

**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH**  
1111 N. LEE AVENUE, SUITE 300  
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

**REGULAR MEETING**  
MARCH 25, 2010

**MINUTES**

**Call to order and roll call**

Chairman Bouse called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Members present were: Tom Alford, Bart Bouse, Darlene Callahan, Terry Cline, Ken Couchman, Wanda Felty, Mike Fogarty, Lisa Hammond, Richard Kirby, Ben Loring, Claudette Selph, and Brent Thackerson. Howard Hendrick arrived at 9:08; Gene Christian arrived at 9:11 a.m.; and Mike O'Brien arrived at 9:40 a.m. Members not present were: Sid Brown, Sandy Garrett, Terrica Grunewald and Terri White.

**Review and approval of minutes from the February 19, 2010, Rescheduled Commission Meeting**

Loring moved, Kirby seconded to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2010, Rescheduled Commission meeting as presented. All members present voted in the affirmative. Motion passed unanimously.

**Director's Report on Agency Activities – Lisa Smith**

A written report from Director, Lisa Smith was included in the Commission packet.

Ms. Smith announced that Commissioner Selph wanted all Commissioners, staff and guests to be aware that Kelly Peterson, Director of the Utah Foster Care Foundation will be presenting at the OSU – Tulsa Campus on Thursday, April 29, 2010, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Commissioner Selph added that the State of Utah has been through a similar type of lawsuit that our state is now going through and Ms. Peterson's presentation may prove to be very beneficial to us and how we handle our own foster care system here in Oklahoma.

Ms. Smith distributed a copy of the Capitol News update dated March 23, 2010; in it contained information on legislative actions that have taken place during the last month. She highlighted some of those that effect the Commission, and children and youth in general in our state.

**HB 3394** – A request bill from OCCY to increase Commissioners terms of office from 3-two year terms to 4-two year terms. The bill recently passed the Senate Judiciary Committee and is now headed to the Senate floor. An amendment was added for those appointed Commissioners whose term is about to or has ended; that beginning November 1, 2010, would be allowed to serve an additional two year term.

**SB 1612** - A bill referencing the establishment of a task force to study Incarcerated Parents and Their Children. This bill has been assigned to the House and Human Services Committee.

**SB 697** – This is one of three bills regarding the development of a Children's Cabinet. Director Lisa Smith indicated that discussions were taking place in the House of Representatives; however, nothing has yet been formalized. She will report back to the Commission at a later time with any further developments.

## **Common issues and strategies for providing children's services in Oklahoma – Howard Hendrick and Claudette Selph**

Commissioner Selph stated that during the last meeting of the Board in February, discussion was had about the Commission Board having a more active role in being more proactive in dealing with the very serious cuts that are being made in state agencies, particularly those cuts affecting children and youth services.

She stated that she is aware that the superintendents of schools in several areas of the state have been very proactive in their approach in dealing with cuts to education, and she would hate to think that schools would be more apt to receive more dollars than those agencies providing social service needs, and feels that it is a real potential when we as the Commission Board are not at the capitol letting our voices and needs of children and youth of this state heard and being a lot more active in making sure that certain fundamental needs of children and youth are not drastically cut.

Commissioner Hendrick added that there has been a great deal of gain in the use of prevention dollars and that is shown by the fact that the number of children coming into care is going down, the number of children being adopted is continuing to go up, and the number of children in foster care being down more than it has ever been in the last decade. However, on the negative side, he stated that family structures are much weaker these days; a lot more frail. There are more out-of-wedlock births; the prevalence of deep poverty is much more significant, particularly for families having their first child.

Commissioner Hendrick stated that CY-2008 was the largest year in which DHS provided services to children and families; Medicaid and food stamps. If you add together both calendar years, 2008 and 2009, there was an increase of over 178,000 people who were either on Medicaid or food stamps, or both for at least one month; a net growth of over 700 new people every business day during calendar year 2009.

