

Kansas Foster & Adoptive Parent Association
Executive Board Meeting, April 19, 2008
Valley Center, Kansas

Board Members Present: Vice President Bruce Bynum, Secretary Sandra Hiller, Treasurer Tracie Wyatt, Region 3 Vice President Eltanis Volen, Region 5 Vice President Nancy Weigant, Membership Chairman Greg Jaquis, Resource Development Chairman Nancy Duling

Members Present: Peggy Jaquis, Bill Weigant, Missy Hoffman, Alice Griffith, Janice Snyder, Shadd Snyder, LaShonda Abbott

Vice President Bruce Bynum called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm. President Dennis Finch is ill and unable to attend today. Bruce asked everyone to keep Dennis in their prayers as he recovers. Introductions were made by all present.

Treasurer Report - Tracie Wyatt: Beginning balance is \$1719.86. Deposits of three memberships were made for a total of \$30. The only expense was the website purchase totalling \$147.94, leaving the ending balance \$1601.92. Tracie stated that she still needs the reimbursement check from Bruce Bynum for the plane ticket to attend the Walk Me Home state coordinator training and she will collect that today.

Tracie still needs the Walk Me Home information. Nancy Duling will get the manuals printed out for the board so we can begin to work on next year's event. Each region should have a person in charge for their area. We need to be sure our information is correct before we put it out. The address on the website is misspelled. Bruce said he will notify Christin at NFPA of that and get it changed.

The question was raised again about getting CEUs at our meetings. We can do that through the Children's Alliance if we provide an actual training. It was suggested that we consider providing medication training and universal precaution training, as Eltanis can do those trainings and they are required for licensing. Shadd Snyder stated that he can do car safety seat training in his area and could get permission to do that training elsewhere if needed. He lives in Region 3.

President's Report: Sandra Hiller spoke with President Dennis Finch this morning and Dennis stated that the election process and the Walk Me Home event should be the priority at this meeting. Dennis asked that we remind everyone that all board members must be accessible and accountable.

Discussion moved to the upcoming election. The nominations received to date were read by the secretary. Nominations will remain open until April 30. The bylaws state that all nominees must be members in good standing with both KFAPA and NFPA at the time of nomination. Bruce stated that we need to be sure that we have the resources if we choose to run, as it takes a lot of volunteer time, commitment, effort and patience in working with others. According to our bylaws, board members can only miss one meeting a year. Meetings will be quarterly when we get established. The secretary was directed to send out a notice to members regarding nominations. Sandra reported that she did try to call everyone last night who had contacted KFAPA about wanting to run for an office, and she has received a resume for the person running for Region 1 vice president, as he is unable to attend today's meeting due to a prior commitment. There is an individual interested in the Region 2 vice president position who had indicated she would attend today's meeting but is not present. A resume will be requested from her. The ballot will be mailed out to the voting

membership along with a brief biographical summary of each candidate. That ballot will be mailed as soon as possible after May 1.

Vice President Report- Bruce Bynum: Bruce reported on the Fatherhood Conference. Bruce was a presenter and he passed out a lot of membership flyers. Bruce would like to strengthen the link between the two associations. Bruce said he will be working with Youthville on kinship issues, and he reported that Youthville will be sending him to the NFPA Annual Conference. Bruce wants to be sure that all agencies have consistent guidelines overall, and he is especially concerned with kinship families.

Secretary Report- Sandra Hiller: Minutes of the previous meeting are available today and are posted on the website. There are 11 new paid memberships with a total of \$145 to be turned over to the treasurer, as well as two memberships given as door prizes at the Colby and Garden City KDHE meetings, for a total of 47 voting members. The new membership applications and fees were turned over to the treasurer.

A news article about TFI's Family Services Care Provider of the Year was read aloud, as that family is Bill and Nancy Weigant. They will also be attending the NFPA Annual Conference. We offered our congratulations and will put that article on our website.

The webmaster has kept our website updated upon request. We have received several comments on how professional our website looks. We had a request to consider having a blog section, and our webmaster has advised us that we probably don't have enough space at the price we are paying for blogs. It was suggested that we consider looking into blogspot.com or blogger.com to set up something that allows our webmaster to moderate the comments. It was suggested that we put the board contact information on the website which would enable people to contact the vice presidents of their regions.

