

Ramsey County Children’s Citizens Review Panel

Minutes

Thursday, February 9, 2023

<https://zoom.us/j/94343538622?pwd=MVhNYlhCV09SZkEybW5JekRzSUh6dz09>

Meeting ID 943 4353 8622 Passcode 375369

Mission Statement

Provide opportunities for citizens to play an integral role in ensuring the child protection system is protecting children from abuse and neglect and ensuring a nurturing home environment.

Meeting Called to Order: Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 4:31 pm by Co-Chair Tonya Long

Attendance

Members:	Tonya Long, Jill Esch
Past Members:	Jill Gunderson-Gernes
Guest(s):	None
Ramsey Staff:	Maina Ngunyi and Kari Kerber
DHS:	None

Clarification; At 11:25am on 2/9, Rebecca Wilcox, DHS, sent an email to Tonya Long and Cassaundra Adler. She made the “suggestion” that the meeting be canceled due to ongoing issues and stated that there would not be a DHS staff member at this meeting. Sarah Bello has taken another position at DHS and her last day as the DHS coordinator is 2/11/23. At 2:37pm on February 9 (before the scheduled RCCSRP meeting), Cassaundra Adler sent an email that stated “*At the request of DHS, tonight’s meeting has been canceled.*” Jill Esch then sent an email stating that the meeting had been scheduled and should not be canceled; she said she planned to attend the RCCSRP meeting. Jill Esch did not receive Rebecca Wilcox’s initial email – fyi. The meeting took place as scheduled.

Welcome: Tonya welcomed everyone. She recognized the land and water; Ramsey County is on Dakota land and the Mississippi River sustained the Dakota and Ojibwe. She cited the 1805 Treaty which was never ratified that ceded Hennepin County, Ramsey County, the airport and Fort Snelling. Tonya asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves and to share something hopeful and positive which everyone did.

Minutes: Jill Esch made a motion to adopt the January 2023 Meeting Minutes and Tonya seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Agenda:

Tonya moved onto the first item under Annual Projection Discussion. She gave a brief description of the Panel’s efforts to date on the Foster Youth Survey which was initially targeted for youth ages 10-17. She noted that a youth is assigned an attorney at age 10. At January’s meeting, she had asked Falon, Ramsey County Planner, to explore possibilities of partnering with [Partnerships for Permanence](#) or [Home - Quality Parenting Initiative \(qpi4kids.org\)](http://Home-QualityParentingInitiative(qpi4kids.org)) to help

with the Foster Youth Survey. To date, Tonya has not heard back from Falon re: this request. The Panel would like to learn more about these organizations and would like a presentation at a future Panel meeting.

Tonya then talked about the \$5,000 that the Panel has available to spend and introduced the idea of a community event at the end of April 2023 to use these monies for. Tonya explained that the community event would be an opportunity to do recruitment for new Panel members, as well as outreach and education for Ramsey County's services.

Tonya emphasized about the need for recruitment for the Panel and Jill Esch mentioned that the Hennepin County CRP recently added 5 new members. Tonya explained that there would be a meal and child care available for those attending. She also said this would be a chance to get community feedback re: child protection and child mortality. Maina liked the idea and offered to bring it to the managers' weekly meeting on Monday, February 13, 2023. Kari also liked the idea. Tonya made a motion to move the community event idea forward and Jill Esch seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Jill Esch mentioned that she would like to see additional CRPs in Duluth and Bemidji and that there is interest to do so, particularly related to ICWA and counties getting penalized for not following ICWA. Jill explained that the Audit that was done on ICWA cases involved only a few cases (between 1 to 8) and that it did not determine full ICWA compliance, which is likely not a true reflection of how a particular county is handling ICWA cases. She also talked about Minnesota's legislative efforts to protect ICWA, in the event that the U. S. Supreme Court overturns ICWA.

Tonya had questions about the new Ramsey County model of combined units. Ramsey County is currently phasing this in and there are still some issues that haven't been resolved as to how the units will operate. Once a case is screened in, it will be assigned to a unit that has intake and case management with 1 supervisor. There are 6 units and each manager manages 1 unit.

If a case is initially assigned to a regular unit and then later is found to be an ICWA case, the case may stay with the initial assignment, but there would be consultation with Bobbi Jo's ICWA unit or it could be reassigned to Bobbi Jo's unit.

Tonya shared a story about a father who contacted her. His child was in child protection and initially had not been assigned as an ICWA case. The father was a member of a tribe and so his children were also tribal members. The father expressed frustration that the worker assigned to this case was not an ICWA worker and that the worker had to consult the ICWA unit whenever the father had questions the worker could not answer over a period of one year. Maina expressed appreciation for this feedback. Tonya thanked Maina and Kari for explaining how the combined units worked.

Membership: No update

DHS Report: No DHS report for this month.

County Report: No County report for this month.

Announcements:

Jill Esch reported that legislative committees have begun meeting. On Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30am, the House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee meets. She also talked about Minnesota's legislative efforts to protect ICWA, in the event that the U. S. Supreme Court overturns ICWA. These bills are SF 667 and HF 1071.

Tonya updated the Panel as to the work that Transforming Systems Together (TST) will be doing. The first round of grant awards is forthcoming and should be announced shortly. Tonya is anxious to get money into families' hands. This grant money will be going to providers for services for families that are most vulnerable to being in Child Protection.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:40pm by consensus.

The next meeting of the Panel is Thursday, March 9, 2023 at 4:30 pm.