



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**Special Meeting
December 1, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

Commissioners present in person: Jackie Aaron, Melinda Fruendt, Samantha Galloway, Jonathan Hall, Ginarie Harrington, Jason Hicks, Rachel Holt, Kalie Kerth, and Lindsay Laird.

Commissioners present virtually: Brenda Myers, Mike Warren, and Brad Wilson.

Guests present: Michael D. Aleman, Susan Agel, Brandy Bahm, Sandra Balzer, Erica Beauford, Joe Dorman, Randy Dowell, Adrienne Elder, Rory Grimes, Betty Hawkins-Emery, Constanzia Nizza, Lynda Steel, John Talley, Wanda Felty, Tamara Bryan, John Reisenberg, and La'Chanda Stephens-Totimeh.

Staff present: Annette Wisk Jacobi, Mark James, Robert Agnew, Kathleen Arrieta, Danielle Dill, Nicole George, Elizabeth Kaup, Harold Jergenson, Marcia Johnson, Ellen Lohrenz, Joseph McGrath, Keith Pirtle, Lisa Rhoades, Isabel Rodriguez, and Cherra Taylor.

Welcome, Introductions, and Determination of Quorum

– *Vice Chairperson Kalie Kerth*

Vice Chairperson Kerth called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

Public Comments

Public comments were given by:

- Joe Dorman, Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA): OICA had a successful Fall Forum and is submitting OICA's Legislative Agenda to lawmakers on December 1, 2022. He asked the OCCY Commission to consider including OICA's Legislative Agenda as part of their own agenda.
- Betty Hawkins-Emery, Parent Partnership Board (PPB) member and the Co-Chair of the Alliance National Parent Partnership Council: Ms. Hawkins-Emery and others from the PPB attended the Children's Trust Fund Alliance and Conference in Denver. She thanked OCCY and Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness for sending them to the conference, from which they received vital information about Parent Partnership Boards across the country which they will use for their own advocacy.

Review of the Minutes from the September 26, 2022 Regular Commission Meeting

– Vice Chairperson Kalie Kerth

A handout was provided.

Commissioner Holt moved to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Harington seconded the motion. The majority of members present voted in the affirmative. Director Fruendt, Interim Director Galloway, and Commissioner Laird abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

Presentation and Approval of the Proposed OCCY Commission Meeting dates for Calendar Year 2023.

– Vice Chairperson Kalie Kerth

The 2023 meeting dates are January 13, April 14, June 23, August 18, September 15, and November 3.

A handout was provided.

Commissioner Laird moved to approve the dates as submitted. Commissioner Aaron seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative. The motion passed.

Presentation and Approval of the Finance Report

– Brandy Bahm

Ms. Bahm provided an overview of the financial report through October 31, 2022. To date, OCCY has a budget of \$4,475,769 and as of October 31st, the agency has spent \$1,689,094 for a total variance of \$2,786,674.

Commissioner Laird requested that a guide of funding codes be listed so that the financials are more easily understood.

A handout was provided.

Commissioner Laird moved to approve the Finance Report. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

Report from the Parent Partnership Board (PPB)

Isabel Rodriguez, OCCY Community Planner

Ms. Rodriguez thanked the Commission, OCCY Staff and OPSR for the support and the opportunity given to four of the PPB members to attend the 2022 Children Trust Fund Alliance Annual Meeting in Denver. This meeting provided them with the opportunity to connect with other parents and professionals from different states and national organizations, build their leadership skills, and increase their knowledge of important issues impacting children and families. She invited the Commissioners to attend the Parent

Partnership Board meetings and thanked Commissioner Schneider for attending the Annual Meeting as well as connecting with the parents. Ms. Rodriguez noted that Annette Wisk Jacobi was honored at the Conference for her years of service as treasurer for the Alliance.

Legislative Report – Agency Request Bills

– Marcia Johnson

- **Identifying Students Experiencing Homelessness (Rep. John Talley)** – The Homeless Children and Youth Steering Committee expressed concerns that schools are underreporting homelessness among students to the State Department of Education (SDE). This bill will direct the SDE to work with the OCCY's Homeless Children and Youth Steering Committee to design and adopt a standard form that will be completed by the parent or guardian of every student annually at enrollment. Another provision of the bill will require the SDE to report the number of students experiencing homelessness by district to the Commission, Speaker Pro Tempore of the Senate, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, Speaker of the House, Chair of the House Education Committee, and the Governor. Representative Talley stated that a form with new language was needed to determine the extent of the issue of homeless youth in Oklahoma.

