

Kansas Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Quarterly Board Meeting-Minutes
March 12, 2011, 10:00 a.m.
Via Teleconference

Present: Joyce DeBolt, Nancy Duling, Denise Gibson, Sandra Hiller, Dianne Kovarna, Jeff Piepho, Bill Reynolds, Julie Schoemehl and Mary Tye

Stacey Ulrich has a sick child and is unable to call in; Dana Decker has resigned.

Welcome

Julie Schoemehl, KFAPA President, called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. and welcomed the members.

Approval of Minutes-

Sandra Hiller made a motion to accept the December 11, 2010. Jeff Piepho seconded the motion and upon voting, passed unanimously.

Vice Presidents' Reports-

Region 1, Richard Basham, no report

Region 2, Julie Schoemehl

Reported there are a lot of empty homes, not placing kids except very temporarily and then moving them to kinship homes; families frustrated about getting kids enrolled in school, setting up appointments, etc. then having kids move in a few days. Julie Schoemehl asked Mary Tye if she would be interested in filling the position for Region 2.

Region 3, Dennis and Carol Finch - no report

Region 4-Diane Kovarna – is serving as an ambassador with Saint Francis Community Services; not enough homes in their area to accommodate all the kids; mentors new families, would like to see a mentoring program in place. Julie Schoemehl encouraged Dianne to speak with her sponsoring agency about the mentoring program.

Region 5, Dana Decker - Dana has resigned from her position. Julie Schoemehl stated that Dana has done a lot of telephone work with the Wichita agencies. Julie asked that Dana continue to foster relationships she has established. Julie asked if anyone has any recommendations for that position. Bill Reynolds will speak with their foster care staff to see if there is a family that would be interested in filling that position. Dianne Kovarna can fill in temporarily for Wichita meetings.

Treasurer's Report

Sandra Hiller reported that the balance was \$6691.31. There will be annual conference expenses coming up. The annual meeting will be hosted as an in person meeting and is scheduled for June 18. It was requested for Youthville to host the meeting. Bill Reynolds will check to see if the annual meeting can be hosted at Youthville. Nancy

Duling motioned that treasurer's report be approved. Dianne Kovarna seconded the motion and upon voting, passed unanimously.

Also elections will be held for the Vice President, Secretary, and Vice President Regions 2 & 4. Elections will be hosted at the June 18th meeting. Nancy Duling will do a mailing to the membership requesting nominations. Nominations will put together with each prospective member's paragraph. We will then mail out the ballots at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting.

Other Business-

Governor's Conference – The conference is calling for proposals and presenters. Saundra Hiller discussed having a panel. Saundra will write a proposal and will forward it to Kansas Children's Service League. The proposals are due April 29.

Logo - Stacey sent out a couple of format files about the logo. All board members should save the document, so that it can be used for business card. Dianne Kovarna hasn't received it. Julie Schoemehl will send the logo to her.

Policies and Procedures – Julie Schoemehl forwarded some of the policies and procedures before the meeting. This will be tabled to our next meeting. It is from Nebraska. Patricia Long felt strongly that we should have Policies and Procedures about reimbursements approval by board. It is suggested to approve via email vote. Julie requested that the board review it and have edits back by March 19. It will be sent for final approval by the end of month. Nancy Duling will send it out to the board.

KFAPA Membership Brochure – The changes have been forwarded and it is current on the website.

Fundraising – Julie Schoemehl asked Joyce about the Casey Foundation and whether there would be a possibility of getting some funding from the foundation. There was a conference call with KU regarding the Case Foundation. There were about 70 people on the call to discuss \$12 million grant. Julie did not get much out and has not received the minutes from the meeting. Denise reported last meeting that there was going to be a federal matching grant to teach foster parents how to talk about healthy sexuality with children in care. Denise received word that Children's Alliance did get the funding. There will be some issues that will need to be addressed with KDHE. Children's Alliance will be meeting to finalize the contract. The outcomes will be decided within the next couple of weeks. Children's Alliance would like to work with KFAPA on the grant. Julie Schoemehl has requested to keep this information on the agenda to hear about updates for the project.

