



# Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee

*The mission of the Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee is to provide oversight for and promote communication between the Board of Supervisors, the Department of Social Services and its related agencies, and the community, with emphasis on providing information and recommendations that make the system more effective and efficient.*

## MINUTES

February 2, 2022

9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

Meeting held via Zoom

### I. Call to order and introductions.

Wilma

Meeting called to order by Wilma at 9:00 AM with round table introductions.

### II. Approve minutes for *December 1, 2021* and the current meeting's agenda.

Rich Bailey motioned to approve minutes for January 5, 2022, Tracy Kashian second the motion to approve the minutes. Jill Stepke motioned to approve the current agenda for February 2, 2022, Elizabeth Thomas second the motion to approve the current agenda. Agenda and minutes approved unanimously.

### III. Updates.

#### A. Consultant to the Board of Supervisors for DSS Update.

Cathi

- No update. Deferred to interim Director for Department of Social Services, Maria Aguirre, and the Child Welfare Deputy Director, Tricia Gonzalez.

#### B. Legislative Updates.

Tricia

- Tricia explained a number of proposals are being discussed but one the department needs help with is funding for shelters or transitional shelters locally. There are a few proposals already passed but the logistics are still being worked out.

#### C. Department of Social Services Addressing Critical Areas.

Tricia

- Tricia provided an update on the department's recruitment and retention issues. She explained the contracts were ratified and approved by the Board of Supervisors and included a 5% child welfare case carrying differential to the social workers and to the Social Work Supervisors. The idea is the differential will incentivize people to stay in Child Welfare. The Board of Supervisors called for a study to look into the incentive further.
- The Board of Supervisors also approved a one-time essential worker payment of \$1,500.
- The Department has conducted Social Worker interviews, 25 people were interviewed and 21 of those were recommended. Once the process is complete, the department will pull another list. There are currently 41 vacancies so the department will also look at extra help. A workgroup looking at recruitment was created and they are looking to other counties to review their recruitment processes.
- Attended the Fresno State Title IVE Job Readiness seminar on 1-31-2022 and reached out to students.
- Fresno County has been participating with the CARES project, which is the name of the new computer system the county needs to replace the current case management system. The county is currently out of compliance with the state. There is now a proof of concept going in around the Resource Family Approval task area and is being implemented this week.
- As far as the complex kids, the media is still reaching out but the stories are widening to include other counties as well as interviewing across the state. The department continues to be transparent about what is needed, and how things are improving. In January 33 kids went through the UMC campus, it took about 6 hours to place them, and 11 stayed more than 24 hours. Of those, only 3 stayed more than 3 days. The Department is continuing to work with the state about what a shelter would look like. The department continues to meet locally with the strike team, did a consultation with the assist team, met with daily solutions, and the local system of care workgroup continue to review what it would take to use the complex funding.
- Maria Aguirre shared her appreciation for Cathi Huerta and the support she has been providing. She addressed Rich's concern about more County Counsel from the last meeting, and shared they are looking into adding more.
- Rich pointed out there are non-attorney's, such as Social Workers, representing the department in court and is concerned of the long-term consequences.
- Judge Dolas commented she does not agree Social Workers are legally representing the county since there are Court Officers present every day, however, she does agree not having county counsel not present for most, if not all, the hearings it does leave the county not represented at some of the hearings. The Social Workers and Court Officers are able to provide information but not represent the county specifically. She shared they are looking at what changes can be made.
- Megan Lambert shared a presentation on Intensive Services Foster Care, who they are and what they do. She provided her

contact information for those who need ISFC services.

**IV. New Business.**

**A. Elections-Ad Hoc**

**Rich**

- The Ad Hoc committee recommended Wilma as Chair and Pam as Vice-Chair. Rich moved to vote the officers and Jill second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Wilma requested to vote on a Vice-Chair, Staff support clarified they just voted on chair and vice-chair as Wilma and Pam, respectively, per their bylaws.

**V. Review of Action Items.**

**A. Collapse and Dissolution of the Education Subcommittee.**

**Sonia**

- Determined the committee may dissolve the Education Subcommittee due to the fact it mirrors the FCSS Advisory committee.
- Rich motioned to dissolve the Education Subcommittee, Jill second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Subcommittee Updates.**

**A. Education/Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS)**

**Pam**

- There will be a focus group on Monday, February 7, 2022 from 2-3:30PM, Cathi Huerta will be in attendance, and an invite will be sent out for those who would like to attend.

**B. Children’s Mental Health**

**Wilma**

- Met last month and were provided statistics for children’s mental health in the county, not just for foster youth, a presentation from CASA, and some of the known challenges across the county. The next meeting is on Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 9AM via Zoom. A representative from A City Without Orphans will be presenting.

**VII. Round Table Discussion.**

**All**

- Ari Martinez shared he sent out pictures of the new DSS Child Welfare building from the tour in January.
- Wilma requested another opportunity to tour the new building and Tricia explained due to the increase in COVID cases the department is taking precautions so there is a pause on the tours but once they are available again a day and time can be set up.

**VIII. Public Comments.**

- Bernia Walker shared she has had a positive experience with JDT Consulting Therapeutic Behavioral Services.
- Wilma suggested voting on the Zoom option again since the situation with COVID is unpredictable.
- Rich motioned to hold the next meeting via Zoom, Ari second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Kim Hazelton asked if there are plans for another town hall meeting. Wilma explained there are no plans currently and Tricia stated it can be discussed and planned.

**IX. Adjourn.**

**Wilma**

Meeting adjourned by Wilma at 10:24 AM.

**Committee Attendance**

District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sal Quintero <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ari Martinez (Proxy)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Martinez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosemary Alanis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pamela Hancock
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Thomas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Bailey	<input type="checkbox"/> Ed Avila
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jill Stepke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tracy Kashian	<input type="checkbox"/> Patricia Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connie Waldrop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wilma Hashimoto

**Attending Staff and Guests**

Tricia Gonzalez, Erica Lozano, Susana Morales, Cheri Archuleta, Anthony Norwood, Catherine Huerta, Dalvin Baker, Denise Espinoza, Ian Coolbear, Rebekah Rodriguez, Jason Williams, Joanna Litchenberg, Jose Vargas, Judge Mary Dolas, Justin Johnson, Karel Gonzalez, Laura Lopez, Maria Aguirre, Marilyn Bamford, Nichole Bletz, Paul Nerland, Shirley Long, Sonia De La Rosa, Sonja Dosti, Whitney Bunker, Bernia Walker, Yanira Eufrazio, David Rodriguez, Sharla Hutchison, Rosa Robles, Diane Warren, Jessica Santoyo, Miriam Flores, Jessica Carrillo, Kylene Hashimoto, Ivana Carter, Rita Bohannan, Kim Hazelton, Marina Calderon, Ryan Townsend, Shawn Payvandi, Megan Lambert, Laura Gonzalez.