

Family Services Review Commission Meeting

March 1, 2007

HSB-252

Members present: Jessica Chanay, Diane Cohen-Alpert, Kim Freeman, Peggy Kennerly (by phone), Rosemary Lazzari, Rob Potter, Angela Sanchez (by VCON), and Michael Ware (by phone)

Members excused: Maggie Bagon, Doreen Binder, Miranda Herrera and Shirley Kaping

Members absent: Bonnie Davidson

DHS staff present: Dr. Bruce Goldberg, Ramona Foley, Mickey Serice, Jim Neely, Vic Todd, Dave Lyda, and Nancy Sathrum

Guest: Representative Tina Kotek, Erin Terrall

Administrative Handouts, sent via email prior to the meeting: Meeting Agenda, Draft Minutes of the February 1, 2007 FSRC Meeting, DHS Summary of Complaints Report for January 2007, Draft Committee Chair Responsibilities, Draft Policies and Operating Procedures, Expense Reports/Per diem, Approved final version of the FSRC's talking points document

Additional Administrative Handouts at meeting: FSRC Member Roster, List of Self Sufficiency Program Legislative Bills as of 2/27/07, January 2007 CAF Public Assistance Caseload Statistics

Greeting and Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 8:40 a.m. with a membership quorum in attendance.

Introductions were made around the table. Peggy Kennerly and Michael Ware participated by phone and Angela Sanchez participated by VCON. Rob introduced Rep. Kotek.

Dr. Bruce Goldberg, DHS Director:

Dr. Goldberg gave a brief update on the legislative session, saying that it will be difficult to deal with the new federal TANF requirements. However, it is an opportunity to re-examine the current TANF system and move to a program that will help children and families to become self-sufficient with living wage jobs. Two bills have been introduced; one by Rep. Kotek (HB 2469) and one by DHS (HB 2180). Rep. Kotek's bill provides enhancements to what is in the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB). These bills should be heard soon and Bruce is cautiously optimistic.

Guest: Representative Tina Kotek:

Rep. Kotek said she will be hearing the TANF bills as a member of the House Human Services and Women's Wellness Committee and the budget as a member of the Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee. She has taken the recommendations from the

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DHS TANF Oversight Committee and is working on amendments to her bill. The differences aren't substantial but there will be funding challenges. She would like to see the policy framework in statute, not all the funding streams. There is an information meeting scheduled for tomorrow to update members; DHS and Chuck Sheketoff from the Oregon Center for Public Policy have been invited to testify.

Rep. Kotek is reviewing the fiscal impact statements and would like to see the funds used where they are most needed, in the up-front assessment process. She would also like to increase the income eligibility to 100% of poverty level. The two-parent program was discussed and it was stated that some states don't have two-parent programs.

The TANF bills will be heard at a Public Hearing and Possible Work Session scheduled for next Wednesday, March 7th. Public testimony will be heard and written testimony can be provided.

Items discussed:

- Both bills will address client engagement instead of using the term "sanctions" and clients will be held accountable to meet the requirements of their individual plan.
- The FSRC has asked for a front-end, Pre-TANF program. The front-end investment will decrease costs and help ensure children's safety and family self sufficiency. Section 2 of Rep. Kotek's bill includes providing early services and getting clients connected with the appropriate programs.
- Jack Tweedie has contacted Ramona and asked her to participate in a Web Conference "Meeting the Employment and Parenting Needs of Low-Income Families" on March 27th.
- HB 2469 deletes the deprivation section. We need to keep children safe regardless of who lives in the house.
- States make policy choices on how to spend state funds. In the past, DHS has used TANF funds for Child Welfare.
- Since the 1990's we haven't paid relatives for foster care if the child isn't IV-E eligible. This issue is being addressed in a DHS Policy Option Package (POP).
- How can we continue to provide needed services to parents when their children have been removed from the home? Some services are covered by Medicaid system. Our hope is to keep kids in a safe environment while the parents successfully complete treatment so the family can be reunited.
- Rep. Kotek thanked the FSRC for inviting her to discuss the bills to help find the best possible wrap-around services. She asked for the commission's input on the bill and welcomed members to testify when the bills are heard.

CAF Report, Ramona Foley, Mickey Serice, Vic Todd and Dave Lyda:
TANF Reauthorization, discuss status of TANF bill, revised TANF regulations and TANF policy changes:

Ramona thanked commission members that testified during our Ways and Means presentations. Having partners at the table with DHS was very well received by the subcommittee. CAF had a total of 11 days scheduled for Ways and Means. The subcommittee has experienced members and has been very attentive. They have asked appropriate questions that we monitor and answer after the hearing.

