



LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Kimberly A. Foster
Executive Director

COMMISSIONERS:
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PATRICIA CURRY, VICE CHAIR
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TINA PEDERSEN, LCSW, VICE CHAIR
MARTHA TREVINO POWELL
SANDRA RUDNICK
STACEY SAVELLE
ADELINA SORKIN, LCSW/ACSW, CHAIR
DR. HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
TRULA J. WORTHY-CLAYTON

APPROVED MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **February 2, 2009**, in Room 739 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim transcription of events at this meeting.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Carol O. Biondi | Steven M. Olivas, Esq. |
| Patricia Curry | Tina Pedersen |
| Ann Franzen | Martha Trevino Powell |
| Susan Friedman | Adelina Sorkin |
| Helen Kleinberg | Dr. Harriette F. Williams |
| Dr. La-Doris McClaney | Trula J. Worthy-Clayton |

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT (Excused/Unexcused)

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Rev. Cecil Murray | Stacey Savelle |
| Sandra Rudnick | |

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Sorkin, Chair.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Self introductions were made.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Action

Motion by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Franzen, the Agenda for February 2, 2009 was unanimously approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **January 5, 2009** – Commissioner Franzen requested a correction on page 3, fourth paragraph, “The Commission has received a total of 300 surveys.” Change 300 to 30.

Action

Motion by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Worthy-Clayton, the Minutes of January 5, 2008, was unanimously approved, as corrected.

V. CHAIR’S REPORT

- **25th Anniversary Ad-Hoc Committee**
Chair Sorkin reported that the 25th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee met on January 21, 2009 to view the event location (8th floor balcony at the Hall of Administration) and to discuss the plans for this event. The event will be held on Thursday, April 30, 2009, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. As part of the program, the Chair stated that Commissioner Williams suggested honoring the founders of the Commission, such as Nancy Daly Riordan, Stacey Winkler, Beth Lowe, Helen Kleinberg, and Sandra Serrano Sewell.

The tentative invitees include: the Board of Supervisors, including past Supervisors Burke and Edelman; Department Heads; the CEO and past CAO David Janssen; DCEOs; Children’s Deputies including Miriam Long and Vivian Restivo; Justice Deputies; Health Deputies; other County Commissioners; past Commissioners; past Commission office staff; the Executive Office; community partners such as Alliance for Children’s Rights, Public Counsel, Community Coalition, Grandparents as Parents, etc.; the DCFS Senior Deputy and DCFS Deputies. There will be approximately 100 attendees.

Commissioner Worthy-Clayton inquired about the funding for the celebration. Chair Sorkin stated that the Committee is being very creative, as we have no budget. Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) will be asked to print the invitations and the program. The First Supervisorial District has offered to assist with Internal Services Department (ISD) for set-up. Restaurants will be contacted for the food. Commissioner Biondi suggested we ask the Probation catering school program to participate.

Follow-Up

Chair Sorkin will contact Supervisor Knabe’s office to reserve the balcony.

By February 17, 2009, the 25th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee will send out the list of proposed invitees to the Commissioners for their review. The Commissioners will then forward the names of any additional invitees to the Commission office.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Ad Hoc Committee - County Organizational Structure**

Commissioner Curry gave the Commissioners a brief summary of the Ad Hoc Committee, which was formed to review the report from Dr. Sanders and prepare a report with recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

The Committee has met twice with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Bill Fujioka and Deputy CEO Miguel Santana to discuss the Commission's concerns regarding the new County Structure. The first meeting focused on Dr. Sanders' report and the Commission's letter to the Board of Supervisors to determine what changes could be made that would provide solutions to the cross departmental and cross cluster child safety issues raised by Dr. Sanders. The second meeting focused on the CEO structure and the Commission partnering with the CEO to work across the clusters on an overarching County Plan for children, as recommended in the Commission's letter to the Board of Supervisors. They discussed how to possibly take the Transitional Age Youth (TAY) group and move across the County Plan/clusters to identify gaps or overlaps of services, identify current resources and leverage funding. TAY encompasses aspects from all four focus areas of the Commission. The Committee will meet again in approximately six months with the CEO and will possibly include Dr. Sanders.

Chair Sorkin thanked Commissioner Curry for her work in writing the letter to the Board of Supervisors. Chair Sorkin discussed the Commission's Sunset Review in August 2006 and read the following excerpt from the Review:

“The Commission's duties are to:

- Monitor, evaluate and report to the Board on the implementation progress of Board- adopted recommendations for improving the delivery of children's services and, when necessary, recommend modification of procedures to ensure compliance with the adopted recommendations.
- Review all County programs/services for children at risk.
- Receive input from community groups and individuals concerning County children's services programs....”

Chair Sorkin also read the following statement from the report:

“The Commission’s objectives for the evaluation period will be to work toward service integration and a continuum of care for children and families. Specifically, the Commission will work in the program areas of Prevention, Permanency, Family Reunification, Mental Health Services Act Planning, Transitional Age Youth, Probation, Faith Based Engagement, Homelessness, Training/Research Development and Community Capacity Building.”