Interim Director Galloway moved to support the Identifying Students Experiencing Homelessness Bill. Commissioner Harrington seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

- **Supporting Youth Formerly in Foster Care to Transition to Independence (Rep. Mark Lawson).** This bill will provide an annual stipend or another type of financial support that does not involve direct payment—to youth, ages 18-25, who are verified to have been in the state's foster care system on their 16th birthday and later aged out.

Concerns arose regarding about direct payments to a young adult, who may not be able to manage their finances. Discussions continue to determine the final outcome.

The Commissioners were requested to vote to support the continued work on the formation of the bill.

The Commissioners expressed concern that not enough information is available to move forward with support. Interim Director Galloway stated that the workgroup is leaning towards a monthly stipend and that DHS will provide administrative support, but at this time there is not enough information for a vote.

This discussion was tabled until more information could be presented to the Commission.

- **OCCY Administration Bill – no author as of yet.** This bill will modify language to make operations more efficient and will also delete outdated language.
 - Deleting certain defined terms not used in the sections of Title 10 governing OCCY;
 - Modifying composition of the Commission by deleting a representative of a community partnership board;
 - Deleting all other references to community partnership boards, which are no longer functioning;

- Clarifying the term limitation of a person appointed to fill the remainder of a vacant term on the Commission;
- Requiring the director of OCCY to prepare an annual report summarizing the activities of the agency;
- Requiring the assistance of the Parent Partnership Board in preparing the State Plan for Services to Children and Youth;
- Requiring the State Plan for Services to Children and Youth to be updated every 3 years instead of annually and providing that copies of the plan be sent to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House and the Governor;
- Clarifying the responsibilities of the Parent Partnership Board;
- Modifying the yearly RFP requirement for the Mentoring Children of Incarcerated Parents program to every 5 years;
- Exempting local Post Adjudication Review Boards (PARB) from the requirements of the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act and; and
- Extending the terms of local PARB members from three to five years.

Director Holt moved to support the OCCY Administration Bill. Commissioner Aaron seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

- **Support for High Quality Legal Representation.** This bill will establish a system of high-quality legal representation for children and parents involved in the child welfare system. It was asked what “high-quality legal representation” means. Director Jacobi answered that it means, in part, having contracted attorneys who have lower caseloads, have been provided specific trainings, and have a multi-disciplinary team that can support them and their clients.

A handout was provided.

Commissioner Laird moved to support the High Quality Legal Representation Bill. Interim Director Galloway seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

- **Support for Seatbelt for Children aged 8-17 Years Old (no author yet).** This bill will restore the requirement that children between the ages of 8-17 wear a seatbelt when riding in the backseat of a vehicle.

A handout was provided.

District Attorney Hicks moved to support the Seatbelt for Children aged 8-17 Year-Old Bill. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

- **Handle with Care OK Legislation – Adrienne Elder presented along with Master Sergeant Michael Aleman.** This legislation is designed to advance partnerships between law enforcement and schools to help provide a safe and supportive academic environment for children recently exposed to traumatic events known as “adverse childhood experiences” (ACEs).

Ms. Elder has been working with multiple leaders within agencies to do this work, so the costs of implementation are going to be low. There are monthly planning calls to continue to work together better. The first version of this legislation will be submitted on January 18th for the February 2023 Legislative Session. Ms. Elder asked OCCY to add this to our legislative agenda and asked each Commissioner to designate staff to attend HWC Planning meetings.

Master Sergeant Aleman spoke about this legislation from the law enforcement perspective. The HWC police unit, comprised of officers, responds to HWC reports, and coordinates with local non-profits to help get the child or family services immediately. He stated that it is vitally important that we grow this program statewide.

A handout was provided.

