

September 10, 2019 Minutes of the DC Citizen Review Panel

Time: 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Day: Tuesday

Place: CFSA, 200 I Street SE, Washington, DC 20003

Nearest Metro: Navy Yard Metro Station

Driving Direction: <https://goo.gl/maps/1byRByY4bC52>

Parking: On-street

Catering: Cornercopia, cornercopiamarket@gmail.com

In attendance:

CRP members: Shana Bartley (Vice-Chairperson), Rick Bardach (Treasurer), Sherrill Taylor, Elizabeth Corson Mohler, Joy Graham, Marie Cohen, Megan Conway, Maura Gaswirth, Patrick Foley, Katrina Floyd, and Emily Smith Goering by phone.

Absent: Sarah Schooler and Katrina Foster

Visitors: Andrea Reid and Roni Seabrook, CFSA Grant Monitor

Facilitator: Joyce N. Thomas

Welcome/Introduction

This is the second quarterly meeting of grant period FY 2019-2020, and the meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM by Shana Bartley, Vice Chairperson. The Facilitator documented that we have a quorum and that the notice of the meeting was posted on the DC Register and CFSA website, thus the requirement for public notification was satisfied. All persons signed the confidentiality form to ensure privacy of client information.

Review and Approval of Minutes and Modification of Tonight's Agenda

Some panel members indicated they did not receive the minute from June 4, 2019. Shana indicated her desire to modify the order of discussion topics in the agenda in order to address key issues first. Topics focused on the CRP By-Laws revision, establishment of a new working group on Foster Care, child protective services working group, and frequency of CRP meetings.

Panel Open Discussion

Shana indicated the need to have feedback from panel members about changing the frequency of the CRP meetings from once a quarter to every other month. Her rationale for this change is to increase the number of full CRP meetings to get greater input from the full panel on critical issues. Several members were in favor of this change, but Marie pointed out the downside of such a change. Marie felt there would be less time for the working groups to meet and committee work would suffer. She further indicated that all panel members should be assigned to a working group and be an active participant. Joy and Emily were in favor of such a change and Shana indicated a need to poll all members about their preference. Several members were not present for this discussion due to arriving late.

The Facilitator indicated that such a change in the frequency of CRP meetings would have both a fiscal and personnel impact. Such a change would work best after a new CFSA Facilitator grant agreement is done. It was further pointed out that all full meetings must be open to the public unless the meeting is classified as a special meeting by the CRP Chairperson. Shana indicated that she would send out a poll prior to the December meeting to get input from the full panel.

The next topic focused on the crisis in the DC Foster Care and CPS system. Marie felt that the CRP should have a working group to evaluate the status of foster care and child protective services. The rationale for this working group is featured in the article by Morgan Baskin from the Hill Newspaper. Joy agreed with the need for such a working group and indicated that she is willing to serve as the Chairperson. She informed the group that she has strong interest and experience with foster care. Since Emily Smith Goering is conducting research on case review of foster children, she is also willing to serve on this newly recommended working group. This will be done during the beginning of next year, after the townhall meeting and the In-Home Care Working Groups are completed.

The final topic for open discussion involved the need to revise the CRP By-Laws. The Facilitator indicated the last By-Laws update was in 2012. Recently, CFSA provided a side-by-side chart to highlight discrepancies between DC Law, CAPTA and the CRP By-Laws. This chart was given to Shana. Several panel members informed the group of changes they recommended. Joy provided written change recommendations to Shana who will compile the changes and get feedback from members. Plans are to vote on new By-Laws at the next quarterly meeting.

The Facilitator has followed-up with MOTA for clarification of the process for finalizing the By-Laws. According to Elizabeth Keaton, once the By-Laws are approved by the CRP members, there should be a review by CFSA General Counsel and then a final review by MOTA.

Treasures Report

Rick Bardach provided an update of the CRP fiscal status. He indicated we are in the second quarter of the grant period FY 2020 between Child and Family Services Agency and the Center for Child Protection and Family Support, Facilitator of the DC Citizen Review Panel. The Facilitator provided hard copies of the fiscal report to panel members. The annual budget for this current grant period is \$42,887 for CRP expenses. During this quarter, \$8,262.75 was for personnel and fringe benefits. Supply cost was \$54.90, website maintenance was \$34.50, and quarterly meeting cost was \$170. Cost for transportation was \$36, community planning project was \$500 for space reservations, and indirect cost for this period was \$1,075. The total expense for this quarter was \$10,133.15. There were a few clarifying questions about the cost of space for the upcoming community forum and need for additional space for childcare services during the event. The Treasurer's report was approved.