He further stated that assuming we (the State) simply stay where we are right now; not adding any additional people, there will be a 20% overall reduction in state government. In FY-2009, the Legislature appropriated \$7.1 billion, and in FY-2010 the year started with \$6.6 billion state monies, not including any stimulus funds; some \$750 million below projections in the first six months of FY'10. If revenues continue as they are right now, all of state government is looking at 20% reduction in budgets.

Dr. Terry Cline, Commissioner of Health, added to the discussion stating that they too have already induced cuts to some programs of their agency; they have done a reorganization of the Child Guidance Program consolidating 16 regional hubs, recreating multidisciplinary teams to address some of the losses from the reorganization.

Commissioner Fogarty added that the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, through SoonerCare and Insure Oklahoma are the largest purchasers of healthcare in the State of Oklahoma, public or private. These are insurance products and the major difference between them and commercial plans is that there is no requirement for reserves.

He stated that he feels that the OHCA has some advantage over other state agencies in that they have supporters and partners in their program that are very influential with ensuring their services continue and are fully supported and funded.

Commissioner Christian, Director of the Office of Juvenile Affairs added that his office, come July 1, 2010, will have reduced staff 20%; from 1,000 FTE to less than 800 FTE, as well as already knowing that an additional 10% will need to be cut after this time. He stated that by the close of business July 1, 2012, OJA will be at 15-30% below where they are today.

He added that when stimulus dollars run out or are simply taken away, OJA will have to close detention centers, shelters, and secure facilities, as well as making some major cuts to prevention services.

Jack Chapman added that he and Lisa Smith have met with various legislators and were told that they don't feel that they get the responses from the Human Services arena like they get from other areas that they fund, i.e. education. They indicated to them that they take their positions very seriously and want to represent their constituencies; however, if they don't get feedback then it's really hard for them to sometimes know what to do. He also stated that the legislators they spoke with don't feel like they have a clear picture of the whole "kids" system, and he feels this is something this Board can address to provide that clearer picture, and what a 20% reduction in funding does or would do to that system.

Chairman Bouse indicated that perhaps a letter from the Commission detailing information about the children and youth service system in Oklahoma, how cuts to various child serving agencies will affect that system, as well as having Jack Chapman and Lisa Smith visiting more with legislators providing them with as much information as possible on how cuts will affect services and programs serving children and youth would be a start. There is also the possibility of having the Legislative Sub-Committee meet to discuss ideas and develop some type of correspondence to legislators and perhaps have Commissioners contact their various legislative representatives across the state to also give them a picture of how cuts will affect services and/or programs provided for children, youth and families.

Commissioner Selph stated that due to the limited time frame we actually have to get something to the legislature, it might be better served for Commission staff (Lisa Smith, Jack Chapman and perhaps Chairman Bouse, as well as other agency directors) to secure a meeting with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Governor, and have information filtered down to the legislature through them.

Commissioner Fogarty added that he and other state agency directors are already at the capitol everyday speaking with legislators and providing them with information on how cuts to funding will affect their services and/or programs; he feels it would be more effective for legislators to hear from folks in the community, maybe those actually receiving services, and/or those not associated by employment with state agencies on how cuts to various agency services and/or programs would affect them, their families, their communities, etc.

Brandy Smith with the Office of Planning and Coordination, offered for she and Dr. Gary Theilen to help in any way with bringing together community folks to assist in developing letters and/or along with Commissioners, personally visiting with legislators.

After much discussion, Chairman Bouse and Director, Lisa Smith, suggested that the Legislative Sub-Committee, consisting of Claudette Selph, Brent Thackerson, Darlene Callahan, and any others who are interested, gather for a meeting and develop something for the Board to vote on at its next meeting in May.

**Discussion and possible action on proposed Annual Retreat Schedule – Lisa Smith**

Ms. Smith was proposing that in lieu of the Commission having an annual retreat, there be a bi-annual retreat. After discussion with other staff, it was determined that given the work of the Planning and Coordination Sub-Committee, headed by Commissioner Ben Loring, it might be best served for the Commission to have a retreat every other year. She added that this would not preclude any updates that would continue to be provided to the Commission on a yearly basis on outcomes from the previous year's state plan.

