

**Adoption Advisory Council**  
**Eastland Suites, 1801 Eastland Drive**  
**August 1, 2008**  
**10:00 – 3:00**  
**Approved MINUTES**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	<b>DCFS STAFF PRESENT</b>
Donsetta Blakely	Dr. Robert Bloom	Lawanda Carter
Diane Dominguez	Kathy Casey	June Dorn
Gwenn Eyer	Patricia Cooper	Lois Drake
Derek Jeske	DeAudrey Davis	Ray Gates
Betty Johnson	Mary Debose	Gail Mayer
James Jones	Joyce Loy	Terry McGlothlin
Patricia Kelso	Alan Marcus	Nancy Murrah
Susanne Loss	Krista McCoy	Kendra Storme
Dave Matthews	Roman McCray	
Kate Monte	Dorothy McGhee	
Lisa Myles	Judy Pence	
Elizabeth Richmond	Gina Samuels	
Jackie Sharp Akins	Michele Seidl	
Carol Sheley	Gretchen Schulert	
Karen Wardlaw	Ron Tyler	
Kim Wheelock	Mark Werner	
Linda Wolter		

**Welcome & Introductions**

Elizabeth welcomed council members and guests. Everyone introduced themselves.

**New Business**

**Report from Chairs on Meeting with Director - Co-Chairs**

Elizabeth said a copy of the memo sent to the Director listing the council's priorities was included in members' packets, as well as a copy of his response. She said their meeting with the Director went well. He was receptive and had already begun to work on many of the things the council asked for, although budget issues prevented moving on some. She said Mark Werner drafted another memo to the Director (page 9 of packets) regarding CCBYS working together with post adoption, and he asked council members to review it and provide input on it. The only suggestion was that the word "deceptive" be replaced with "confusing" in the last bulleted paragraph. Elizabeth asked Terry to make the change and send the memo.

Jim asked council members for other thoughts, and the following suggestions were made:

- \*Ask either adoption pres or CCBYS to take the lead on setting up regional meetings to get together and talk about how to facilitate communication.
- \*Invite DHS staff that work with CCBYS to come and present to this council to find out how they are meeting the needs of the adoption population.
- \*Dave suggested starting the dialogue in one region first.
- \*Kim said the adoption certification training could be opened up for other providers to come. It is a training that already exists with a lot of useful information.

\*Susanne said that if families are giving false information, that typically means that they feel intimidated. She suggested the information/process be simplified.

Elizabeth said that they also discussed psychiatric services with the Director. There is a new treatment facility opening in Springfield that will involve better long and short term psychiatric services. She said they stressed to the Director that adoptive families would like to be able to access this service as well. Ray said someone will be presenting information on this at the joint meeting with the SWFCAC in November.

### **Identifying Adoption Groups around Illinois - Co-Chairs**

Jim said he would like the council to compile a list of adoption groups in Illinois for adoptive families to use. There was discussion and the following ideas were noted:

- \*Ray said Vanessa could put something in the newsletter and ask the readers to contact regarding adoption and post adoption groups they know about.
- \*Adoptive Families magazine has a list.
- \*In 2002 Susanne did a survey for Jeanne Howard.
- \*NACAC does training for support groups, so they might have a list.
- \*Metropolitan has many groups.
- \*Dept. of Aging – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, may be a resource.
- \*Adoptive Families Today (Kathy Casey) might have a list.
- \*Adoption Information Center should know about groups.
- \*Ray said his office could help keep it updated after it is developed.
- \* Once the list is developed it could be put on the DCFS website under the AAC link.
- \*Phase 2 could be to add programmatic support – speaker pools.

Elizabeth said there is already a Clearinghouse Committee, but those appointed are no longer members except Judy Pence. Kim Wheelock and Jim Jones volunteered. Terry will send out an email to council members since so many were not present today.

### **Report from Division of Service Intervention - June Dorn**

#### **New Post Adoption Staff**

June introduced new downstate post adoption staff, and she said all have years of child welfare experience.

Nancy Murrah – Central Region supervisor

Gail Mayer – Springfield

Lois Drake – Urbana

Lawanda Carter – Urbana

June said that Don Vasich will also begin as the Northern Region Supervisor on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Elizabeth asked that post adopt staff attend the IAAC meetings, one at a time, when meetings are in their regions. June agreed, as workload permits.

**Budget** - June said she hasn't had any extremely bad budget news. Contracts are being mailed out, and the Department is trying to avoid cuts to direct services.

**Enhanced SG Waiver** – June said the Federal government granted an extension to October 2009. The web based training has been available since mid June. She said there is a lack of knowledge on the enhanced SG waiver, and the challenge now is to urge workers to do the training.

Ray said he would ask Vanessa to put something in the newsletter, but that June should get the information to her soon because she is currently working on Volume 5, which will be mailed out in September.

### **Report from Office of Foster Parent Support Services - Ray Gates**

Ray said the joint AAC and SWFCAC meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. He said the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Prevent Child Abuse Illinois Conference is scheduled for that date and for 11/20 in Oakbrook Hills. No one voiced problems with this.

### **Conferences and Institutes**

Ray said the planning committee had their first conference call on July 21st. They are planning the same models as last year, with two 2-day conferences and four 1-day institutes. He said the focus this year for the institutes will be psychiatric/mental health issues and services, and for the conferences there will again be a diverse set of workshop topics. The planning committee started discussions to identify areas of the state in which to host these events. One of the 2-day conferences will be northwest or southwest of Chicago, but probably not in Cook due to higher lodging rates. For downstate the suggestion was Effingham because, although it is in Southern Region it is also close to Central Region, so it will draw from both regions. For the institutes, one will be held at either 6201 South Emerald or Kennedy King, two will be in Central Region and one in Southern.