Sandra asked the board about issues of confidentiality, especially with regard to emails. Sending out bulk emails gives out email addresses. It was suggested that emails have a confidentiality statement put at the bottom of them and another way to maintain confidentiality would be to send emails to herself and blind cc to everyone else if she has that capability.

Meetings attended on behalf of KFAPA by the secretary included the Project Belong kickoff in Hutchinson, Children's Alliance Training Committee meeting in Emporia, KDHE regulations meetings in Salina, Colby and Garden City, Newton Support Group, Benefit Concert for Kidz Camp in Hutchinson, and Dennis Embry training in Wichita. She will be attending the KDHE meetings in Chanute and Pittsburg, the Children's Alliance Training Committee in Emporia, the Walk Me Home informal walk in Topeka, and the Best Practices workshop in Hays in the new few weeks.

The draft of the Guidance Handbook regarding the KDHE regulations was reviewed and returned to KDHE with comments and suggestions.

Sandra asked for biographies as quickly as possible for those persons running for a board position. The condensed biographies will be emailed to the nominees for approval prior to the ballots being mailed out. A review of the membership revealed that we do have one person who has never paid dues, and that person is not eligible to hold a board position. Only current members can vote, which means that anyone wishing to participate in the election must be a member as of April 30, as the ballots will be mailed out shortly after that.

Saundra explained the questionnaire handed out at the KDHE meetings, and provided copies to the Weigants for the Wichita meeting. She will contact Sheila Peterman about the Great Bend meeting and get that information to her if Sheila is planning to attend that meeting. The questionnaires will provide us with feedback about what issues are of concern to the families.

We have discussed in the past the issue of board insurance and bonding, and Tracie will check into that, as we need to have that coverage.

Saundra reported that she checked with the IRS website this morning and they are now considering applications received in November 2007. Our 501c3 application was received in February 2008.

Region 3 Vice President Report - Eltanis Volen: Eltanis and Tracie attended the KDHE meeting in Topeka and talked to a lot of people and handed out a lot of brochures. Eltanis stated that we need to change our membership brochure after the election and we should list the board members' contact information on that brochure. That way people would know who to contact in their respective regions. We will also need new business cards. Board members who do not want their addressees made public can use the official KFAPA address on their business cards.

Region 5 Vice President- Nancy Weigant: Nancy and Bill have been working on the newsletter, which will be mailed out after the first election, probably during the first quarter of fiscal year 2009 (July – September 2008). The board will proofread the draft before it is sent to SRS for printing and distribution. A copy of an e-newsletter was given to us by Christin Kundert of NFPA and Weigants will look at that for ideas.

Nancy asked about ways to find out about resources across the state such as food-banks. Wichita has one, and Missy Hoffman volunteered that Hutchinson also has one. These kinds of resources that are available and helpful to foster and kinship families need to be identified. Tracie said she has been to a clothing store for foster families. It would be nice to have an exchange for things like prom dresses. Nancy agreed to head a subcommittee to work on these two areas: food-banks and clothing closets across the state available to foster families. Another resource that families often don't know about are the camps for kids. There is one coming up in Hays for children of parents with alcohol abuse issues, and Tracie stated there is a camp in Perry as well. Bruce suggested that if we get a blog set up, we could ask people to tell us about what resources they utilize in their communities and that information would greatly assist us as we begin to develop our resource directory. Meanwhile we can put links to different camps on our website.

Bruce reported that he has asked the 211 program about including us on their website, and he handed some information about that program to the secretary.

Eltanis said she has been trying to identify a contact person in every county in her region and would like the link to the county fair coordinators so she can work to set up some county meetings. That might boost awareness of the association.

Bruce asked if there were any reports from committee chairmen. Nancy Duling and Sylvia Hernandez of St. Francis Community Services stated that they had a presentation to make at this time and presented the secretary with an HP laptop computer with an external CD drive. Pictures were taken of the presentation and may be posted on our website to encourage other agencies to donate much needed equipment to KFAPA.