Director Holt moved to support the Handle with Care OK Initiative. Interim Director Galloway seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

Interim Director Galloway left the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

- **Proposed OCCY Administrative Rules**

There are two chapters in OCCY's administrative rules that need to be modified. The changes are in response to statutory changes that were made several years ago. Director Holt asked that the office address also be stricken from the administrative rules.

A handout was provided.

Director Holt moved to adopt all as proposed with an amendment to strike 135:1-1-1.2. completely. Director Fruendt seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative.

State Auditor and Inspector's OCCY Operational Audit Report

Erica Beauford, Auditor, State Auditor & Inspector's Office

Ms. Beauford gave an overview of the OCCY performance audit for the period of January 1, 2018 – June 30, 2022. There was one finding related to inventory control, which OCCY has already addressed. She thanked Annette Wisk Jacobi, Mark James and the OCCY staff for their cooperation and complimented them on the audit results.

Presentation: Oklahoma Respiratory Season Update

Jolie Stone, State Epidemiologist, Oklahoma State Department of Health

Ms. Stone gave an overview of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and the health implications for children. In Oklahoma and nationwide, the RSV positivity rate has been higher than usual for the 2022-2023 respiratory season, due partially to COVID-19 mitigation measures such as masks and isolation, causing immunity to RSV to wane. There may be another RSV spike in early spring 2023.

Seasonal influenza is elevated across the county, with Oklahoma State at a high level. Nationwide, hospitalization rates for influenzas have not been this high since 2010. Influenza positivity began climbing

at the end of October, earlier than the usual rise in December. Oklahoma is on track to have the highest levels of influenza positivity since the 2017-2018 Influenza season.

This respiratory season may be worse because of several factors, such as a possible winter spike in COVID, the changing epidemiology of RSV and Influenza, and a lower influenza vaccination rate compared to previous years.

Presentation: Oklahoma Children's Hospital Behavioral Health Center

Randy Dowell, CEO, University Hospitals Authority and Trust

Oklahoma Children's Hospital is building a Behavioral Health Center on their campus. This center will specialize in children who are difficult to place in out of home care because of concurrent health disorders or a dual diagnosis.

Suicidal ideation has grown exponentially. One in five Oklahoma children/youth suffer from depression, anxiety, mood disorders, post-traumatic stress and/or other serious ailments. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among children/youth ages 10-24 in Oklahoma, and the state ranks 33rd in the nation for access to mental health services and support.

The new facility will be the third largest juvenile mental health facility in the United States. It will serve as a premier training facility for a variety of healthcare providers in the state and the nation.

Presentation: Helping Every Life and Parent (H.E.L.P.)

Juli Merciez, Chair, H.E.L.P. Task Force

The H.E.L.P. Task Force was created to examine ways to support life, mothers, parents and the public in the State of Oklahoma. The Task Force recommendations include:

- create a website that compiles resources, initiatives, programs, and educational information for pregnant women and parents;
- create a statewide network and process to make Abortion Pill Reversal available;
- expand funding for pregnancy centers through the Choosing Childbirth Act;
- amend the Oklahoma Adoption Code (10O.S. § 7505-3.2(C)) to increase the initial amount authorized to be expended on birth mother living and transportation expenses from \$1,000 to \$3,500 without first obtaining court approval;
- expand health services to women in all areas of the state and address the social determinants of health including improved access to care and reliable transportation for women;
- seek support for the new Pregnancy Resource Navigator (PRN) program administered by the Oklahoma State Department of Health;
- expand home visiting and case management services; and
- raise the federal poverty level (FPL) for SoonerCare income eligibility for pregnancy and postpartum coverage from 138% to 205% FPL and to extend postpartum coverage from 60 days to 12 months continuous coverage.

Director's Report

– *Annette Wisk Jacobi, Executive Director*

In the interest of time, Ms. Jacobi asked that Commissioners contact her after the meeting with any questions or concerns regarding her written report.

Announcements

– *Commissioners*

Commissioner Laird noted that the Parent Partnership Board is looking for nominations and encouraged the Commissions to refer parents to apply.

Chairperson Comments

– *Vice Chairperson Kalie Kerth*

No comments were given

Adjournment

– *Vice Chairperson Kalie Kerth*

District Attorney Hicks moved to adjourn the Commission meeting. The Commission meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 13, 2023 AT 9:00 a.m.