Karen said that the Joliet Support Group asked her to request a program of some type for the children during the conference. Gwenn explained that this option has been discussed in the past but that it is not financially or legally feasible.

### **Update on IFAPA Conference**

Ray passed out registration packets for the IFAPA Conference. He said that council members are welcome to share the packets, but asked that they white out "Adoption Advisory Council Member" that was written at the top of the registration form. He told council members that they could complete the form and return it to Terry, fax it to the DCFS Registration Unit as instructed on the form, or go online to register.

Ray said that caregivers will get two nights of lodging and all meals will be provided at no cost to them. There will be a pre-conference CPR class on Friday morning available to the first 30 caregivers who register for it. Those attending that training will obtain free CPR certification.

Ray said there will be a post adopt track so that in each workshop block there will be one post adopt workshop. There will also be a health fair all day Saturday, where several screenings will be available to caregivers. The health fair will be available by signing up for it as a workshop, or during break times.

Gwenn said the IFAPA Conference is lengthy and we need a lot of help. She passed out a volunteer registration form for council members to fill out and return to Terry.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Ray distributed the Conflict of Interest Precaution forms and asked that any council member with a DCFS contract complete and sign the form and return it to Terry. He emphasized that members having contracts with DCFS cannot bill DCFS for their time or expenses related to Adoption

Council work, nor can they do anything as small as send an email or make a phone call related to the Adoption Council while they are being paid through their DCFS contract.

### Legislation

Ray said that the Director and Robin Staggers attended the last Adoption Council meeting to talk about legislation, and the Council requested regular legislative updates. He said he received a report last night and had one copy, which he gave to Derek, Chair of the Legislative Committee. He said that, as a Department, DCFS has to be responsible about what legislation it can support, always based on the budget, as well as other factors that may vary according to each bill.

### **Committee Reports**

#### Respite Coalition - Ray Gates

Ray said they have made some changes and there are a lot of new people involved. They had their annual summit in April. They also started a monthly newsletter that is being sent out online. They are having meetings moving around the state to get more people involved. They formed a formal governing structure and board of directors. They fired the attorney who was supposed to do the 501c3 and have a new one that is doing it. Ray said he will not be very involved due to budget issues. Gwenn has been representing the council but her second term on the AAC has ended. He suggested assigning someone from this group that is able to travel. He said DCFS may or may not be able to continue reimbursing the Council representative's expenses, depending on the budget. Elizabeth asked Terry to send out a request to council members to see if anyone wants to do this.

#### Membership Committee - Mark Werner

Elizabeth said Mark sent her a memo with a complete slate to send to the Director, except for two adult adoptees from Cook County. She asked if anyone knows of any Cook adoptees that they get the names to Terry or Mark.

#### Adoption Celebration Report - Karen Wardlaw

Karen said the keynote for the Friday night event will be Jayai John. She is still working with Krista on getting the "Adoption Journey" video from DMC. It was not produced for publication; therefore it is not available through the library or even to purchase. If it is secured, the committee will view it and if acceptable, will forward it to the DCFS administration for approval, then, if approved; they will use it in a movie night format to be shown after the dinner and celebration. She said Krista also suggested that there is a "Cats in the Cradle" program that he did which is a shorter video about how he wanted to find his birth mother.

Karen has been looking for pins, and she found a white ribbon pin for adoption. She has contacted a person to donate the pins and is waiting for a decision. She also had a contact with Zales Jewelers and they might be willing to design and donate a pin, with their name associated. She has discussed the design with art therapists who know the artistic community and is hoping they will help.

There will be a decorated celebration cake supplemented by sheet cakes to serve everyone. There will also be a Heart Gallery display in the ballroom on the night of the celebration. Karen and her husband will arrange transportation of the Heart Gallery photos to the hotel.

### **Joint Meeting with SWFCAC - Council**

Elizabeth asked for suggestions for the November 21 agenda for the joint meeting with the SWFCAC.  
Possible topics:

- \*Report from Director's Office – state of the state
- \*Velma – Psych Services, to include info on the new Springfield clinic
- \*Report from DCFS Training Office
- \*CCBYS Information
- \*Invite Marge Berglind to talk about legislation
- \*Licensing Issues – Steve Minter
- \*Integrated Assessment – portion to be provided to foster/adoptive parents (Ray said the SACWIS change request was done but possibly not yet implemented. He thought Velma might report on this.)
- \*Statewide Youth Advisory Board changes that have been made

Elizabeth said that Diane Dominguez could report on the Residential Services Authority, but would prefer to do that for the February AAC meeting.

### **Old Business**

#### **Approval of Minutes from June 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

*Kim made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Linda seconded. The motion carried.*

#### **Plan Agenda/Speakers for Next Meeting**

For October meeting –

Report for what all of the MAP programs are doing – invite someone from Mark Testa's office and the Farm Resource Center representative.

#### **Other Discussion**

Kendra Storme said she is from the Office of Training and is doing the work that Jean Maher used to do in Springfield. She said the new four hour child trauma training is very good training.

Elizabeth and Jim suggested that we consider not having a meeting in August in the future due to low attendance.

#### **Adjourn**

*Gwenn made a motion to adjourn. Kim seconded. Motion carried.* The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.