Nancy Weigant suggested that we provide daycare for meetings, especially when we offer trainings as well. Sandra stated that the families in western Kansas feel isolated and we should consider having mini-conferences in their areas as opposed to one annual conference, because we would probably be able to reach more families and show them that we are aware of the unique issues and challenges that they face.

Bruce commended the Weigants for their commitment. Sandra was asked to contact SRS about the status of the grant proposal made to them last fall. Bruce recognized Joyce DeBolt from KDHE, who reminded us that KDHE is going across the state with the new regulations and they appreciate KFAPA attending those meetings. The trainings have been helpful, and frequently asked questions will be posted on the KDHE website, where people can log in their questions as well. This is a transition period until October to get families in compliance with the new regulations. The Wichita presentation is April 24 at Youthville. The Guidance Handbook materials will be coming out later this summer as well. The KDHE contact regarding the FAQs and Guidance Handbook is Tina Ferguson. KFAPA did review the initial Guidance Handbook draft. Joyce stated that the child placing agency regulations will be looked at next, and there are members of our association that have expressed an interest in attending those meetings. The contact information for those individuals will be emailed to Joyce by the secretary. Sandra asked Joyce if we could put a statement about the CPA regulations review on our website to encourage comments from families and Joyce will check with Debi Hatfield about that.

Bruce thanked KDHE for allowing us to be a part of the trainings and expressed his thanks that KDHE has been in consistent attendance at our meetings. Nancy Weigant said we should ask every agency again to appoint a representative for our meetings, as St. Francis Community Services and KDHE have done. Sandra Hiller suggested that would be a good thing to do, as the contact list is quite large now and it is not practical to continue to send out emails to a massive list when we could send information to the designated representative for each agency and let that person disseminate the information throughout their own agency network. Bruce suggested that we post thank yous to the groups who send representatives to our meetings, as that shows the families which agencies are actively involved.

Old Business: Walk Me Home – Bruce stated that the official webpage for the Topeka walk is now up. We have permission from NFPA to use their tax exempt status. We will add that to our website as well. Tracie will try to get Channel 27 News out of Topeka to give us some footage. Next year we will have a much larger effort. Bruce said we must follow all the rules and regulations set by NFPA. As the statewide coordinator he will report to NFPA and will keep KFAPA informed as well. T-shirts are available for the walk, and it was decided that we can afford to purchase 35 shirts. Tracie was given the information and will pursue the t-shirt purchase. She is also soliciting hotdogs and chips etc. We may use some of the t-shirts as door prizes. It was suggested that we recommend to everyone wanting to walk that they wear light blue shirts to show unity as a group and it might show up more if we get on the news if everyone has the same color on. Dennis painted a large sign that we used at the Governor's Conference and we will ask if we can get that sign and perhaps he can make us one that says Walk Me Home to hang up at the walk site. Bruce explained that all checks should be made out to NFPA, as we are using their tax exempt status.

New Business: Bruce reported that the Wichita Prevention wants flyers for their picnic, this is a program for incarcerated parents

Tracie stated that she will be purchasing a ledger and a receipt book, the board signed a check for that purchase.

Bruce said we all have personal issues and sometimes we offer forth things that we need support for and he has an issue at this time. Bruce said that his mother has been diagnosed with breast cancer and the family would appreciate prayers as they face the challenge that lies before them. This is a new path that his family will be taking and he is not running for president at this time because of the uncertainty of where that path may take him. He said that he appreciates all that everyone does at KFAPA, and he stressed that everyone's input is important and needed. We want to be a solutions group, an action group that gets things done and not a complaint group. We are all here for the kids, and we take our hats off to foster parents that we are here to represent. Bruce said that we live by partnership and we die without it. If we follow our guidelines (bylaws) we will succeed.

Missy Hoffman spoke briefly about Project Belong and how they pass along KFAPA information at their meetings and on their website.

The door prize of a pot, potting soil, and seeds donated by the Weigants was won by Greg Jaquis. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm to the park for a cookout.

Respectfully submitted,

Saundra Hiller, LMSW
Executive Board Secretary