Data shows fewer dependency petitions are filed in juvenile court, and fewer children are removed. It memorializes the protective capacities of the victim parent. The federal funds that started this program are dwindling. The subcommittee may decide to consider ways to duplicate this program in other areas as one of its future projects.

They also reviewed the current Lynn Travis training project and will present those results to CWAC in November.

Asked for clarification about the notes on today's agenda about how CWAC's bylaws allow the subcommittee to make decisions and what CWAC can do to override those decisions.

- Balter: Recalls that the CJA oversight rests with CWAC so the full committee must approve the decisions of the subcommittee. In the past, the former CJA Task Force made its own decisions. Staffing issues required the agency to consider efficiencies, including the merger with CWAC. The challenge was that when this merger first took effect, many activities were in motion and reports needed to be approved even though CWAC was not up to speed. Now is the time to tighten it up. It is important that CWAC be notified in advance when a vote will be needed.
- Rasmussen: The subcommittee looks closely at CWAC's four priorities when making its decisions on future projects.
- Balter: CWAC does not have a preconceived notion of what projects fit or don't fit. It is more of who is in charge. So when CWAC asked to vote, it was because CWAC has such authority.
- McKenzie: Regarding the Lane County project, does the CJA subcommittee see themselves putting together training or supporting local programs through mini grants?
- Rasmussen: Yes. This is not a project they have adopted, but food for thought. They are looking to see if lessons learned from this expensive federal program could be put into training for other communities. She has already taken some parts of it and implemented them at no cost in her county.
- McKenzie: It fits with Differential Response, DV advocates, the Oregon Safety Model, and engaging families.
- Day: The data demonstrates that it results in more durable safety plans and fewer kids coming into care.
- Balter: The subcommittee operates under two boundaries: the CJA grant requirements and CWAC's four priorities. The federal requirements are the higher of the two.
- Rasmussen: Shary Mason is good at keeping on task with the federal requirements.
- Arenz: Is there any interest in CWAC getting a mini-presentation of the Lane County project?
- McKenzie: Yes, there would be if the subcommittee is going to try to develop similar programs.
- Balter: We need to put a presentation on hold because we have other big topics for the agenda right now. We should wait until we know if the subcommittee wants to adopt this as one of their projects and they need a CWAC vote.

- Rasmussen: When you say “need a vote” do you want the dollar amount or to vote only at the concept level before the dollar amounts are worked out? We don’t want to work with the contractors if approval has not been given.
- Balter: CWAC approval would be at the concept level with an estimated amount of money. The subcommittee gets into the details at the contractor level.

CWAC SAFETY IN FOSTER CARE SUBCOMMITTEE

- Butler: The subcommittee is in the process of inviting members. They have eight members at this time. Their first meeting is scheduled for October 26. They will set their process at that time and then add additional members. She has been in contact with Lois about their data needs.
- Rasmussen: Is Don Darland a member?
- Butler: We have invited him or another Foster Parent Association member.
- Balter: If action is needed from CWAC, please get it to FIWG first. If no action is needed, then give a brief update at the CWAC meeting.

CROSS-OVER REPORTS

HB 2009 and DHS/OHA Transition

- Balter: It has been suggested that CWAC reconfirm past letters to DHS regarding the committee’s concerns about A&D and mental health treatment for child welfare clients.
- Day: To do so now would be timely as we go into the February legislative session.
- Balter: This letter will then let us drop this topic from our agenda.
- Day: Instead you may want to change the topic to “DHS transition.”
- Balter: And move it under the CAF Administration Report.
- Day: We can share the draft organizational structure documents.

ACTION: FIWG approved the draft letter. It will be presented to CWAC for approval.

Juvenile Dependency Interbranch Work Group

- McKenzie: The work group is planning to reconvene during the November interim legislative days. They are pulling together additional legislators to be involved.

- Balter: The interbranch group will be the only cross-over report on the agenda.

