

Family Services Review Commission Meeting
September 7, 2006
HSB-252

Members present: Jessica Chanay, Doreen Binder, Diane Cohen-Alpert, Lorie Freeman (by phone), Bonnie Johnson, Peggy Kennerly, Rosemary Lazzari, Rob Potter, and Angela Sanchez (by phone), Michael Ware

Members excused: Shirley Kaping, Maggie Bagon

DHS staff present: Bruce Goldberg, Ramona Foley, Mickey Serice, Jim Neely, Vic Todd, Ted Swigart, Dave Lyda, Lisa Reed, Elyssa Tran, Lori Nelson, and Nancy Sathrum

Guest: Lorie Morphis

Administrative Handouts, sent via email prior to the meeting: Meeting Agenda, Draft Minutes of the August 3, 2006 FSRC Meeting, DHS Comments on the TANF Interim Final Regulations

Administrative Handouts at meeting: CAF Public Assistance Caseload Report for July 2006, Self-Sufficiency at a Glance for July 2006, FY 2005 Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program State Information Spreadsheet

Greeting and Introductions:

- Meeting convened at 8:35 a.m. with member quorum in attendance.
- Rob introduced two new FSRC members; Peggy Kennerly and Rosemary Lazzari

Chair Report:

- Action and follow-up items: None to report. **Dave and Vic to speak to action item on page 6 of August 3rd meeting minutes.**
- Discussed the Complaint Report that now includes complaint and resolutions.
- Bonnie Johnson motioned and Mike Ware seconded approval of the August 3, 2006 FSRC meeting minutes as written. Members voted in favor of approval.
- Membership Status: Discussed new recruitments and Lorey's resignation. Applications have been received from Karen Berkowitz, Oregon Law Center, and Julie Massa, Oregon Food Bank. Lorey and possibly Cassandra will need to resign before new members can be appointed. FSRC gave Rob confirmation of the two applicants. The Governor's Office would like members to serve no more than two four-year terms. Shirley Kaping, member since March 1992, could be replaced by Karen in the Public Welfare Specialist category. Julie could replace Cassandra in the Advocate category if Cassandra is asked to resign because of her new employment as Administrator with the Oregon Advocacy Commission. Julie could also qualify in the recipient/former recipient category.
- 2006-07 Strategic Plan approval: Updates were made and a final version was distributed. Changes included: 1) Folding some items together in Section A of

FSRC Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2006

Goals/Objectives; 2) Address individuals by position instead of name (since the names change). **ACTION: Nancy to make necessary changes. (Done 9/13/06.)**

Strategic Plan Discussion and Suggestions:

- Diane believes the FSRC has been asked to make their requests more specific with clearly stated questions. Use committee structure to frame questions and requests.
- Narrow scope of meeting and address goals and objectives included in the Strategic Plan.
- Bonnie Johnson strongly suggested that new FSRC members attend the Board/Commission Training.
- The Policy Committee is the only one currently meeting.
- Customer Service Committee will review complaint report and report back to the FSRC. Peggy Kennerly said she'd be interested in serving on this committee. Peggy and Doreen agreed to work together to visit branches and survey needs.
- Rosemary expressed interest in the Partnership Committee and hopes that the meetings could be coordinated with her monthly PSU classes in Portland.
- Committee meeting structure: How will people be selected for the new committees? Need chair and member volunteers.
- Mike motioned to approve the 2006-2007 Strategic Plan after removal of names. Diane seconded motion and members voted in favor.
- By-law change approval: There was a motion by Doreen Binder and seconded by Bonnie Johnson to accept the By-laws with the change to the meeting date in Article IV, Section 1 to the first Thursday of each month. Majority voted in favor. **(Changes made by Nancy and copy will be sent out with the October 5th meeting materials.)**
- FSRC Operating Procedures update: Mike asked about role between DHS and FSRC and building a more cooperative work environment. Information will be added to address this issue in our Operating Procedures document under Roles and Responsibilities. **ACTION: Rob will work on the Operating Procedures document and include it for further discussion on the October 5th meeting agenda.**
- Introductions were made. Jessica is moving to Portland to work for the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force. Visitor in attendance: Lorie Morphis, Springfield.

DHS Director's Report, Dr. Bruce Goldberg Updates:

- Discussion continues on TANF Reauthorization. DHS and community partners continue to analyze how we can change our program to be in compliance with the new federal regulations. Mental health and substance abuse are very problematic areas. Doreen Binder and Diane Cohen-Alpert will represent the FSRC on the DHS TANF Oversight Committee. The FSRC appreciates the opportunity to participate in this committee.
- Reported on clarification of the DHS organizational structure. We will return to using "Division instead of Cluster" within DHS and will continue to work together as one

FSRC Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2006

Department to organize our services around people instead of programs since many of our services are interrelated.

- DHS recently submitted our agency request budget. DHS has six categories of policy option packages (POPs) this year. They have been posted on the DHS web link for review. **Action: Forward web link to FSRC members. (Done by Nancy on 9/12/06)**
- Budget concerns: The forecast indicates that we will have an increase in state revenue but it won't be enough to cover the huge cuts that have taken place during the past five years. Decision is needed on how to reinvest and use the money as wisely as possible.
 - Doreen Binder reported that the City of Portland is struggling with the same issues and tough decisions are needed.
 - Mike Ware suggested that DHS look at capacity building/partnerships before beginning new programs that can't be sustained. Bruce agreed that we need to work smarter by moving in this direction.

