

Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council
Special Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday, June 4, 2008
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Present: David Hoffman, Linda Davis, Judge Michael Skwierawski, Jennie Dorsey, Judge Mary Triggiano, Pastor Archie Ivy, Colleen Ellingson, Deborah Blanks, Denise Revels Robinson, Dr. Earnestine Willis, Julius Agara, Janel Hines.

Guests: Diane Welsh., Felicia Thomas-Lynn – Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Pastor Ivy opened meeting with greetings and introductions.

Bi-Annual Subcommittee Reports, Subcommittee Chairs.

Reports were presented by David Hoffman, Public Policy Committee Chair; Colleen Ellingson, Adoption and Out of Home Care Committee Chair; Linda Davis and Dr. Earnestine Willis, Health Committee Co-Chairs and Julius Agara, Community and Systems Committee Chair.

Each of the reports included summaries of the following:

- Mission and focus
- Subcommittee activity in 2007
- Challenges and issues faced by the subcommittee in 2007
- Recruitment efforts and membership needs identified in 2007
- Provider and public outreach conducted in 2007
- Summary of subcommittee's goals and plans for 2008

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the reports presented by the subcommittees.

Discussion of the subcommittee reports provided the following input/suggestions:

- There is a need for an organizational chart showing the structure of the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and its relationship with various partner agencies. Denise Revels Robinson will work on getting this information.
- A "glossary of terms" will be developed to define terms, phrases and acronyms used by the Bureau and its partners -- a type of "Bureau-speak" dictionary. This information should be available in the next week to ten days. Judge Triggiano will work on a list of judiciary terms.
- Judge Skierawski and Judge Triggiano volunteered to work with Chief Judge Brennan to develop a plan that will enable Partnership Council members to attend sessions at Children's Court. This will provide hands on experience with the court system and help members to better understand how it impacts BMCW

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- families. It was suggested that this experience also include sessions at the downtown courthouse, especially those cases involving domestic violence. The Bureau also provides “ride alongs” and shadowing experiences with its case managers for Partnership Council members.
- Jennie Dorsey of MPS discussed ways the Bureau and MPS could share information regarding children and families. The group identified a need for an Education Subcommittee. Ms. Dorsey agreed to chair the Committee and Dr. Willis, Pastor Ivy, Deborah Blanks, Linda Davis and Denise Revels Robinson will participate as members.
 - The Committee wants to review the results of the Strategic Plan. Copies of the Strategic Plan will be distributed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

2008 Citizen Review Plan (CRP) and Subcommittees

Janel Hines presented the 2008 work plan for the Citizen Review Panel. Executive Committee members reviewed the plan and assigned Subcommittees to lead the following proposed activities:

- (1) Increase consumer (birth parent, relative caregiver, foster parent) participation in Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council meetings and committees. **Community and Systems Subcommittee**
- (2) Review, monitor and support efforts to recruit and retain quality out of home placement options to meet the cultural and developmental needs of children. **Adoption and Out-of-Home Care Subcommittee**
- (3) Develop and support efforts to recruit, retain, support and value a diverse, skilled child welfare workforce at all levels. **Executive Committee**
- (4) Use the information and recommendations related to BMCW practice received from CART’s child fatality review reports and the corresponding BMCW response to establish benchmarks for policy and procedure development, implementation and evaluation, as needed. **Health Committee**
- (5) Monitor and support the implementation of the Milwaukee Child Welfare Safety Plan. **Executive Committee**

Judge Mary Triggiano respectfully requested that she be exempted from work on the Citizen Review Panel as her position as a Children’s Court Judge may present a conflict

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of interest.

Questions arose regarding the role of the Partnership Council as a Citizen Review Panel. Chief Legal Counsel, Diane Welsh was able to help answer questions.

- Is the Citizen Review panel not necessarily the same as the Partnership Council? Their roles overlap.
- Do we need a quorum?
A quorum is a self-practice issue as opposed to a legal issue.
- Does the Partnership Council's role as a Citizen Review Panel necessitate changes to the By-Laws?
By-Laws are the same for both.
- Should meeting attendance be an issue? Attendance at meetings is not the only way to measure members input on the Council. (i.e. members may be very active on Partnership Council subcommittees but not able to attend full Council meetings.)
- Need to look at existing committees. Do we have overlap? Do we need new committees? Some Partnership Council committees are based on statutes, others are not. Can we streamline, change or refocus?
- Need to determine if all members of the Partnership Council can or should be part of the Citizen Review Panel.

CART Reviews and Recommendations

The Committee discussed CART reviews and the recommendations made by the CART.

- Cases need to be reviewed in a more timely manner, but we need to ensure that reviewers are given adequate time to review cases.
- The Partnership Council is an advisory committee, not an oversight committee. The Partnership Council can endorse or not endorse recommendations made by CART.
- Need to set benchmarks with timeliness and develop a way to monitor implementation.

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- May need to set aside one Executive Committee meeting per quarter to hear CART reviews.
- CART will report to the full Partnership Council at the October meeting. It will be a closed meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Zellner