

# WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

**Meeting summary, Association Meeting  
10:00 a.m. – Noon, Tuesday August 19, 2014  
Lutheran Community Services  
4040 South 188<sup>th</sup> Street, SeaTac WA 98188, Third Floor**

**Attending:**

Charlotte Booth, Institute for Family Development  
Brian Carroll, Secret Harbor  
Jeff Clare, Youth for Christ  
Chuck Cole, Janus Youth Programs  
Jessie DiPardo, Service Alternatives  
Greg Dootson, LCSNW  
Bob Faltermeyer, Excelsior (phone)  
Lee Grogg, Ryther  
Sandy Hart, Casey Family Services

Paul Johnson, Friends of Youth  
Rod Johnson, Community & Family Services Foundation  
Erin Larson, Navos Mental Health Solutions  
Susan Maney, Children's Home Society  
Rose Quinby, YMCA  
Jennifer Ryan, Secret Harbor  
Anne Snook, Olive Crest  
Linda Thomas, CCS  
Kim Zacher, CLR

**Call to order – Greg Dootson**

**I. Minutes** approved as amended: correct spelling of Bob's last name

**II & III. Financial & Membership Dues Received/Outstanding – Kim Zacher**

\$27,000.48 bank balance. 24 paid members, 6 outstanding and one that was partially paid. Invoices are being re-sent. NW Adoption exchange appears to be non-renewing; they have not actively participated in membership this year.

**IV. WACF Membership Outreach – Greg**

Ashley House is applying. Lorene's Place intends to apply for a Carey Forward dues waiver. Charlotte expects that some of agencies attending the upcoming EBP meeting with Tim Kelley on the 21<sup>st</sup> will consider joining WACF and several of those would be eligible to apply for fee waivers. Erika will bring WACF brochures to that meeting. Rod has also been reaching out in eastern WA and we are asking Bob for support reaching out in the Spokane area. Erin and Rod talked about WACF at the recent BRS meeting in Lynnwood.

**V. Advocacy Agenda/Legislative Strategies – Greg**

This will be a huge focus in the upcoming year. According to last month's discussion with Seth, outlook is not much different or better than last year. Is anyone doing outreach or advocacy on their own?

Jeff C. and Linda are talking about an event in Pierce County in September. We want something with the providers. O'Ban would be willing to meet with us, but after the election.

Lee has been meeting with Ruth Kagi and others and working to get a decision package out of CA. We understand the CA will be calling for a rate increase for CPA and BRS. The next step is to schedule a meeting with OFM and the Governor's office, which we hope to do in September. The goal is education about rates and discussion to at least get admin support for an increase. Numbers are not being disclosed for now. Lee recommends that Charlotte reach out and ask for clarity re:FPSS as it's not too

late to echo the WACF message that all three divisions need rate restoration. Lee was representing his agency, not WACF, in these meetings. A decision package should be submitted by the end of August. OFM may need some education about changes in the last few years; there is no reason to assume they have seen the WACF materials. We have tried to educate Kevin Quigley. We will focus on the legislators in the fall. We may learn in December if we've had any success. Lee recommends it would not hurt for agencies to ask their legislators to inquire on their behalf about progress.

Moving forward, Greg encourages strategy of members hosting a "town hall" with representatives, other WACF members in your area, etc. to educate and share information. This is what Jeff and Linda mentioned earlier that they were working on doing. At the executive meeting, we discussed making funds available for food and beverage and also Erika's staff support time if needed for agencies that want to try this. Brian plans to do something up north – not sure when.

Brian and Seth meet again next Thursday, the 28<sup>th</sup>. They will talk about strategy, preparation for this session and the session itself, identifying the key folks who can champion the rate increase for us. We can prepare and be ready to try to get more introductions; we want to communicate clearly how agencies can help. Anything that Brian should carry to Seth?

Erin would appreciate the list of key people to contact. Many of us have other agency priorities in the mix so these notes will be helpful in keeping this on everyone's radar. Rose notes that the Y is aligned with other agencies on extended foster care, and there is a homeless coalition roundtable coming up with YouthCare and Cocoon House on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Jim Theofolis is a lead; Smith and Reichart will attend. She will keep the group informed about how that goes. Charlotte notes that CWAC is probably a month away from voting on a legislative agenda; we will be sure to look at that and what we can support. We will look for opportunities to offer other coalitions collaborative letters of support where we can. Children's Alliance might be one to look at? They post a brief on the website. Nina of WA Infant Mental Health will be pushing for Infant Endorsements.

