



**OKLAHOMA
COMMISSION ON
CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**June 23, 2023
9:00 a.m.**

Commissioners present in person: Kevin Corbett, Melinda Fruendt, Kalie Kerth, Lindsay Laird, Keith Reed, Deborah Shropshire, Mike Warren, and Brad Wilson

Commissioners present virtually: Jonathan Hall, Jason Hicks, and Brenda Myers

Guests present: Amber Adams (OCCY Parent Partnership Board), Betty Hawkins-Emery (OCCY Parent Partnership Board), Sandra Balzer (Oklahoma Office of Attorney General), Thad Burk (Oklahoma State Department of Health), and Jessica Hawkins (Healthy Minds Policy Initiative)

Staff present: Annette Wisk Jacobi, Mark James, Rob Agnew, Kathleen Arrieta, Danielle Dill, Marcia Johnson, Ellen Lohrenz, Caitlin Merritt, Joseph McGrath, Keith Pirtle, Lisa Rhoades, Isabel Rodriguez, Cherra Taylor, and Mahboob ul Haq

Welcome, Introductions, and Determination of Quorum

— *Vice Chair Kalie Kerth*

Vice Chair Kalie Kerth called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with a quorum present.

Public Comment

Betty Hawkins-Emery spoke briefly about caregivers over the age of 55 years of age and the lack of resources available to them while they care for grandchildren, foster children, or adoptees.

Review of the Minutes from the April 14, 2023 Meeting

— *Vice Chair Kalie Kerth*

A handout was provided.

Director Fruendt moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Reed seconded the motion. The majority of members present voted in the affirmative. The motion passed.

Presentation of the Finance Report

— *Mahboob ul Haq, OCCY Business Manager*

A handout was provided.

Highlights of the financial report through May 31, 2023:

- OCCY continues to meet with its OMES finance partners to ensure the agency is on track and financially viable.
- OCCY has utilized 87% of its \$4.8M budget, leaving a balance of \$625,047.

- OCCY has \$808,640.27 cash on hand, which includes \$415,545.20 carryover from SFY22.
- SFY23 is estimated to have utilized 90% of its budget, with an estimated carryover of \$630,000 to SFY24.

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

Presentation of the Proposed State Fiscal Year 2024 OCCY Budget

— *Mahboob ul Haq*

A handout was provided.

Highlights include:

- The total volume of the budget increased by \$293,031 in SFY24.
- The state appropriations for SFY24 are \$2,869,414 an increase of \$360,000 over the previous fiscal year. The funds will be used for the following expenses:
 - Juvenile Competency Evaluations \$60,000
 - The Chief Child Abuse Examiner is \$100,000
 - Two new full-time employees for \$200,000.
- Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant (CBCAP) and Pre-School Development Grant (PDG), two new grant-funded programs have been approved. The CBCAP will receive \$ 235,000, and the PDG will receive \$ 245,000.

Commissioner Fruendt moved to approve the SFY24 Budget. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative. The motion passed.

OCCY Commission Officer Elections

— *Director Melinda Fruendt, Nominating Committee Chair, OCCY Commission*

The Nominating Committee, which consisted of Director Fruendt, Judge Warren and Commissioner Wilson, met on June 21, 2023 to discuss nominations for OCCY Commission Officers. The following individuals were nominated:

- Commissioner Schneider for Chair
- Commissioner Kerth for Vice-Chair
- Commissioner Hall for Secretary

Commissioner Kerth asked if anyone would like to make additional nominations from the floor. No additional nominations were made.

Director Fruendt moved to approve Commissioner Schneider as Chair. Judge Warren seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative and the motion passed.

Director Fruendt moved to approve Commissioner Kerth for Vice-Chair. Judge Warren seconded the motion. Commissioner Kerth abstained. All other members present voted in the affirmative and the motion passed.

Director Fruendt moved to approve Commissioner Hall for Secretary. Judge Warren seconded the motion. Commissioner Hall abstained. All other members present voted in the affirmative and the motion passed.

OCCY Parent Partnership Board (PPB) Report

— Amber Adams, PPB Member

A handout was provided.

Ms. Adams shared her personal experiences with Oklahoma social services.

Commissioner Hall encouraged Commissioners to attend a PPB meeting. He stated that he recently attended and visiting with the board members was a meaningful and positive experience.

Update: Oklahoma Human Services

— Dr. Deborah Shropshire, Director, Oklahoma Human Services (OHS) and OCCY Commissioner

Update Regarding the Child Welfare Reform Lawsuit:

- As of March 2023, OHS has achieved 23 of the 30 goals included in the Pinnacle Plan. OHS expects to achieve the seven remaining goals by late 2024.

Update on The Governors Child Welfare Task Force:

- In January 2023, the Governor created the Child Welfare Task Force to address child welfare challenges such as children being permanently placed in a timely manner and appropriate services being provided for biological parents seeking reunification with their children who had been removed. The Task Force consists of 12 members and has been meeting since March. A report including their recommendations will be issued on October 1, 2023.
- The Task Force is utilizing data and subject matter expert insights from a variety of sources including The Administrative Office of the Courts, the District Attorneys Council, and OHS as well as foster and biological parents. Surveys were also distributed to many more to seek a broader input and the results from that survey are currently being reviewed.

Ongoing OHS Challenges and Accomplishments:

- OHS continues to need more services for youth who have significant mental health and/or behavioral issues. Often these youth can be physically aggressive, and they may be involved with the juvenile justice system. Fifty percent of the teenagers who entered the state child welfare system over the last 18 months were abandoned by their parents. It may not be possible for this population of youth to find a permanent family home, but the alternatives should not be to place them in a juvenile detention center or hospital. OHS is working to develop appropriate placement for such youth.

