

Ramsey County Children’s Citizens Review Panel

Minutes

Thursday, April 13, 2023

Zoom link:

<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, April 13, 2023 at 4:38 pm by Co-Chair Tonya Long

Attendance

Members:	Tonya Long, Jill Esch
Past Members:	Jill Gunderson-Gernes, Tony Porter, Jacqueline Thomas
Guest(s):	None
Ramsey Staff:	None
DHS:	Vicki White, DHS

Welcome: Tonya welcomed everyone.

Minutes: Motion to approve March minutes made by Jill Esch and seconded by Tonya Long. Vote ensued and the motion carried. The March minutes were approved.

Agenda:

Tonya verbally described the agenda and order of business. Jill Esch mentioned that she contacted Darla who attended a meeting in January. Darla indicated that she had not been paid for her January participation to date and that she had been in contact with Cassandra. This needs follow-up. There were several emails that circulated to RCCSRP members and participants including County and DHS. Tonya read aloud the email from Yvonne Goodsky, DHS and it is included at the end of these Minutes on pages 4 and 5. This email clarifies the Ombudsperson’s role as a voting member of the Panel when in attendance. Tonya stated that she had contacted John Choi, Ramsey County Attorney, to ask who the County attorney is for the Panel. Tonya also met with Yvonne Goodsky and Rebecca Wilcox, DHS. Yvonne Goodsky and Rebecca Wilcox wish to meet with Jill Gunderson-Gernes, Tony Porter and Jacquie Thomas as former Panel members and Jill Esch, current Panel member. Sarah Bello’s position as DHS coordinator has not been filled to date. Tonya talked to Tribal Chairs about starting up CRPs. Three of them indicated interest in moving forward but need more information. Jaime Sorenson, DHS, has moved to another position but Tonya did confirm with Yvonne Goodsky that DHS support of \$10,000 for National Citizens Review Panel conference was still valid. Tony asked whether the County has the right to cancel RCCSRP meetings and membership was discussed. Jacquie Thomas said that she had submitted an application for membership and

Tonya asked her to send a copy of the application to her. Vicki White, DHS, said that she could provide application and training. Discussion ensued as to how Ramsey County Citizens Review Panel's process for membership is different from other counties because RCCSRP is part of the Ramsey County Community Advisory Council (CAC) and is governed by CAC bylaws. Until DHS finalizes Minnesota CRPs application and membership so that it falls under the Secretary of State and appointed by the DHS Commissioner, the RCCSRP's path to membership must be done as it has been done in the past: application, interview by RCCSP members and Ramsey County staff and membership approval is now through the County Manager's office according to the amended bylaws adopted by the Commissioners last summer. There is clear frustration about not being able to bring on new members to this Panel, as there haven't been any new members processed since ???. Jill Esch promised to email Kathy Hedin about the Panel's concerns about not being able to process new applications. A few months ago, the Panel was informed that applications for membership were on hold by the County.

There was continued discussion about the Panel's desire to support the Institute for Transforming Child Protection (ITCP). Tonya made the Panel's request for \$3000 for the event and for 80 \$25 gift cards for participants who fill out the Panel's survey. The 5-question survey will also be included at the conclusion of these Minutes on page 6. Since the Kinship event is on Saturday, April 22, 2023 from 11am to 1PM, the Panel is concerned about being able to go forward with this project. A description of the Kinship event is in the March Minutes. flyers for potential new members. Tonya made a motion that the Panel give \$3000 to ITCP for the event and that 80 \$25 gift cards be purchased for survey participants. The Panel also wished to do recruitment for potential members at this event.

Tonya reported about attendance to the NICWA conference. She said that she learned a lot and that there was a great deal of data and information disseminated including attachment and bonding issues. Children do the attaching and families do the bonding. Cultural Connectedness which includes your traditions and ceremony was presented with a work plan as to how to practice. Tonya will share this. Also, discussion re: 2 or more races and how it "dilutes" the American Indian population and reduces resources, so caution was recommended when using 2 races. Discussion of missing children ensued; this was preferred to run away. 90% of children who go missing have been in foster care. The Panel should follow-up with the County re: runaways.

Brief discussion of the challenge to ICWA at the U.S. Supreme Court. Tonya and Jill attend the signing of the bill at the legislature that was voted unanimously in favor of in the House to enshrine Minnesota's ICWA laws by passing the Minnesota Youth and Family Indian Preservation Act.