CAF ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- All: Agreed to change this agenda item to “DEPARTMENT REPORT.”
- Rasmussen: Has found it helpful to have a catch phrase of “DHS is working at 63% capacity” when asked in court why DHS is not doing something. Wants to know if this is still an accurate statement.
- Balter: That came out of some of the legislative presentation. Has it changed as DHS prepares for reductions again?
- Serice: Will get an update on the staffing capacity.
- Balter: Asked Carrie to share with CWAC how she is using her CWAC membership and the information she gathers as a member.

CWAC WORK PLAN

- 1.** Identifying strategies to reduce over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.
 - Balter: In previous meetings we talked about having never revisited the Equity Task Force final report and recommendations. We need to decide if CWAC has done all it could or not with that report.
 - McKenzie: CWAC members that were on the task force could give an update on what has happened to the recommendations directed at their agencies/organizations.
 - Arenz: Do we want to invite anyone else? Gloria Anderson in the DHS Equity and Multi-Cultural Services Office has been invited already.
 - Balter: We would need to give CWAC members a heads up that they would be asked to speak about this.
 - Bell: Our question is how DHS is going to incorporate the recommendations since HB 2053 did not pass. Her opinion is that we don't need CWAC members to talk about their agencies. We need to know how DHS is going about making those recommendations happen.
 - Rasmussen: When a task force is disbanded, who does the follow up? She gave an example of when follow up is not tracked. A CJA Task Force project funded the publication of the Foster Club's coloring books, which is a great product. There was no plan for dissemination and over half the supply has not been sent out to DHS offices.

- Balter: Equity is a diffuse topic and if someone doesn't bring it together and draw attention to it, it becomes a lot of smaller projects. The ultimate question for us is: If it is still important, how do we bring the focus to CWAC attention?
- Bell: Differential Response is a big piece of it. Suggested bring the DR manager (Aisha Hollands) to the November meeting along with Gloria Anderson. To find out what pieces of the task force report are being carried out.
- Arenz: HB 2053 had to be put together before the task force report was finished.
- Day: You as FIWG need to figure out what you want. We could bring in a host of people. Aisha can give an update on DR or we can talk about what we are doing that fits in with the task force recommendations.
- Balter: Let's focus on the question – what do we want? We want a large portion of time focused on one topic. Is that equity, DR or something else? The equity report keeps drifting and waiting for some magic moment.
- Arenz: It is a companion to DR and DV – they all dovetail together and all three can be the centerpiece to the meeting. DHS is already doing things that support the task force recommendations. There may be new initiatives that we don't know about.
- Rasmussen: Do you know if DHS will be proposing future legislation?
- Serice: We don't know at this time. If you are asking if the task force will come together again to push some legislation forward, he hasn't heard that they are meeting.
- Balter: The task force finished its work, they did not disband. What are the efforts to reduce disproportionality? We aren't managing the task force. We are asking what the highlights are of the strategies that are related to the task force.
- Day: The creation of the Equity and Multi-Cultural Services Office is one of the main strategies and that is why Gloria has been invited to CWAC.
- Balter: The lineup is a DHS leadership presentation and then CWAC members talking about what their agencies are doing. As an advisory committee to CAF, we are most interested in what DHS is doing, but we are also interested in what others are doing.
- Arenz: Agreed. The presentation will have to begin with a reminder about why it's coming back to CWAC.
- Bell: She understands there are other agencies working on it, but let's keep the focus on DHS Child Welfare. It will be great to hear from the agency if they

would consider proposing legislation next session (over and over again until it passes).