Commissioner Sorkin stated that the Commission has continued to work in these areas as indicated in the Commission’s 2007-2008 Annual Report. The Commission will continue discussions with Miguel Santana on how to move forward with the Commission’s Agenda and the overarching approach and blending funds for the Commission’s areas of focus. The Commission’s four areas of focus that will be presented to Mr. Santana are 1) Prevention, 2) Crossover Youth, 3) TAY, and 4) Relative Care. Commissioner Kleinberg requested that the CEO staff discuss these four areas and provide information on the progress of each one.

VII. DIALOGUE WITH DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

In Miguel Santana’s absence, Kathy House, Jenny Serrano, and Vani Kumar from the CEO’s office addressed the Commission. In an effort to move forward in working with the CEO, Commissioner Kleinberg suggested they address each of the four areas of focus one at a time and discuss what work is being done in each area.

Prevention

Kathy House stated that in the area of Prevention, Carlos Pineda has been working with Magnolia Place and 8300 Vermont as facilities that offer an array of services to the community. Magnolia Place is a private facility that has representatives from DPSS, DCFS, L.A. Help and a Los Angeles Eligibility Automated Determination, Evaluation and Reporting (LEADER) System terminal. Their referral system includes a “warm hand off”, person-to-person referrals. They have some issues with sharing information across County Departments and confidentiality issues and County Counsel is working with them on the rules and regulations regarding confidentiality. They are attempting to centralize case management and are looking at a Family Child Index (FCI) system. This system will allow several departments along with law enforcement agencies to enter information on families and their contacts with the system.

Chair Sorkin inquired if Magnolia Place has a WIC office, as WIC serves as a primary area of prevention. Kathy House was not certain and will look into it.

Commissioner Curry inquired if Miguel Santana directed Kathy House on how to negotiate the four areas of focus for the Commission. Ms. House stated that no, she did not receive direct instructions from Mr. Santana.

Commissioner Williams requested clarification of LEADER. Ms. House replied that the Los Angeles Eligibility Automated Determination, Evaluation and Reporting (LEADER) system is an eligibility determination system for the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS).

Commissioner Kleinberg questioned how the clients are being evaluated and if they are getting prevention services, being treated well, and whether or not they are engaged. Ms. House stated that the goal is to improve the County's treatment of clients by looking at what is convenient for the family, not what is convenient for the system. She stated that Vani Kumar is working on outcomes. Ms. Kumar stated she is working on how to get services and information, a simple referral and tracking system, and looking at short term outcomes such as customer service.

In lieu of Miguel Santana's absence, Commissioner Olivas suggested the Commission discuss whether or not the four focus areas are workable and indicate the sub-issues under each focus area to discuss with Miguel Santana, rather than going into detail with questions to the CEO staff that are not prepared with answers.

Commissioner Kleinberg indicated for Prevention, some sub-issues could be: Prevention Initiative funding and education across clusters. Trish Ploehn stated that the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) results from the Casey evaluation will determine their funding. Kathy House stated that the CEO is looking at existing resources to see how best to blend funding and looking at where there is money, if there are opportunities to leverage funding. The County is also looking at opportunities to draw down grant and Federal Quality Health Center funding. The County is looking at different models to bring in money and leverage funding. Commissioner Curry questioned if there are outcomes, and Ms. House responded that yes, for years in the transition to Performance Counts, they have been able to capture outcomes from research and they have an evaluation group that breaks down cost benefits. Commissioner Curry questioned if there were outcomes for Mental Health services in Probation camps and for all the different streams of money. Jenny Serrano indicated that they do have staff who work with DMH and Probation and the funding issue will be looked at.

Commissioner Kleinberg asked if there was one overarching group that is looking at Prevention. Kathy House responded that the largest group looking at Prevention is PIDP. They are working on clients being assisted by different departments and crossing over or connecting. Ms. House indicated that there will be a Board letter as soon as they are able to deal with the FCI confidentiality challenge with sharing information.

Commissioner Williams discussed primary prevention and First 5 with Partnerships for Families (PFF), which is one of the strongest of 8 major agencies. The DCFS program, PIDP, is very similar and also very successful. How can they expand these successful programs? Is the new County structure a barrier to sharing these programs? Ms. House replied that the Social Services clusters interact and work together well. As far as working across clusters, relationships are being established and they are working towards better collaboration such as the gang prevention strategies and adult homeless indigent issues. She stated that there is better integration and better collaboration in this structure than there was in the past.

Commissioner Biondi inquired about the gang prevention work across clusters and meetings being held. Commissioner Biondi requested to be included in future meetings and to be sent copies of the Minutes of previous meetings, as she is the Commission's representative on this Committee. Ms. House stated that the CEO's principal analyst assigned to gang prevention is Vincent Holmes and she will relay the concerns of the Commission not being included and the request for Minutes to him.