- OHS has completed the first year of what is anticipated to be a three-year process to end the Developmental Disabilities Services Wait List. Secretary Corbett stated that multiple agencies seek services for these children/youth, but too often services are only found out of state.
- OHS distributed nearly \$38 million of Temporary Assistance for Needy Family Funds, via a Request for Proposal, to non-profits to provide additional supports for youth. In addition, \$9 million was provided to various fatherhood projects across the state.
- OHS has recently invested in work readiness programming with the goals of making it easier for individuals to apply, land, and maintain employment.
- OHS has developed a multi-sector plan on aging. This plan includes supports for older individuals who are raising children during their senior years.

Presentation: Adverse Childhood Experiences - Data from the 2021 Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS)

— *Thad Burk, Child and Adolescent Health Epidemiologist, Maternal and Child Health Assessment, Oklahoma State Department of Health.*

A handout was provided.

Overview highlights:

- Due to COVID-19, the survey was postponed from the Spring of 2021 to the Fall of 2021.
 - Fifty public high schools, with grades 9-12, are randomly selected from around the state to participate.
 - School and student participation is voluntary; however, parental consent forms are mandatory.
 - Survey topics include unintentional injuries and violence; tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use; sexual behaviors; dietary behaviors; and physical activity.
 - Adverse Child Experiences (ACE) questions were added in 2021 and cover emotional, physical and sexual abuse; neglect; parental substance abuse, mental illness or incarceration; violence; and racial/sexual discrimination.
 - ACE 2021 Survey results: 14% had zero ACES; 17.2% had one ACE; 32.1% had two to three ACE; and 36.5% had four or more ACES. Children with high ACE scores had a greater chance of being bullied, having depression, and completing suicide.
 - Positive Childhood Experiences (PCE) questions were added in 2021 and include having an adult or friend to talk to about feelings as well as feeling close to people in school.
 - PCE 2021 Survey results: 54% had a supportive school; 48.9% had a trusted friend; and 43% had a trusted adult in their life. Children with a higher number of PCEs generally had lower instances of being bullied, having depression, and completing suicide.
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Presentation: Oklahoma’s Continuum of Care for Children

— *Brittany Hays, Director of Policy Research and Engagement, Healthy Minds Policy Initiative*

Overview highlights:

The Healthy Minds Policy Initiative’s mission is to end untreated mental illness and addiction in Oklahoma through policy and practice transformation. In Oklahoma, the rate of a major depressive episode during ages 12-17 have steadily increased between 2012 (~8%) and 2020 (~17%).

The Healthy Minds Policy Initiative focuses on:

- building a continuum of care which includes universal prevention and promotion, and comprehensive crisis care
- supporting youth and schools with multi-tiered systems of support which include prevention, intervention, and treatment
- expanding access to mental health care and strengthening Oklahoma’s behavioral health workforce by crafting and supporting legislation such as
 - Senate Bill (SB) 254: Requires commercial insurers to arrange behavioral health care for plan subscribers if they cannot find timely care on their own
 - SB 442: Addresses “ghost networks” by requiring insurers to update information in their provider directories every 60 days
 - SB 444: Activates medical billing codes that reimburse primary care doctors, psychiatrists, and mental health practitioners who collaborate to treat patients
 - House Bill (HB) 2175: Creates the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Fund

Legislative Report

— *Marcia Johnson, OCCY Legislative Liaison*

A handout was provided.

- OCCY received an appropriation of \$2,869,414 for SFY24 – an increase of \$360,000 from the previous year. The additional funds will be utilized for juvenile competency evaluations, the Chief Child Abuse Examiner contract, and two additional staff positions for the agency.
 - **Signed into law:**
 - HB 1029 requires a new form to be used by school districts to report information about student homelessness to the Oklahoma Department of Education. This information will be utilized to seek federal funds.
 - Senate Joint Resolution 22 revokes obsolete language within OCCY Administrative Rules.
 - SB19X will improve the child welfare system by providing funding for specially-trained attorneys to represent children and/or parents as well as a multidisciplinary team consisting of parent partners and social workers to support the attorneys and parents.
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Presentation: Post Adjudication Review Board (PARB) Overview

— Keith Pirtle, PARB Program Manager

A handout was provided

The Post Adjudication Review Boards (PARB) are groups of locally trained volunteers who meet regularly to review active child abuse and neglect cases.

The purpose of PARB is to:

- oversee the implementation of the state post adjudication review program
- identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to issues concerning child welfare and foster care services
- submit a report of the activities of the review boards, including the findings and recommendations of such review boards, to the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth

In 2022 PARB had:

- 279 State and Local PARB Volunteers
- 6,499 Volunteer Hours Reported
- 2,222 Case reviews completed
- 42 active Boards (7 in Oklahoma County, 4 in Tulsa)

Director's Report: A Report Regarding Agency Activities and Personnel Changes

— Annette Wisk Jacobi, OCCY *Director*

A written report was provided.

Director Jacobi introduced Caitlin Merritt, Community Planner, the newest employee within OCCY's Office of Planning and Coordination. Ms. Merritt will be working on parent engagement for Oklahoma's Preschool Development Grant. Funding for her position is provided by the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness.

There will be an OCCY Commissioner Retreat on August 18th facilitated by Jeff Linkenbach of The Montana Institute. More details will be forthcoming.

Chairperson Comments

— *Vice Chair Kalie Kerth*

Vice Chair Kalie Kerth thanked everyone for attending.

Adjournment

— *Vice Chair Kalie Kerth*

Vice Chair Kalie Kerth adjourned the meeting at 11:52 AM.