Jim thinks it's the best committee he's worked with since he began participating in legislative testimony in 1985. Often their comments speak to the state not funding services/programs in the past. Although some discussion with leadership is currently taking place, the full budget discussion should begin as soon as the rest of DHS gets through their Phase 2 presentations.

Mickey reported that Legislative Counsel has many new staff and it is taking additional time to get the amendments written. He believes committees will begin hearing bills, some without the necessary amendments. The two TANF bills will be heard together. Rep. Kotek is working on a side-by-side comparison of HB 2469 and HB 2180. **ACTION:** The FSRC requested a copy of Rep. Kotek's comparison document when it is available. **(Nancy sent Rep. Kotek's office an email on 3/26 requesting document when it is complete.)**

Ramona mentioned an article from The Associated Press regarding TANF numbers declining at the same time the number of people applying for other services, such as Medicaid and food stamps, continue to increase. **ACTION:** Nancy to send to FSRC members. **(Done 3/1/07.)**

A TANF Informational Meeting is scheduled with the House Human Services and Women's Wellness committee for Friday, March 2nd. Invited testimony only will be heard.

Using the Legislative Web Site, members can e-subscribe to hearing notices for committees. Mickey recommended FSRC members subscribe to the House and Senate Human Services Committees and the Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee.

How will our systems accommodate the necessary changes due to implementation of the TANF bills? DHS is currently discussing Information Systems and Accounting changes that may be needed. Central office and field services have designated leads for each major issue who are reviewing the TANF Oversight Committee recommendations.

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Field staff continue to work toward meeting the participation expectations. The Post-TANF program may enable more counties to meet the requirements.

CAF and Seniors and People with Disabilities, Developmental Disability Services (SPD, DDS) have been meeting to discuss implementation of the SSI program. SPD has agreed to assist in training CAF staff. The GRB proposes additional SSI liaison staff.

There were 12 specialist positions that weren't included in the GRB. Rob would like to see this funded through other methods, possibly contracted staff. The legislature may look more favorably if the services can be provided without increasing DHS staff numbers. This work may assist families before they enter the child welfare arena.

Diane said she is noticing positive changes in field offices to correct identified problem areas; reception, greeters, and staff aware of community services/partners. The Dr. Ford training has helped create a culture of how to work with and serve our clients. It has created energy and engagement for staff.

Rosemary, Rob and Jessica did a great job testifying before the Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee.

Grievance Report: Members were provided the DHS Summary of Complaints Report for January 2007 for review.

Diane reported that Multnomah County staff don't want to use the DHS form. They want a simple one-page form for clients. The current form is too difficult for clients to complete. They are to let FSRC and DHS know what they are doing. Who are they going to notify? The grievances listed probably don't accurately reflect what is actually happening in the field offices.

Lori Nelson has requested a representative from the FSRC for a Customer/Client Committee that will develop rules to govern the policy. Maggie and Angela have both expressed interest. The committee will hold approximately three two-hour meetings. Rob will send out an email for interest. Angela will ask permission to be involved since her front desk experience will be very valuable. **(Per Rob's email on 3/2/07, Angela Sanchez will represent FSRC on this committee.)**

Chair Report:

- Action and follow-up items:
 - Approved the TANF Talking Points paper electronically. Unanimous vote.
ACTION: Nancy will prepare a vote summary for the record. **(Done 3/16/07)**