Home Studies-Julie Schoemehl family was interested in a foster child that was available for adoption from another state. Their sponsoring agency said they would not be interested in doing the home study or working with the other agency. The family would

have to do that privately. Jeff Piepho stated that they just adopted a baby. They had to find someone on their own to do the home study. Mary Tye communicated about a child that is leaving tomorrow for their forever home. It was unfortunate because several families lost out because they couldn't get the home studies completed. Joyce stated that there are many small CPAs that will complete the home studies. It was communicated that going out of state requires ICPA approval which is a lengthy process. Joyce has a website at her office and will send out who they recommend to families looking for a placing agency. There is a website for Child Welfare Information Gateway. www.childwelfare.gov. You can call the state and will get a list of agencies. KC Metro Adoption Counsel is a resource as well which coordinates a lot of international and domestic adoptions. Nancy Duling recommended the North America Council on Adoptable Children as another resource. Their website address is www.nacac.org. Jeff Piepho stated that it would cost \$800 to get their home study completed through a private agency. Joyce communicated that from a regulation standpoint, it is up to the placement agencies to make those decisions. This issue should be brought to SRS's attention because it should not be holding up adoption processes. Families should be sure to ask agencies what their policy is regarding home studies. Julie Schoemehl asked if she should bring this to Patricia Long's attention. She will begin that discussion with Patricia, so no child in SRS custody would have an adoption linger because of the home study issues. Julie Schoemehl situation has been frustrating because although the child is listed as being adoption eligible, the agency does not seem to be interested in pursuing adoption with her family. Julie Schoemehl will follow up with Patricia Long. Julie asked Mary Tye if she is willing to talk with Patricia from a personal perspective. Sandra Hiller knows her situation as well and is willing to speak with Patricia about the challenges.

Training regarding Transportation - Julie Schoemehl attended the RAPP program meeting and met with Corey, Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Julie mentioned about the Parent Summit and the transportation issues that were raised then. Corey suggested that training should be done for agencies hiring transporters, to work with Children's Alliance. Denise asked for a training requirement and will go over that with Julie Schoemehl later this week. The transport drivers require some basics but no consistent training. Transporters receive information from foster children about things going on and the information is not communicated to the case manager. The transporters are not using correct car seats, with cars that are possibly not appropriate (3 kids being transported in a van with a metal divider for a 2 hr transport where kids are stuck way in the back). When they children are placed in this type of vehicle, there is no transporter/child conversation, interaction. There is not an opportunity for transporter to relay information. Kids may be relaying things to transporter that need to be reported. Dianne Kovarna reported a similar situation where she did not feel comfortable with the transporter situation. She called the worker and relayed her concerns. She was told to document that she wasn't comfortable with the safety of the child and did not allow the transporter to take the child. Foster parents are probably not aware that they have the right to refuse transport if they are uncomfortable with

the transport situation. Mary Tye stated the information that the transporter has with the bio parent is not being shared either and this information could be huge to the foster family and the agency.

Julie Schoemehl met with Denise in January about some of the things KFAPA can be doing regarding some issues that are going on in the state. Julie has been trying to connect with KFAN and FAC about Parent Summit issues. Julie wanted to discuss about coordinating another Parent Summit. Denise pointed Julie toward the Children's Alliance member agencies. Julie Schoemehl has made contact with all of the member agencies reminding them of KFAPA. She also has asked for opportunities for KFAPA to work together to introduce us to their families. She has received some positive feedback from some of those agencies, including some corporate memberships. Regional VP should reach out regularly to folks to remind them that we are here and available to work with them. Need to maintain current membership and work to increase membership. Corey urged JS to continue to reach out to the agencies. We should forward agency newsletters, etc. to JS so she can ask for space in their newsletters to educate about KFAPA.

Julie Schoemehl is running for the NFPA election, Vice President for Region 7. They only have 10 members in Kansas that are not KFAPA members. She has reached out to those families and sent membership brochures.

Nancy Duling had requested a change of name towards adoptive homes. There are numerous inquiries coming in from AdoptKsKids website. The families strictly want to do adoption. Nancy has attempted to explain how becoming foster parents is a helpful way to the process of becoming adoptive parents. Adoption disruptions are common. Nancy would like to look at ways to encourage families to become a foster to adopt family to help them get more educated about the system. The children's behaviors are difficult to manage from the system. Sandra Hiller reported that she encourages families in PS-MAPP class to consider foster to adopt. This suggestion would help the family learn about the system and the process. The issues would help families be more prepared to adopt a child from the system. Nancy Duling questions how many families are lost because they are adopt only and are not truly prepared to adopt because of their lack of experience. Mary Tye is an experienced foster parent and she feels that families should foster first because it helps them learn how to work with the social workers and the system. Families need to learn how to advocate, learn who to go to and where to go to get the answers. This is an opportunity to get families to network and learn how to get resources. Mary feels that the fostering piece teaches families how to learn to work with the system and if you don't foster, you don't learn that and you can get really frustrated, really fast. Julie Schoemehl stated that it is an education process and it is a new process for every family that is recruited.

Other Business:

Joyce DeBolt made an announcement that she will be leaving KDHE effective April 29, 2011. Joyce's replacement will be Deena Robbins, out of the Hays office. Joyce will continue as a professional member, she will be working at The Shelter in Lawrence, Kansas. She will start at The Shelter on May 2.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m. Julie has requested that the annual meeting will be hosted on Saturday, June 18, 2011, at Youthville. Bill Reynolds would help with the arrangements.