Working Group Reports

- *In-Home Services Working Group*: Marie Cohen, Chairperson of this working group gave the report. The final report for the project has been completed and sent to CFSA for comments. This report documented the findings of the focus group, data review, cohort data and meetings with CFSA. The working group is waiting for comments from CFSA. The Facilitator will arrange for a final review, edit and dissemination of the report.

- *Youth Ageing Out of Foster Care:* Rick Bardach, Chairperson of this working group gave a brief update. He reported that on July 3rd a memo was sent to Brenda Donald requesting a meeting to discuss issues related to youth ageing out of foster care. Rick informed the panel of CFSA's decision to terminate the contract with Young Women's Project (YWP) effective September 30, 2019. Rick reported that CFSA has made a programmatic decision to bring after care services in-house, modeled after the YV LifeSet program, which they believe will yield better outcomes for youth. Brenda advised Rick to meet with the OYE team for follow-up.

Rick indicated the Youth Ageing Out working group proposes to examine services provided to foster care youth ages 18-21, focusing on program activities administered by OYE. This working group is seeking updated information from OYE on services provided to past recipients of post-emancipation programs. In addition, the working group is requesting to have brief monthly phone calls with someone at CFSA who can apprise them of major changes to policies, staffing or anything else related to the service provided to youth ages 18-21 and 21-23.

Rick has also requested an organization chart of OYE and case records for review by the working group. It was reported that these records are very large and there are many challenges. This working group has been in contact with Nicole Broom and Tanya Trice.

Susan Punnett, Executive Director at Family and Youth Initiative, will participate with this working group. According to the CRP By-Laws, "Task Forces shall, where appropriate, include non-Panel members who lend special knowledge or expertise to the work of the Task Force." Confidentiality forms will be signed by all persons on the working group.

- *Community Forum:* Joy Graham provided an update on the plans for conducting a townhall meeting for the CRP. The purpose of the community forum is to gain input from DC residents about their knowledge, attitudes, and feelings about activities of the DC child welfare system. In addition, the community forum will increase awareness about the mandated responsibilities of the DC-CRP. The overall intent is to engage the public in the safety and protection of vulnerable children and families.

Joy provided a summary of the planning process. The date has been set for the event to be held on November 23, 2019 and will be at the R.I.S.E Demonstration Center located at 2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave in Southeast, DC. The rental cost for this facility is \$500 for the day. The proposed structure of the activities for one day event will include having two keynote speakers in the morning session with an opportunity for questions and answers and discussion from the audience. Joy identified other team members; Katrina Floyd and Elizabeth Corson Mohler who will meet and flush out the plan. Shana Bartley and the Facilitator both requested to be involved in the planning process and the townhall meeting. The tentative townhall meeting schedule was presented and topics such as discussions on mental health first aid, kinship care, and other possible options were discussed.

Facilitator's Report

- ❖ The Facilitator, Joyce Thomas informed the panel that Roni Seabrook of CFSA will be the new grant monitor of the CRP. Ms. Seabrook introduced herself to the panel and expressed interest in working with the CRP. She indicated that she is a social worker at CFSA and currently the coordinator of the Mayor' Advisory Committee.
- ❖ Membership status is as follows: there are 13 appointed panel members and two pending appointments. Katrina Floyd was introduced to the panel and the facilitator informed the group that Emily Bloomfield still has not sworn-in by DC City Council. In late June, a new potential candidate was introduced to the Facilitator and a phone interview was held with Elizabeth Keaton, the Facilitator and Tracy Hamilton (an interested candidate).
- ❖ The website redesign is in the final phase. The Facilitator is working with Kahl Consultant Group who will design a new logo, complete a search engine optimization, and review the layout. The structure includes a home page, history, mission statement, events, resource information and frequently asked questions.
- ❖ The Facilitator reminded panel member to please submit a budget for working group activities before the next quarterly meeting.
 1. Need a budget for Community Forum

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

Action Items

1. Shana to collect comments from panel members on recommended changes to the CRP By-Laws.
2. The website will be ready for individual registration to the town hall meeting.
3. After the town hall meeting event, Joy Graham will serve as chair of new working group on foster care.
4. Emily will continue to research strategies on conducting case reviews on foster children.
5. The Community Forum will hold a planning meeting and engage additional members and keep Shana and the Facilitator informed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joyce N. Thomas, Facilitator