

September 11, 2018 Minutes of the DC Citizen Review Panel

Time: 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Day: Tuesday

Place: Southeast Neighborhood Library, 403 7th St SE, SOE Meeting Room, Washington, DC 20003

Catering: Office Catering

In attendance:

CRP members: Ann Franke (Chairperson), Emily Smith Goering (Vice-Chairperson), Rick Bardach, (Treasurer), Megan Conway, Marie Cohen, Katrina Foster, Maura Gaswirth, Sherrill Taylor, Patrick Foley, Shana N. Bartley, Elizabeth Corson Mohler, Sarah Schooler, and Joy Graham.

Visitors: Emily Bloomfield, a pending DC City Council Nominee to CRP, Andrea Reid (CFSA Grant Monitor)

Facilitator: Joyce N. Thomas

Welcome/Introduction and Agenda

The second quarterly meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Ann Franke, CRP Chairperson. Ann expressed greeting to all the new members and was pleased with the 100% attendance. Each person introduced themselves, and table tents with names were visible. As stated in other meetings, the Chair informed the group that CRP panel members, visitor and the Facilitator must sign a confidentiality form at each meeting to ensure privacy of client information that may be discussed during the session. Client information was not discussed during this meeting, but the confidentiality form was signed by each person attending anyway.

Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes and Confirmation of Tonight's Agenda

Since this meeting had 100% attendance, the Chairperson indicated that we have a quorum and that she has reviewed and approved the minutes. Panel members indicated they had not received the minutes, and the Facilitator indicated they are posted online, and email copies will be sent to each member. The public notification requirement has been met.

Goals for this Meeting

This meeting is considered as the CRP Retreat session and there should be more discussion about future directions. The Chairperson introduced the goals for this meeting, and in general, the panel will participate in a brainstorming session to identify the priority focus areas for the upcoming year. In addition, it is anticipated that the panel should make recommendations for guest presenters for upcoming meetings. Further, there will be opportunities to examine alignment of the Working Groups, and perhaps identify additional working groups. Ann suggested we will have this discussion after we get updates for the two existing Working Groups.

Working Group Reports

- *In-Home Services Working Group:* Emily Smith Goering, Chairperson of this working group provided an update on activities. Besides Emily, members of the group consist of

Katrina Foster, Marie Cohen, and Maura Gaswirth. Emily reported that the group has met prior to tonight's meeting to focus on the activities to be accomplished. The focus is on the redesign of In-Home Care and emphasis on the large number of CFSA clients that are served at home. It was emphasized that over 64% of families known to CFSA are receiving in-home care. Emily mentioned that a meeting has been held with Robert Matthews to drill down to the most important tasks that are needed. The Working Group considered doing case reviews, but currently this is being done by the Court Monitor (Center for the Study of Social Policy). The Working Group expressed interest in evaluating the intensive needs of children and family as well as examining CFSA policies regarding services and outcomes. There have been discussions about holding focus groups, looking at evidence-based practices for in-home services, and identifying the type of data that should be collected to document outcomes. The recommendations stated in the recent annual report will be used as guide for next steps. Emily indicated a proposal will be prepared to zero-in on the activities of this working group.

- *Youth Ageing Out of Foster Care*: Rick Bardach, Chairperson of this working group provided a historical background and brief update on activities. Members of the Working Group include Rick Bardach, Sherill Taylor, Patrick Foley, and Megan Conway. The key question for this working group is, "Is the Young Women's Project providing quality services to youth, and how are outcomes documented?" The Working Group Chair stated that emphasis must be placed on documentation beyond contract requirements. Rick told the full panel that the usual expectations regarding attendance, youth obtaining employment, attending school, or securing housing is available. A large spreadsheet documents many of the descriptive findings. There is a need to understand the quality of youth engagement. Rick stated, "to get at this question, on September 10th, a focus group was held involving seven youth known to the Young Women's Project." Questions were raised about details related to the focus group. Specific information is needed about informed consent, number of questions, timeframe for the discussion, topics for the questions, summary of findings, and recommendations for next steps. He further told the group that there was a staff person present from Office of Youth Empowerment (OYE), and this was not well received by the youth. He and other members of the Working Group indicated that youth participating in the focus groups had strong negative comments about their personal experience with OYE while they were still in foster care. The members of the Working Group made a commitment to provide this information for the records.

Treasurer's Report

- The Treasurer indicated the Chairperson (Ann Franks) was successful to getting additional funds for the CRP. Rick provided a hardcopy of the CRP revised budget and gave an overview of the changes. The current budget is \$43,450 which represents an increase of \$8,450. It was pointed out that these funds must be used during this grant year which ends on March 12, 2019. Ann provided additional information about the need for funds to enhance Working Group Activities. She stated that the DC Code indicates the need for the CRP to get input from the community about their perspective of the CFSA. There was broad discussion about the budget items that were changed such as

hosting a community forum, transportation support for members, assistance with childcare if needed, and improvement of the website. Funds were approved on August 29th by a Grant Modification from CFSA. The Facilitator informed the group that these funds must be obligated by the end of this grant period on March 12, 2019. A new form was shared with the CRP members to document expenses for Working Group meetings activities, transportation and childcare. Receipts must be attached, and reimbursement by check will be sent out for costs over fifty dollars. Expense reimbursement for small amounts will be handled by petty cash.