The divisions will be asked to get going with discussion of legislative priorities to bring forward. Our goal is to have proposed items next month. There is a particular need to listen to local issues that may be coming from smaller agencies on the east side; we need to hear those. Bob (Excelsior) has been advocating for WACF in that community because this legislative process is so important. The stakes are high. When it comes to any kind of rate impacts, there's serious harm that could potentially come down.

All are asked to email any other ideas that come up. Erika will reach out to Rod about collecting input from the BRS group. Input is needed before the next association meeting.

## **VI. FAR Update – Charlotte**

One area of Spokane was one of the first FAR rollouts – Bob reports a very positive reaction to how it is going so far. But important to note there has been a spike in reports to CPS (15-20%) which is overloading the system. CA has started negotiation with Empire Health Foundation, who wants major changes for this investment; that is, preventing kids from entering the child welfare system. Bob is monitoring closely. The CA has developed a fiscal note to cover this network administration. No initial savings have been identified; they don't have the metrics yet to measure accurately. Implementation date is unknown.

Kim notes that with increased access to Medicaid, we have more contact with families we might not have seen before. Mental health centers are struggling with meeting the needs of families "on the cusp" of entering into services. Some families who we are trying to work with are being screened out. Sandy

notes that with these calls there is a slight increase in numbers of kids coming into care; permanency is a huge concern.

Charlotte notes that FAR is now serving abuse and neglect cases. Criminal behavior (abuse) was not originally planned to be a part of FAR. Some stakeholders are concerned about this.

## **VII. WISE update – Linda Thomas for Rod Johnson**

Linda's agency CCS has just launched as a site (Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Clark) and trying to sort everything out; flooded with requests. For social workers to access, they have to do a WISE screen, even on 3 and 4 year olds. Services must be Medicaid billable. Regarding Community support, supervising, respite care – still talking through. Can't necessarily offer. This is very different from BRS and from other EBP services. We are really working to define WISE. The screen is almost being seen as a barrier to getting the service desired rather than a tool to determine what is needed. It does provide the chance to serve kids in their homes. The connection to the provider is valuable. Encouraged focus on that opportunity rather than the frustration of having to work through this initial stuff. CA has a pretty consistent message – multi-domain assessment can create better conversations/ better service possibilities.

Bob (Excelsior) was also just certified. Will keep the group posted on how things go. It's a great opportunity and pushes populations closer together – that duality of child welfare and mental health. Wise is being billed out like an ancillary service with a Medicaid billing code (they pay directly; this is not part of a contract).

Jessie hopes for some further education from CA. In region three, this is really being approached as a technical requirement rather than education being shared about purpose.

## **VIII. Divisions**

### **CPA – Jeff Clare**

We've continued to meet during the summer. Pam M. will attend the next meeting. We do want to change some of our strategy around how we connect with CA. We talked to CA about four months ago about the Transfer of License document and about PALS. We have had an open dialog with Darcy about timely licensing. We want to help DLR hear directly from foster families. April and Doug will attend the following meeting, to talk about contracts, specifically the process of releasing contracts. We would like to get, in writing, some process of soliciting provider input and then what happens before contracts are issued. Specific issues related to visitation and vehicle maintenance will be cited. The division has also been discussing the idea of legal representation, to review contracts when issued? Many small agencies would not have this expertise available. We hope these division level conversations will help when we get to the quarterly CA meetings.

Linda sees an increased delay with background checks. It was getting better but is now again worse. Jessie sees this also, and is frustrated that CA consistently wants to treat these as isolated incidents rather than a systemic problem in DLR. Families have done everything required in 90 days and then just wait. Linda is framing the question about the impact; urgent placement needs that cannot be met. Rose notes a seemingly quicker approval time for state homes. Can we ask for that data?

Jeff is also working with POC about how to make visitation more effective. POC has an open source parenting curriculum. Charlotte, Linda and Kim all shared the need for more review – if you can reduce the number of supervised visits you can do this better. Some parents are being treated as if criminal when that is not called for. There is a visitation assessment “matrix” from the past which used national research – are any other states using? Sandy recalls a lot of pushback on that from the legal community.

### **FPSS – Charlotte Booth**

Meeting on Thursday with Tim Kelley hosted by HopeSparks about EBP sustainability and dealing with turnover. We will have 20-25 people.

The next FPSS division meeting will focus on stopped referrals/cuts that are happening.

Tim has been very open about the fact that there is no continuing round of training. If there is no training to replace the folks we have, we will see reductions. We need to document these hidden costs.

**Adjourned at noon.**