



Citizen Review Panel

District of Columbia

Tuesday, July 12, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Time: 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
Day: Tuesday
Via: Webex video conferencing

Virtual attendance

CRP members: Shana Bartley (Interim Chairperson), Mattie Cheek, Emily Bloomfield, Pierrea Wallace, Dr. Wanda Thompson, and Meghan Schott
Absent: Patrick Foley, Elizabeth Mohler, Theresa Gibson
Visitors: Rick Bardasch
CRP Facilitator: Margie Chalofsky, Toni Carr
Grant Monitor: Roni Seabrook

Welcome/Introduction

Shana Bartley, Interim Chairperson began the meeting at 6:30 PM and it was acknowledged that there was a quorum for tonight's meeting. She offered to the panel members a slight alteration in the agenda to welcome the new facilitator group as she felt it was better to use this time for proper introductions of panel members and to hold business until the fall to give Margie and Toni an opportunity over the next couple of months to learn as they transition into this new role. We will use the September meeting to pick back up our conversations around working groups and panel leadership. There were no concerns from panel members regarding the change in the agenda. Satisfaction of public notice was achieved. Each panel member present, as well as the one guest, the grant monitor, and the facilitator group confirmed the Confidentiality Statement to protect the privacy of any sensitive information that could be discussed at the meeting. Roni Seabrook, Grant Monitor, clarified for Margie and Toni that the required public notice is to be forwarded to her in advance for every meeting to be posted on the DC Register. Margie Chalofsky, Facilitator, asked if every meeting was public. Roni Seabrook responded that it is an open meeting and that there were specific reasons to close a meeting and that Margie Chalofsky would have to go through training on the "Open Meeting Act" with the DC government accountability office and she will send that information to her.

Approval of Minutes

Shana Bartley asked if panel members had received the minutes of the May 2022 CRP meeting, if there were any concerns or questions, and if they could approve those minutes. Some members noted that they did not receive the minutes. Shana Bartley stated that she was not sure if it made it out to the entire panel and that we should make sure that panel members receive them. She also stated that Meron verified that they were on the website and that panel members could get them from there and

that she would also drop them in the chat. The minutes were not approved at this meeting as all panel members were not in receipt of the minutes.

Updates and Panel Discussion

Backgrounds of Facilitators and Panel Members

Shana Bartley passed the meeting over to Margie Chalofsky and Toni Carr to introduce themselves and to share their backgrounds and what brought them to the role of CRP facilitator. After Margie Chalofsky and Toni Carr spoke, Shana Bartley invited panel members to introduce themselves, their passions and what brings them to the panel.

Shana Bartley opened the floor for questions for Margie Chalofsky and Toni Carr. Opened discussion followed:

Meetings

Margie Chalofsky shared the intention of meeting with each panel member individually.

Recruitment

Margie Chalofsky mentioned that one of the issues she has been hearing a lot about is gridlock in the nomination and appointment process and she will be working on that. A short discussion ensued about experiences with the process. It was noted that we have eight (8) members and can take up to fifteen (15). It was also noted that there are only two jurisdictions in the country, DC being one of them where CRP members are politically appointed. It was also noted that many of our vacancies were on the Council side. Margie Chalofsky made the suggestion that perhaps the panel could identify gaps in skills to see where we might need new members and how these needs can impact the recruitment process. Shana Bartley shared that although there is a less formal process on the Council side for nominations, panel members can make recommendations. A short conversation ensued about which members were appointed from the Mayoral or the Council side. We discussed that the general public may not understand the application process and strong potential members may not know how to apply. Mattie Cheek brought up the idea of marketing CRP so that it is more well-known which will also provide a recruitment tool for potential members.

Margie Chalofsky asked if panel members will be interested in hearing from the new Ombudsperson for children. Shana responded affirmatively and also shared that CFSA presents at their meetings two-three times a year.

Emily Bloomfield also mentioned her interest in understanding what other DC committees such as the CFSA Child Fatality Committee do so as to better understand how committees interact so that each one can create its own value. Megan Schott suggested including other DC committees that might not be part of CFSA so that we can learn what they do and how they can impact our work.

Wanda Thompson added inclusion of DC's Domestic Violence Fatality Committee as another committee we might want to hear from. She also recommended looking into the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC) to recruit possible new members.