Chairperson's Report

Following the Treasurer's report, Ann Franke indicated that the group should have an open discussion about the pending program modification based on the revised budget. She pointed out these new funds are intended to get the CRP to carry out a mandate of the DC Code, and to offer amenities to panel members that are consistent with support received by other CRPs around the country. She stated that before we have this brainstorming session, she informed the members that she will not be continuing as Chair of the CRP. She informed the group that a decision was made by MOTA¹, that she will not be reappointed to serve as Chair of the CRP. She continued to give a brief update on CRP vacancies. She reported that there will be three vacant positions, two appointments from MOTA, and one from DC City Council. Ann encouraged new members to review the most recent CRP annual report. Several members expressed appreciation for Ann's serving as Chair.

Brain Storming Session for the Development of a Community Forum and/or Adding a New Working Group

Ann led the discussion about possible topics for future Working Groups and possible ideas for the community forum. A list of topics was presented for consideration such as follow-up after the LaShawn Consent Decree is over, trauma informed practice, pregnant/parenting youth, the needs of homeless families, and screening of newborns for the presence of drugs. Many of these topics were follow-up ideas from the last CRP retreat and are issues related to child welfare and CFSA goals. Shana Bartley, one of the new members of the panel, raised the need for the CRP to address prevention, especially considering the new Families First Act which is in the process of implementation by CFSA. Marie Cohen raised concerns about some false assumptions of the Act such as simply reducing the number of children entering foster care does not necessarily mean the child has a successful placement or positive outcomes. She stated, "the Family First Act is not about primary prevention."

Additional topics for the proposed community forum or the establishment of a third working group were mentioned. These included addressing the issues of physical health conditions of child in care, especially looking at chronic conditions and continuity of care. The list was expanded to include Rapid Housing, services to youth ages 16 to 21 that are still in care and known to OYE, and examination of the needs assessment that are conducted by CFSA.

A few panel members raised concerns about the amount of work for a forum in such a short timeframe. Questions were raised about the availability of getting consultant support to assist, and yet many members were positive about the idea of a community forum particularly since there is limited representations from residents of Ward 8 on the panel.

¹ MOTA refers to Mayor's Office on Talent and Assessment, which is responsible for appointment to Boards and Commission in DC

To move forward, Ann pointed out the need to make decisions about the Where, When, Who, What and Why for conducting the forum. It was determined that:

Where - The ARCH in Ward 8 is a potential location.

When - Late April, during Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the logistics must be committed prior to March 12, 2019 to utilize existing funds.

Who - It was suggested that we partner with community stakeholders and perhaps School of Social Work

What - Target audience and number of participants must be defined.

Why - There is a mandate in the DC Code to get broad community input about child welfare issues, and a forum will provide greater visibility for the CRP that will assist with recruitment and improved quality oversight as intended by federal legislation.

Some concerns were raised about the amount of effort required to accomplish this, and the pressure of time related to fiscal issues. Ann suggested we get volunteers from the CRP panel to narrow down the topics and bring recommendations back to the group. Joy Graham, Shana Bartely and Emily Bloomfield will conduct a conference call to discuss further. The Facilitator will provide a call-in number and participate in the call.

Facilitator's Report: Joyce Thomas reported:

- The Administrative Assistant (Meron), is researching the needs in the current CRP website and identifying possible changes to upgrade it to be more interactive. We need to determine the cost for upgrade, and new cost (if there are any) for maintenance each month.
- We are in the process of researching the possibility of securing space for the community forum (preferably in Ward 8). Something like the ARCH or similar venue. We can move forward when the CRP makes recommendation about the date and size of target audience.
- An email will be sent regarding the procedure for requesting reimbursement for transportation and childcare services of panel members.
- Reminder about the Swearing-In Ceremony on September 17, 2018 for Mayor Appointees.
- A Dropbox account is created for CRP and annual reports and minutes have been uploaded. A link to the uploaded files will be sent to members.
- Working Groups have funds to support activities, and it would be helpful to have a written plan for the use of funds.
- The revised workplan was distributed.
- Reminder: There is still a need to revise the current CRP By-Laws for clarity of the rules of order.
- Reminder: Please review roster to make sure it is correct.
- A timeframe must be established for completion of the annual report.

New Business:

There was no new business mentioned

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Action Items:

1. Youth Aging Out Working Group should provide details about the focus group that was held on September 10th. This should include copies of informed consent from each youth, number of youth participating, list of questions that were asked, purpose of focus group, and the summary responses. In addition, it would be helpful to know who else attended the group session, and recommendations from findings.
2. In-Home Care Working Group should provide a statement on what funds are needed for their activities.
3. The Facilitator will communicate with MOTA about plans for appointment of a new Chairperson.
4. On September 18th, the Facilitator, Working Group Chairpersons, and Current CRP Chair will attend the quarterly meeting with CFSA Grant Monitor (Andrea Reid).
5. A committee of three individuals (Joy, Shana, and Emily B) will conduct a planning meeting for the proposed public forum.

Respectfully Submitted
Joyce N. Thomas, Facilitator