- Day: Disagrees somewhat with Iris because the recommendations call out other entities and speaks to the child welfare system as a whole, not just the child welfare program in DHS. The recommendations were very broad.
- Bell: But if a recommendation is not acted on, the task force would come back to DHS as the work is DHS-driven. Other agencies are called out, but from a community perspective, the focus is DHS. It's not that the others aren't partners or don't play a role, but the communities see it as DHS being called out.
- Arenz: Suggested the presentation be a briefing on where the agency is at, the initiatives that are in place, new initiatives and if help is needed in promoting and mobilizing.
- McKenzie: That last piece is the value of the discussion.
- Arenz: We serve as advisor and advocate. The better we understand what is happening, the better we can let people know what is in place.
- Rasmussen: Regarding Iris' comments, when a family comes to court, it sees the DHS worker running the show. The DHS worker is the person doing most of the talking and in some communities making recommendations to the judge.
- Butler: Yes, that would also be the perspective of youth and young people in court. No one blames the judges and lawyers – the blame always goes to DHS.
- Arenz: It is our responsibility to respond to those perceptions.
- Balter: Does the Casey partnership fit under this? Is it completed?
- Day: There is an ongoing relationship with Casey, the Commission, courts and DHS. It targets all four of CWAC's priorities. She is not certain why the Casey roundtables were noted under this first priority. They cover all four.
- Balter: We need to clean up this section of the agenda. He wants to spend 1 to 1.5 hours on this issue of what DHS is doing to reduce overrepresentation. It could start with Janet giving a brief history of the task force. When DHS staff present, they can speak to the legislation that did not pass, how they are still carrying out elements of it, if there is a potential for future legislation, and where they are headed. Lay it out so members come prepared to contribute to the conversation.
- Arenz: There has to be an action item that comes out of these presentations.
- Balter: Awareness is first. It might be premature to know about legislation.
- Day: The previous legislation was intended to help us get there. It didn't pass, but we are still moving forward.

- Balter: Big topics are multi-year topics. CWAC could recommend that the department consider future legislation. That could be an action. Or there could be something else in a recommendation. We will want to know if there are strategies and programs to solve the problem. If we spend a long time on this topic, it will limit what we can with the other agenda items.
- McKenzie: We decided the legislative update would include a Differential Response update so we can cross-reference from there.
- Day: The legislative update for DR will be at a higher level. The details could be presented here on the agenda. We already gave CWAC a high level presentation on DR.

ACTION: Lois Day and Mickey Serice will meet to plan DHS' presentation and decide who in DHS needs to attend the November CWAC meeting. A call to action for CWAC may be only awareness at this point, or may be to determine what CWAC can do to promote and mobilize.

2. Preventing foster care placement.

No discussion.

3. Assuring that children placed in foster care are safe and are thriving.

- Balter: Pam Patton had asked FIWG that a future CWAC meeting include an update on Recommendation #3 in the JM CIRT 60 day report regarding CWAC's relationship to CIRT reports when they are directly connected to CWAC's work plan.
- Day: She could give an update on the CIRT report, but the broader question is what the role is when a CWAC member serves on a CIRT for their expertise, not because they are a CWAC member. Everyone wears more than one hat. When we put a CIRT together, we need multiple representations. Sometimes someone serves on a CIRT and also happens to be a CWAC member.
- Balter: Is not sure of the difference between a CIRT and a Sensitive Review Committee and the role of CWAC for each. Do we need a primer?
- Day: Can do that. Some are statutory, some are internal, some are mandatory, some are not. Pam Patton is on a work group that was formed out of a recommendation from a specific CIRT.
- Balter: Do we want a primer on the November agenda?

- Serice: When we talk about the CIRT and SRC, we could mention that Carrie is appointed to the current SRC as a CWAC member. Having a CWAC member on Sensitive Review Committees was one of the agreements when the SRC policy was written.
- Day: Noted that the SRC is different than a Sensitive Case Review. It's confusing because of the use of similar terms.

ACTION: Lois Day and Mickey Serice will report on the general differences between a CIRT and SRC and the role of CWAC in each.

4. Providing permanency for children placed in foster care in a timely manner.

No discussion.

Continued discussion not specific to any one goal:

- Balter: Asked how CWAC can align with the Office of Safety and Permanency for Children's strategic plan.
- Day: It is already aligned. The OSPC's strategic plan has a 5 year plan in mind. The Casey strategic plan is aligned in the same way. It has helped us focus on the things that fit and weed out some that don't. CWAC has seen this before. If we send it to them again they will see that it needs to be updated. They would be right, but that is not going to happen soon.
- Balter: Would not be looking to advise on the details, but to see if there is a parallel process.
- Day: We are not asking for CWAC advice on the strategic plan at this time. Offered it here because FIWG asked to see it at its last meeting.
- Balter: It shows how OSPC's goals line up with CWAC's.
- Day: We are considering adding an initiative on overrepresentation. The strategic plan has been shared with the field and they share these same four goals.

Meeting adjourned.