Pierrea Wallace raised the question of what skills the panel would like to see in new members. Meghan Schott suggested more people who have received services from CFSA such as foster parents.” Shana Bartley also suggested a young person who has been in the system.

Margie Chalofsky asked if the panel has ever talked about birth parent representation on the panel and Shana replied anyone with lived direct experience would be good. Positive discussion followed about the recruitment of families.

Pierrea Wallace raised the question of how to identify birth families who may be interested in participating with CRP.

Mattie Cheek suggested that we develop a recruitment plan so that we can approach new members in a systematic way and asked that we not forget grandparents.

Megan Schott suggested that families impacted by CFSA should include those whose children were either not removed or reunified and can talk to the issue of stigma when an allegation is made.

Pierrea Wallace agreed and brought up including families with in-home cases as well expanding the grandparent category to all kin including fictive kin.

Mattie Cheek suggested looking into DC’s ward-based Family Strengthening Programs.

Emily Bloomfield suggested youth serving organizations, including schools, mental health professionals, etc. to speak to their experience with CFSA. Mattie Cheek suggested reaching out to faith-based organizations.

Shana Bartley stated that when we meet in September, we could identify a short-term committee to work on recruitment. She shared that prior to the pandemic the CRP was working on a recruitment plan involving flyer in community spaces. In the current situation, the committee could revisit a recruitment plan that could best work in these times.

Wanda Thompson suggested looking at newsletters from other organizations as well as small newspapers.

Roni Seabrook reminded the panel that while looking at the skill sets we need, we should also include people who can focus on CRP deliverables, i.e, research and report producing.

Margie Chalofsky supported Shana Bartley’s idea of having a small committee to look at recruitment/skills needed for new members. She also suggested that reaching out to the community is two-fold; that we need new members as well as outreach to the community for input from others who are not members.

Reports/Research

Mattie Cheek brought up streamlining the way we prepare the reports in the reporting process so that it could be more readable to the public. Shana Bartley agreed but clarified that the intended audience is CFSA and the federal government. She also shared that Councilmember Trayon White once referred to

a CRP report from the dias. Shana Bartley and Meghan Schott further discussed the suggestion of having easy to read short briefs about each report for the general public. Mattie Cheek also suggested developing different formats for different populations so that we can be a more inviting body.

Shana Bartley suggested that not all projects need to be long research papers. She brought up the example of the community forum that CRP did a few years ago. Community members and CFSA came together, and the CRP report was developed from the notes taken for each table. She mentioned that the mission is to be in-service of supporting and strengthening the child welfare system and that not everything has to be done by a major or longer-term research report.

Working Groups

Margie Chalofsky asked for confirmation that the working groups are expected to meet in between meetings and asked if there any workgroups still open. Shana responded that the older youth working group report put out earlier this year was the last open task. She stated that at the last meeting they brainstormed ideas for new projects and developed an active document with ideas that were discussed as a group.

Training of New Members

Shana Bartley stated that at the last meeting that they also discussed the need for training for members because everyone had a different baseline of information. Roni Seabrooks responded that Joyce Thomas had requested that she put together a list of ongoing CFSA trainings that members could participate in. She expressed positive feedback about the CFSA training academy and stated that because the training sessions are virtual it would be easy for CRP members to participate. She also talked about the CRP conference that was missed this year as well as other national CRP opportunities for training. Meghan Schott asked if there was any kind of "CFSA 101" training for new CFSA hires (that CRP members could take). Margie Chalofsky asked if the CRP orientation for new members covered a CFSA overview. She received a response that the CRP orientation covered the role of the CRP panel to CFSA and the mandates and requirements of the CAPTA and the CRP, but not an overview of CFSA's work. It was expressed by the group that because of continual new information, all CRP members, not just the new ones, would benefit from a" CFSA 101" training. Roni Seabrook will bring this idea to the CFSA Director and work with Margie Chalofsky to try to put this type of training together for the fall.

Concluding Comments

Margie Chalofsky told the panel members that she and Toni Carr are totally open to feedback and to please feel comfortable having honest conversations with them about their work. Shana Bartley closed the meeting by giving gratitude to current members for their participation and to Roni Seabrook for supporting them in the transition. She also again welcomed the new facilitator group and asked the group to look out for emails from Margie Chalofsky for individual meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted
Margie Chalofsky, CRP Facilitator
Toni Carr, CRP Administrative Support