All Commissioners agreed to this proposal, and the previously scheduled Retreat date of August 19, 2010, was selected as the date that the Commission would meet and updates would be provided on current state plan activities.

**Discussion and possible vote to adopt permanent rules regarding certification of state-operated youth shelters; OAC 135 Chapter 10, Subchapter 24[NEW] – Grant Moak**

Grant Moak reminded Commissioners that the new rules (copy enclosed in Commission packet) were originally adopted as Emergency Rules in the fall of 2009, and now it is time to make them permanent rules. These rules were originally produced when legislation from last year moved certification of DHS operated youth shelters from the hands of DHS to OCCY. He is requesting a vote of the Commission to proceed in making these rules permanent, noting that on page 5, subsection "g", #3, remove the last sentence, as the address of the OCCY is noted incorrectly and is not really needed because the OCCY location/address is previously noted in our rules. He also reported that a public hearing was held on March 23, 2010, and no one appeared to make any comments.

Commissioner Couchman also noted a change at the top of page 3 from "licensing staff" to "certification staff". Grant Moak indicated that the entire document will be reviewed again to check for any other such changes before submission to the Governor, Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

Loring moved, O'Brien seconded to adopt the rules as presented and amended. All members present voted in the affirmative. Motion passed unanimously.

**Report from the Office of Juvenile System Oversight – Joanne Verity**

A written report from the Office of Juvenile System Oversight was included in the Commission packet.

Ms. Verity summarized this report indicating that the reporting period from which this report was developed was February 6, 2010, through March 12, 2010, and during this time seven (7) oversight and complaint reports were issued; of these four (4) facilities responded, and two of these were followed up with by oversight specialists. Two (2) of the original seven reports did not require a response as there were no violations or areas of concern to address, leaving one outstanding, in which a reminder letter for a response was mailed.

Attachment A of the Oversight report list all of the violations or areas of concerns that were uncovered and reported in the seven (7) oversight reports noted above. Copies of the complete reports can be obtained by contacting the OCCY offices.

Attachment B of the Oversight report indicates that the OJSO closed a total of 26 complaints during the reporting period; however, 24 were actually received. The Attachment also indicates that five (5) public reports were issued and are available for review on the OCCY website at [www.okkids.org](http://www.okkids.org).

**Report from the OJSO on the certification of DHS operated shelters – Sara Vincent**

A written status report on the OJSO' certification of DHS operated shelters was included in the Commission packet.

**Report from the Office of Planning and Coordination – Brandy Smith and Dr. Gary Theilen**

A written report from the Office of Planning and Coordination was included in the Commission packet.

Ms. Smith summarized this report indicating that P&C is providing staff support to various initiatives to implement recommendations from the State Plan for Services to Children and Youth.

A recent P&C subcommittee meeting was held and Ms. Smith stated that this committee did make a recommendation to develop a Facility Pilot Advisory Team to oversee the work being done in the area of strengthening custody services. A meeting of this Team was held and Commissioner Brent Thackerson, as chairman reported that 8-10 individuals were part of this meeting and agreed to meet again in May where they will discuss facility selection criteria. Two facilities will be selected to receive a wrap-around team approach to include a self-study, recommendations on improving services, and resources to implement recommendations. An evaluation will be conducted post project completion.

Ms. Smith further asked that Commissioner Fogarty provide an update on the Health Access Network, and he reported that this Network is designed to help build on the capacity to manage healthcare in Oklahoma. There are now two pilots that will be offering an infrastructure to make it possible for medical practionners, who could not otherwise, delivery more enhanced medical services.

Ms. Smith also reported that P&C each year puts out a special projects application that communities can apply for to support local projects; however, this year they changed the criteria to place emphasis on those projects that center around and support the adopted recommendations from the State Plan for Services to Children and Youth, such as (1) Access to Healthcare; (2) Strengthening custody and transition services; and (3) Positive Youth Development.

**Public Comment**

None

**New Business**

None

**Adjournment**

Chairman Bouse adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.