

MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services
Friday, November 20, 2020
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, the meeting was conducted by Zoom rather than in-person. The Zoom meeting information was made available on the DCF DMCPs Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council webpage on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/partnership-council>)

Members Present: At the request of Chairperson Michele Bria, a roll call was taken to identify the Partnership Council members present for the meeting.

Present were Ms. Libby Mueller, Judge Laura Crivello, Ms. Christine Holmes, Mr. Tony Shields, Dr. Mallory O'Brien, Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Mr. Mark Mertens, Supervisor Patti Logsdon, Dr. Michele Bria, Rep. Jocasta Zamarripa, Senator LaTonya Johnson, Mr. Steve Gilbertson

Ms. Abby Trawicki (non-voting representative for Senator Alberta Darling) also was present.

A quorum of the Council was present on the Zoom meeting.

Notice of Meeting – Chairperson Michele Bria reviewed compliance with Open Meetings Law requirements

First, the notice of the meeting was published on the DCF and DOA websites on November 16, 2020, and in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on November 18, 2020.

Second, the notice was faxed to the newspaper of record for the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin State Journal, on November 18, 2020.

The notice was emailed to the Partnership Council stakeholders including any media who had requested such notice on November 16, 2020.

Finally, the agenda was posted on the front door of the DMCPs building at 635 N. 26th St. on November 18, 2020.

This satisfies the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law requirements for notice under Wis. Stat. § 19.84(1)(b).

Announcements and Report, Dr. Michele Bria, Chairperson

Dr. Bria acknowledged and thanked Dr. James “Dimitri” Topitzes from UWM for his years of service on the Council. Dr. Bria also thanked State Representative JoCasta Zamarripa, who will be transitioning from the Wisconsin Assembly to be an Alderwoman of the City of Milwaukee, for her years of service on the Council. Both will be departing from the Partnership Council.

Rep. Zamarripa thanked the Council for their good work. She encouraged everyone to keep Ms. Maria Rodriguez’s late husband Emilio Lopez, who was a community leader, in their thoughts.

Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr. expressed his condolences for his colleague, Ms. Rodriguez, and said Emilio Lopez was always a go-getter.

Dr. Bria expressed that Mr. Lopez’s heart was huge and stated, “he would move the world for any youth especially those that he was coaching.”

Acknowledgement of Adoption Day (11/20/2020)

17 children were adopted today at Children’s Court. Dr. Bria encouraged everyone to keep these families uplifted on their new journey.

Review and Approval of Past Minutes, Dr. Michele Bria, Chair

A motion was made by Ms. Libby Mueller to approve minutes from September 25, 2020 meeting. Judge Laura Crivello seconded to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Bria announced and congratulated Sarah Henery for accepting her new position as DMCPs Administrator after Charmian Klyve’s retirement.

DMCPS Updates & Report, DMCPS Administrator Sarah Henery

New DMCPS Administrator Sarah Henery spoke about her path to child welfare. She spent years working in the private sector and went back to school to have the opportunity to do public service work. She has been in the field of Child Welfare with DCF about 10 years, primarily working for the Office of Legal Counsel. She feels passionate about the work that DMCPS and our partners do. She has a lot of experience working with different types of leadership; she worked with four prior DMCPS Administrators, three Governors and three Secretaries. She is looking forward to carrying out the good work of staff at DMCPS as we move toward our next transition phase.

Request for Proposal (RFP) – Ongoing Case Management Services

Ms. Henery reported that DMCPS is continuing to work through the Ongoing RFP procurement. We are hoping for resolution soon and announcements of who our new ongoing case management partner agencies will be.

Family First. We are working closely with the DCF Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) and internally on what our plans are for Family First. Wendy Henderson from DSP will present on the statewide level for Family First this meeting. We are continuing conversations about the disparities in the child welfare system, how systemic racism impacts our system and where we can look for opportunities to counteract some of those impacts.

Congratulations to Mark Sarvela. Formerly a Section Manager with the DCF Bureau of Performance Management, he is joining DMCPS as the new Quality Improvement Section Manager. Tyler Oettinger is filling Mr. Sarvela's former position in the Bureau of Performance Management.