National Citizens Review Panel (CRP) Conference meeting was held on April 12, 2023. Alia Innovation has agreed to partner with the Panel to sponsor and can handle publicity, breakouts, brochures, etc. An LLC (which one, Tonya?) will handle the \$, take in registration \$ and other monies and pay bills. Mystic Lake did not offer Tonya the same deal for 2024 as she was

offered if the event was in 2023. Tonya will pursue this further and may have to look for alternative site.

Membership: No update

DHS Report: Vicki White indicated that the Minnesota Training Academy is doing the training for new CRP members.

County Report: No County report for this month.

Announcements: Jill Esch attended Tribal Sovereignty Day at the Capitol and she will be meeting with Athena Hollins on April 14. She will ask if Athena knows any new potential members for the Panel. Jill mentioned that Hennepin County CRP has brought on 6 new members in recent months.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:51 pm by consensus.

The next meeting of the Panel is Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 4:30 pm.

FYI – here is the email that Tonya is reading.

From: Goodsky, Yvonne (DHS) <Yvonne.Goodsky@state.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 2:20 PM
To: Tonya Long <tklong50@gmail.com>; Esch, Jill (OAIF) <jill.esch@state.mn.us>; Adler, Cassandra <Cassandra.Adler@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US>; Ross, Windy <Windy.Ross@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US>; Hedin, Kathy <kathy.hedin@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US>
Cc: Wilcox, Rebecca L (DHS) <rebecca.wilcox@state.mn.us>; Wahi, Bharti M (DHS) <Bharti.Wahi@state.mn.us>; White, Victoria F (DHS) <victoria.white@state.mn.us>
Subject: Ramsey County Citizens Review Panel

Aaniin – Greetings.

I am reaching out today to you as Ramsey County Citizens Review Panel (CRP) members and Ramsey County staff that work with the CRP.

To begin, Miigwech (thank you) for the commitment you have made to participate in the CRP process. It is not easy work; systems change is difficult and slow in nature. You came to this work with a love for our community's children and families and a desire to improve their experiences within systems that, too often, were not created for them or by them.

We all know that in recent months the work of the CRP has become more difficult, with added tension and stress. DHS staff want to better support your success, understand obstacles to the work, revisit the core intentions of the CRP at Ramsey County, and create a path forward together. DHS staff will provide technical assistance and support to navigate this with you as partners. We will work to resolve any issues impacting CRP's ability to carry out its core functions.

To better understand the complexities that exist for CRP, we are setting up individual meetings with each of you. This is not an investigation. The intent of these meetings is to hear your concerns, explore what success has looked like for the CRP, and brainstorm ideas for how to move forward. We hope to meet with each of you over the next couple of weeks and then follow-up about potential next steps.

In her former role at DHS, Sarah Bello developed a draft set of CRP Operating Procedures that we'd love to share with you at a future meeting. These guidelines could possibly help with some of the structural questions that are arising. We need your expertise and input on this draft.

One issue we have gained clarity around is the role of the Ombudsperson for Indian Families as a member of the CRP. This role should not be excluded as a voting member of the Ramsey County CRP. See the following:

Minnesota statute specifically requires that CRP membership include representatives of certain other government bodies. It states, “The panel membership *must* include volunteers who broadly represent the community in which the panel is established, *including* . . . representatives of the councils of color and ombudsperson for families.” Minn. Stat. § 256.01, subd. 15(b). In listing these representatives as required members, the statute does not draw a distinction between representatives of these bodies and community members appointed to the panel through an application process. The implication is that these members are on level footing, at least in the eyes of the statute.

We look forward to our upcoming conversations and creating solutions to move forward.

In partnership,

Yvonne Goodsky

Deputy Director of Prevention and Operations | Child Safety and Permanency Division

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Ramsey County Children’s Services Review Panel Kinship Survey

Participant:

_____ **Relative (Related by blood, marriage or adoption)**

_____ **Kin (Close to family and considered family)**

Optional:

Race _____

Ethnicity _____

SURVEY QUESTIONS

- 1. Did you encounter any barriers during the licensing process?**
 - a. **If you answered “Yes”, please elaborate:**

- 2. The Process:**
 - a. **What worked best for you during the process of becoming a Relative/Kin provider?**
 - b. **What did you dislike about the process?**

- 3. Your perspective, insight and suggestions so that the system can be improved:**
 - a. **What would really have helped you during the process of becoming a provider?**

- 4. Are you or have you been involved in case planning for the youth in your care?**
 - a. **If you answered “Yes”, please elaborate on your involvement.**

- 5. Has any of the County requirements affected your family and your relationships with your family?
Licensing and visitation are examples.**