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- Approval of Minutes: Kim Freeman motioned and Rosemary Lazzari seconded the approval of the February 1, 2007 FSRC meeting minutes as written. Vote of approval was unanimous.
- Commission membership status: We have received notice that the Governor's Office will be appointing Mavel Morales, Oregon Law Center in LaGrande. The Governor's Office will be contacting two FSRC members that haven't been participating in meetings regarding the status of their appointments. The commission appointment process was discussed; the Governor's Office sends DHS and the FSRC Chair copies of interest forms for our recommendation. The Governor's office has the final responsibility and authority for appointing and removing members from the commission.
- Other discussion:
 - Members should notify Chair and FSRC Administrative Assistant if they won't be in attendance. Members should resign if they aren't able to attend meetings.
 - Every two years the strategic plan is reviewed and updated to develop the focus of the FSRC.
 - It was mentioned that the monthly meetings may be a hardship for people and suggested that it may be better to meet every other month and tighten the agenda. FSRC meetings seem to rehash the same issues each month without resolution. It was explained that in the June 2006 strategic planning session, the group moved to monthly meetings this year to address all the issues around TANF reauthorization.
 - The work of the FSRC needs to be divided equitably, instead of one or two members carrying the brunt of the duties. We can only accomplish the amount of work that engaged members can realistically handle.
 - Mike complimented Rob on his work to keep the FSRC on task and work collaboratively with DHS. Rob recently heard that the FSRC is doing good things these days and that it was previously thought of as the "do nothing" commission.
 - Mike suggested reviewing the Strategic Plan at the April meeting to inform new members. Continue to use the welcome packet and possibly assign someone to mentor new members. Good focus and commitment are needed from all members.
 - Agenda preparation was discussed. Rob creates the agenda for each meeting and sends it out for comment. He rarely hears anything. He believes the most important work we'll do in the next five years is the current legislation on TANF Reauthorization, therefore, the agenda has been narrowed to address this issue. Our role is to advise on policy changes that take a long time to accomplish.
 - Diane feels like we are losing track of some program areas, food stamps, etc. and requested updates by email. **ACTION: Nancy will discuss with Vic Todd.**
 - DHS will continue to pay for out of state Birth Certificates through the end of June.
 - Expense Policy: The final draft was discussed; Rosemary Lazzari moved and Kim Freeman seconded approval, vote was unanimous. Add document to the FSRC Welcome Packet.

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- Committee Chair Responsibility Document: The final draft was discussed and approved by members. **ACTION:** Remove the statement that the FSRC approves committee chairs. Add document to the FSRC Welcome Packet.
- A current DCI report from Dave Lyda was requested. **ACTION:** Nancy will request a report for the April FSRC meeting. **(Done: Email request was sent to Dave on 3/9/07.)**
- A public hearing on the TANF bills is scheduled for March 7th. Jessica and Rob would like to testify if they are available. Rosemary agreed to be a back up if her travel expenses are paid. The schedule is subject to change so please check the on-line agenda.
- Key committees and members were sent by email to FSRC members. **ACTION:** Please forward the approved talking points document that outlines issues we support to legislators from your area. Individual meetings with legislators can also be scheduled to discuss the reauthorization bill.

Committees:

- Legislative Committee: The Legislative Committee needs to be meeting during session. When session ends, the work will shift to the Policy Committee for implementation. Michael will be testifying with the Oregon Alliance of Children's Program and doesn't want to confuse the committee. Rob, Rosemary, and Jessica agreed to work on the committee and testify at hearings.

Need update of Food Stamps, Federal Farm Bill Reauthorization.

It would be good if a smaller group from the commission could discuss these issues and report back to the full commission. Jessica will send email with issues and request DHS's position. Jessica will also convene a meeting to discuss the key issues and prepare letters to send to Oregon's federal delegation. Should we include Nancy Weed?

ACTION: Nancy to send Belit Stockfleth's email to Jessica. **(Done 3/15/07)**

ACTION: Eventually send letters to Oregon's federal delegation on the Food Stamp/Farm Bill issues.

- Ways and Means Joint Committee: Jessica, Rosemary and Rob provided testimony at the Ways and Means Hearings on Self Sufficiency
- Policy Committee: Mike is the current chair, but would like to be replaced. Rosemary and Jessica have agreed to co-chair. They will work on putting together the recommendations from the FSRC. The Policy Committee will not meet during the legislative session. The FSRC would like to focus on three high priority items. **ACTION:** Nancy will ask Mickey if there is a Federal bill list. **(Done: Nancy sent an email on 3/2/07 with two web links to Federal bill information. Mickey sent an email to members on 3/9/07 with information on federal legislation.)**

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- Partnership Committee: Diane Cohen-Alpert:
The last CWAC meeting was good. The committee is very contentious around the roll out of the new Child Welfare Oregon Safety Model. Children experiencing neglect will be provided services through community partners. This may have ramifications on TANF as well as Child Welfare. It was suggested that Angela Sherbo or another staff from the Juvenile Rights Project (JRP) be invited to discuss legislative items.

Do we want to partner with the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF)?

ACTION: Rosemary will explore the possibility and find out if they have a public advisory group meeting. Michael will assist Rosemary to connect with OCCF.

April 5, 2007 FSRC meeting agenda:

- Erinn Kelley-Siel, Governor's Office, Health and Human Services Policy Advisor is scheduled to attend at 9:00 a.m.
- Review the 2006-2007 FSRC Strategic Plan.

Next Meeting: The next FSRC meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2007, 8:30 a.m. to noon, in HSB-252. Please let Nancy know if you plan to attend by Video Conferencing or phone.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.