Chair Sorkin expressed concern that there is no follow-up or connection to families that are homeless or in shelters and not in the DCFS or CalWorks systems. How is the county partnering, in terms of prevention, with that group of people? Ms. House indicated that the County has removed 250 families out of skid row. They are also looking at what services or money is available to help families in response to the foreclosure situation. The Community Development Commission (CDC) is working on identifying families that are under the radar.

Commissioner Olivas reiterated that the Commission should prepare for the next meeting with Miguel Santana. The Commission should develop an outline of the four basic areas of focus for the Commission and three sub-areas of focus under each one, plus any CEO issues. Also, we should indicate a Commission Liaison for each group, such as Commissioner Curry for TAY, Commissioner Williams for Relative Care, Commissioner Biondi for cross over youth, and someone for prevention. Mr. Olivas suggested this could be done after the Commission meeting in order to be ready for the next meeting with the CEO.

Commissioner Pedersen stated that Prevention should include these sub-issues: health issues such as obesity, and dental care.

Commissioner Curry indicated that TAY should include these sub-issues:

- Overarching County Plan – identify gaps or overlapping current services, integrate funds, and leverage money
- TAY Housing – Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)/TAY money
- Independent Living Program (ILP)
- How best to work across clusters.

Commissioner Kleinberg indicated that Prevention could include the same sub-issues as TAY.

Commissioner Williams indicated that Relative Care has a lot that can be absorbed by either Prevention or TAY, but should still include:

- Relative Care as a first option for placement.
- Explore ways to expand funding (some funding falls under First 5)
- Administrative Reviews (increased and need to be discussed).
- Feedback from Relatives (They are meeting with the Children's Council on February 13, 2009 to discuss what process is in place to gather feedback.)

Commissioner Kleinberg stated that the County does not understand Relative Caregivers and their issues. Commissioner Curry stated that some Relative Caregiver issues fall under prevention, some under TAY, some are in DCFS, and some are across clusters. Commissioner Curry discussed the need to separate DCFS and cross-cluster issues. Commissioner Worthy-Clayton indicated there may be information through Probation on the number of children that the court orders to return home or to a relative.

Commissioner Biondi discussed Crossover Children and the failure to identify ILP-eligible children. She also discussed the lack of connection to resources for Probation families in the prevention of siblings becoming part of the system and the disconnection of services when children leave the camps and transition into the community.

Commissioner Curry inquired who in the County oversees the integration of services for crossover youth. Jenny Serrano indicated that the CEO Service Integration Branch has that responsibility. Commissioner Curry suggested asking Miguel Santana to partner with them on integration of services, blending funds, and integration of funds.

Follow-Up

Kathy House will report back on whether or not Magnolia Place has a WIC office.

Commissioner Curry requested outcomes for funding streams, whether they are being met or not, and if any recommendations were made or implemented.

Commissioner Biondi requested copies of the Minutes of the meetings held on gang prevention and requested to be informed of future meetings and included as a participant.

The Commission's Executive Director, Kimberly Foster, requested that the lists of the three sub-areas be submitted to the Commission office for the next meeting with Miguel Santana.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ivy Carey, from Children's Law Center, informed the Commissioners that the Center has Attorneys on call 24 hours. When a child is arrested, Probation calls them and they try to get the child released and back to their relatives or group home. They also work with DCFS and will go to Delinquency Court to set aside disposition orders if the 241.1

is not complete. They work with open cases only, but if a legal guardian calls for help on a closed case, they may reopen the case. There is a recently placed DCFS kinship liaison at Delinquency Court that they may be able to work with in disseminating the information on this resource to relative caregivers. Commissioner Worthy-Clayton suggested that the Children's Law Center, along with the County Departments involved be put on a future Commission Agenda to discuss this combined effort.

Paul Freese, from Public Counsel, announced that Public Counsel and Mental Health Advocacy Services have received a grant for a new pilot project. This project will have a youth advocate focus on 14-18 year old foster youth to ensure they have access to ILP benefits and to actively support and ensure their educational stability. The pilot project is taking place in the East Los Angeles area and they are working with DCFS and Children's Law Center to identify the focused youth. They are working to ensure that these youth do not cross over to Probation, homelessness, or to the criminal justice system. They are also addressing the transition of youth out of probation camps into the community and whether they receive the DMH support services needed. Public Counsel, along with other legal partners, would like to have an active role in working with systems navigators on their level of engagement in the community.

Follow-Up

Commissioner Biondi requested data from the Children's Law Center on how many children have been helped by the availability of attorneys 24 hours and were able to stay in their placements rather than be incarcerated.

Commissioner Worthy-Clayton requested that the Children's Law Center, along with the County Departments involved in the pilot project, be put on a future Commission Agenda to discuss this combined effort.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Comments appear under Item VII.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

X. ADJOURN

Commissioner Sorkin adjourned the meeting.