COVID-19 updates- We are down about 20% of screen ins and referrals in comparison to previous years. At the end of October 2020, we had about 5,202 screened in referrals; we normally would average over 8,000. Our intakes are still down with fewer children coming into out-of-home care. However, referrals have up ticked since their dramatic decrease in April and May of 2020 to be closer to their average around this time of year.

Staff have done a phenomenal job trying to get Initial Assessment cases

closed in a timely fashion. As of yesterday (11/19/2020), we had 42 overdue Initial Assessment reports; last year around this time we had closer to 200.

DMCPS has been tracking staff taken offline who had contact with someone who was COVID-19 positive or who have been positive themselves. We have been getting more reports of staff in contact with COVID-19 and testing positive. We will continue to support our staff that are ensuring children are safe during these stressful times.

Presentation- Family First Prevention Services Act and Child Welfare Transformation, Wendy Henderson, Administrator of Division of Safety and Permanence

Presentation materials can be found at:
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/partnership-council>

DCF's vision for Child Welfare Transformation is that all Wisconsin children are safe and loved members of thriving families and communities. The purpose is to strengthen all Wisconsin families to support their children because children belong with their families.

The Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First) is a change in the federal reimbursement for how the Child Welfare system is funded and the ability to access funding for prevention and family preservation services. As a higher level of care, Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) will eventually be federally reimbursed. DCF's "Go live" date is 10/1/2021 but this will be a phased-in process over time. DCF needs parts of legislation to be passed to develop the criteria, policy and standards for the QRTP Designation.

Question after presentation, Supervisor Sequanna Taylor: As a County Supervisor, how can we and elected officials on the State level assist on the legislation part and collaborate to work toward the solutions?

Ms. Henderson: We have a small piece of legislation that we do not see any opposition to that allows DCF to certify a provider as a QRTP. We need this passed as early as possible. We would love for people to make that known to their local legislators. As soon as this passes, our staff and stakeholders can flesh out the rules of becoming a QRTP but right now providers are waiting for that information COVID-19 has slowed the work in

that field.

Sup. Taylor advised that her office will reach out for more details.

Updates MCWPC Committees, Dr. Michele Bria

Future Meeting Dates

- Critical Incident- 11/23/2020 9:00 am-10:30am
- Out of Home Care-12/2/2020 12:15pm-1:00pm
- Heath and Education: 12/17/2020 12:00pm- 2:00pm

Status of Committees

Critical Incident: Ms. Libby Mueller- No updates currently. First meeting occurring 11/23/2020.

Health and Education: Ms. Christine Holmes- For upcoming 12/17/2020 meeting, representatives from CARE4KIDS and Chris Shafer, the Education Liaison for Wraparound, will be attending. If any other contract agencies have an interesting topic in Heath or Education, they are encouraged to reach out to Ms. Holmes.

Out-of-Home Care: Judge Laura Crivello- The purpose of the Out-of-Home Care Committee is to address issues related to services with children who have been removed from their homes, licensing, supporting training with foster care and placement resources, and issues related to adoption. All are encouraged to be a part of this committee.

2021 Meeting Dates, Dr. Michele Bria, Chairperson

Dr. Bria proposed the following dates for the Partnership Council to meet in in 2021

- March 26, 2021*
- June 11, 2021
- September 24, 2021*
- November 12, 2021

*Settlement presentations

Motion to adopt dates for 2021 made by Mr. Tony Shields and seconded by Senator Latoya Johnson. Motion passed unanimously.

Community Input, Dr. Michele Bria, Chairperson

Susan Conwell from KIDS Matter- Ms. Conwell is curious to know in next meeting how agencies are experiencing volume. She states KIDS Matters numbers are up 57% this year. She thinks this is because they work a lot with family caregivers and the placements happening family to family. She is interested in what other agencies are experiencing outside the child welfare system.

Concluding Remarks, Dr. Michele Bria, Chairperson

Dr. Bria wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and encouraged everyone to take time to rest and find joyful moments. Keep imagining and reimagine how we can keep supporting our families moving into the adventure of what the world would look like Post-COVID.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Christine Holmes and seconded by Supervisor Patti Logsdon. Motion passed unanimously.