CAF Report, Ramona Foley, Mickey Serice and Jim Neely:
TANF Reauthorization – New regulations and DHS policy

- Vic reported that DHS has identified strengths/weaknesses of current program to assess necessary changes to meet the new requirements. We have a placeholder package in the agency request budget to address program changes. We are challenged to look at the block grant (same amount of dollars) and decide how we can redesign programs to better meet the client's increasing need for services. Many activities may not be countable from the federal perspective; however, we can count clients in our participation rate if we offer a small amount of assistance after the client obtains employment. The assistance helps move the client from the program to successful independent living. Need to continue to reaffirm and work on a strengths-based model, not sanction based, and to market opportunities to client because it's in their best interest (not requirements that they must meet).
- A DHS TANF Oversight Committee has been formed to review program changes. Diane Cohen-Alpert and Doreen Binder will represent the FSRC on this committee. FSRC Policy Committee should provide information for them to take to the meetings. The committee is expected to meet twice by mid-October to agree on conceptual structural issues and programmatic changes. Family stability and keeping TANF families out of the child welfare system are big concerns. **ACTION: Oversight Committee minutes to be supplied to FSRC through Nancy.**
- Training: Dr. Beverly Ford training is being held throughout the state. She is helping to build a statewide philosophy and consistent practice when assessing client needs and moving them through the TANF system. We need a program structure that views the client as an individual. How can we consider the client's individual needs and meet the new requirements? Weekly messages on the Dr. Ford training are being sent to staff by

the CAF Training Unit. **ACTION: Nancy to forward messages to FSRC members. (First 6 messages forwarded on 9/27/06.)**

Grievance Report – Lori Nelson

- Lori reported that knowledge of this process is out there and that the client complaint report is larger than usual which may indicate that the form is being more widely used. Clients are always encouraged to speak directly with caseworkers. Doreen said some of her clients see this as a safety issue and may wish to skip this step and move directly to the supervisor. Clients are reporting satisfaction with process and outcomes when they meet with supervisors to resolve complaints. Most often frustration is the basis of the problem and open communication is the key to finding a suitable resolution. Peggy acknowledged the report as a good process.
- Rob agreed that the report now includes the information the FSRC has been requesting; problem, resolution and results.
- Customer service policy and training were discussed. Jim reported that there is an increasing emphasis on customer service issues. Customer service training will help staff treat clients more respectfully. A report is being produced for Jim to track complaints over a 12-month period so branch/worker problem areas can be better identified.
- Michelle Cole's article in the Oregonian was discussed. The local office believed they had handled the case very well, but in review it was found that things were handled poorly. Clients would like due process when a conflict arises and the ability to challenge decisions. People need to be treated with respect.
- Policy/Procedures: Lori has addressed three main areas of complaints: lost client paperwork, being treated rudely by staff, and clients not receiving returned phone call back from staff. Lori has used these complaint areas as the backdrop of creating draft policy on customer service. The draft policy is written from a positive viewpoint of good customer service and has the DHS CORE values integrated into the document. **ACTION: The draft policy should be shared with the FSRC for review prior to the October meeting.**

TANF / Child Welfare Integration

- Between 25-30% of children entering foster care were in the TANF caseload within the previous 60 days. If the FSRC can partner with Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) to close that door and keep kids with families, it will reduce foster care expenses by 25%. There are four primary issues that bring kids into foster care: Alcohol/Drug, Domestic Violence, Employment, and Mental Health issues.
- Integration/Coordination Grant: We applied for the grant but haven't heard if we have been accepted. The next meeting of the oversight group is scheduled for Thursday, 9/21, 10:00 a.m. in HSB-457.

FSRC Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2006

- Dave distributed the FY 2005 Community – Based Child Abuse Prevention Program State Information Report. Discussion was focused on the allowable claim and leveraged claim award columns. Stephanie will be researching how/what other states count and report and will continue to work on identifying how we can leverage additional funds. **ACTION: Dave to report back at next FSRC meeting.**

Other Business:

- FSRC Site Visits: What is the goal of site visits? Jim suggested individual visits for FSRC members to observe branch processes and gather information to be used to promote productive input on policy changes. Determine the office's strengths/barriers to see how the FSRC can advocate for staff. Rosemary attended a staff meeting in her branch and reported that staff was very welcoming and asked her to share issues with the FSRC. She can represent remote areas in state since their issues are much different from urban areas. **ACTION: Contact Jim to set up branch visits.**
- Legislative Session: May want to spend one meeting, without DHS staff, to establish goals, objectives and consistent message when working with the Legislature. These objectives will also be helpful when forming committees to ensure we work toward consistent outcomes.
- Visitor: Lorie Morphis from Springfield shared her perspective as a DHS child welfare client and discussed community services and support available in the Eugene area.

FSRC Committee Updates:

- Set next Policy Committee meeting: To be done by e-mail. This is a public meeting and anyone can attend.
- Partnership Committee: Diane is the official FSRC representative to CWAC. Agendas are being forwarded to FSRC members. Other areas of concern include mental health and domestic violence barriers to TANF and partnering with the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF).

Next Meeting Agenda: TANF Reauthorization – establish bullet point objectives that can be shared with the Governor's Office, Legislators and community partners around the state. The next FSRC meeting is scheduled for October 5th, 8:30 a.m. to noon, in HSB-252.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.