

FCRO Advisory Committee Minutes

March 11, 2013

Hruska Law Center, 635 S. 14th, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Lincoln NE

MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

NO. 7

Call to Order A meeting of the Foster Care Review Office (FCRO) Advisory Committee was held on Monday, March 11, 2013. Notice of the meeting, pursuant to statute, was published. Craig Timm, the Advisory Committee Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Roll Advisory Committee Members present were: Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley, and Craig Timm. Michelle Hynes joined the meeting by phone due to inclement weather and was a non-voting participant at the meeting.

Staff Present Kim Hawekotte and Heidi Ore.

Open Mtgs Law Chairperson Craig Timm stated that the Open Meetings Law and Agenda for the meeting were posted per law.

Agenda The Advisory Committee reviewed the agenda. Elizabeth Neeley moved to approve the agenda. Sandy Kruback seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. Michele Hynes gave her assent.

Minutes Elizabeth Neeley moved to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2012, meeting. Sheree Keely seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. Michele Hynes gave her assent.

Financial Report Kim Hawekotte asked the Advisory Committee to review the February 28, 2013, Budget Status Report. Ms. Hawekotte reported that 66.58% of the fiscal year had elapsed and the FCRO had expended 54.43% of its budget. The Advisory Committee reviewed and discussed the Budget Status report and expected expenditures.

Ms. Hawekotte stated that the FCRO's Appropriations Hearing was held on March 7, 2013. Ms. Hawekotte reported that the Appropriations Committee had appropriated funding for an additional FCRO Review

Specialist position, that the Senators asked good questions, and that she offered to meet with the Senators to answer their questions as well. The Advisory Committee discussed agency staffing levels and positions, the FCRO's current budget request and how the request was determined, if fewer children in care would impact the FCRO's staffing levels, that Senators had emphasized in some of their appointment hearings how they would rely on the FCRO for data concerning children in out-of-home care, and if the Advisory Committee needed additional persons.

Exec Director Report Ms. Hawekotte asked the Advisory Committee to discuss the process for Executive Director Reports. The Committee and Ms. Hawekotte discussed several options and determined that Ms. Hawekotte would provide a written monthly report incorporating manager's monthly reports with her own report.

Ms. Hawekotte stated that she was working on agency organization and communication by creating a Leadership Team consisting of herself, Linda Cox, Mary Furnas and Heidi Ore. Ms. Hawekotte stated that decisions would be made at the Leadership level and communicated to the Review Specialist Supervisors and staff.

Ms. Hawekotte provided an agency specific SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats) Analysis that the Leadership team and the management staff had developed. Ms. Hawekotte stated that the analysis had also been provided to staff and they would add to the analysis at the all staff meeting in May.

Ms. Hawekotte provided a Strategic Plan that she and the Leadership team developed. Ms. Hawekotte and the Advisory Committee discussed the goals, objectives and action steps outlined on the document. The Advisory Committee discussed the Strategic Plan and suggested that a specific Data Strategic Plan also be developed.

Ms. Hawekotte stated that the Leadership Team would utilize and update the SWOT Analysis and Strategic Plan and progress would be noted. Leadership Team members, Supervisors, and staff would participate in specific work groups as needed to meet the action steps outlined in the Strategic Plan. Ms. Hawekotte stated that the Leadership Group meeting minutes would be provided to the Advisory Committee.

Ms. Hawekotte updated the Advisory Committee on pending Legislation pertinent to the FCRO and children in out-of-home care. The Advisory Committee discussed the Legislation and asked that updates be sent.

Ms. Hawekotte related several systemic issues and concerns she had become aware of through her contacts and meetings including DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services) changing its policy on Shelter Care, the change of foster parent licensing, how DHHS provider contracts will be RBA (Result Based Accountability) based by July 1, 2013, and that she has been working to assure the FCRO is meeting with systemic partners. The Advisory Committee discussed these issues.

Ms. Hawekotte provided the draft FCRO Quarterly Report, due to the Legislature on March 15, 2013, to the Advisory Committee for their review. Ms. Hawekotte reported that Elizabeth Neeley, as the Data Analysis Expert on the Committee, had been reviewing and offering input on the report. Ms. Hawekotte stated that she planned to release the report to DHHS and NFC (Nebraska Family Collaborative) prior to releasing the report.

The Advisory Committee discussed the data and trends outlined in the report, data elements to collect in the future, how SDM (Structured Decision Making), a decision matrix employed by DHHS to determine if a child can be safely returned home, may be lowering the number of children in care, and that FCRO staff and local board members will be trained on the SDM Model.

Ms. Hawekotte asked the Advisory Committee to share their comments regarding the Quarterly Report with her and Linda Cox by 5:00 pm the following day.

Old Business

Ms. Hawekotte updated the Advisory Committee on the status of several ongoing internal projects. Ms. Hawekotte stated that the FCRO's scanning project is underway and staff will begin testing in the following weeks, that the FCRO's main office will expand square footage in the coming year and will be remodeled at that time, and that staff were working with DHHS N-FOCUS staff on automating case manager changes. The Advisory Committee discussed the updates.

New Business

Ms. Hawekotte stated that she would be developing a policy to help staff balance their regular workloads and continuing education opportunities. Ms. Hawekotte stated that she had scheduled an all staff meeting for May

6th, 2013 where staff would attend in person. Ms. Hawekotte invited the Advisory Committee to attend. The Advisory Committee discussed the proposed agenda for the staff meeting/training.

Ms. Hawekotte provided the schedule and draft agenda for local board member summer trainings being held across the state. The Advisory Committee discussed the training topics, lunch panel invitees, if CLE's and CEU's would be available for attendees, and ideas on how to publicize the trainings.

Ms. Hawekotte asked the Advisory Committee to consider implementing continuing education requirements for local board members. The Advisory Committee discussed how to assure training would be accessible to all local board members, the possibility of web-based trainings, how local board member input on training topics would be attained, and how training hour requirements could be spread over multiple years.

Public Comment Chairperson Craig Timm asked if there were any public comments. Seeing none, the meeting continued.

Executive Session Elizabeth Neeley moved to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues. Sandy Kruback seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. Michele Hynes gave her assent. The Advisory Committee went into Executive Session at 3:45 p.m. Kim Hawekotte was asked to remain.

Sandy Kruback moved to come out of Executive Session at 5:00 p.m. Sheree Keely seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. Michele Hynes gave her assent. No motions or actions were required after Executive Session.

Next Meeting The next Advisory Committee meeting was set for May 13, 2013, at 1:30 p.m. with the location to be determined at a later time.

Adjourn Elizabeth Neeley moved to adjourn. Sandy Kruback seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. Michele Hynes gave her assent. The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.