Indian River County Florida

Indian River County Administration Complex
1800 27th Street, Building B
Vero Beach, Florida, 32960-3388
www.indianriver.gov

Children's Services Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes - Final

November 12, 2024

Committee Members

Miranda Swanson, IRC Health Department, Chair | **Bob McPartlan, DCF – Ex Officio, Vice Chair**

Michelle Morris, District 2 Appointee
Katie Mieras - District 3 Appointee
Amber Cerda – Member at Large
Doug DeMuth – Financial Appointee
Eric Flowers, Law Enforcement Ex Officio
Frank Isele – Hospital District Appointee

Bob Schlitt, Jr., Member-at-Large Appointee
Jeffrey Andros- District 4 Appointee
Hope Woodhouse, District 5 Appointee
Hon. Victoria Griffin, Judge Circuit 19 Ex Officio
David Moore, IRCS Superintendent
David Bailey, District 1 Appointee

Commissioner Joseph H. Earman, BCC – VOTING MEMBER

CSAC STAFF:

Cindy Emerson, IRC Community Services
Ms. Maya Miller, IRC Community Services
Megan Kendrick, IRC Human Services
Robert Catapano, Human Services

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Miranda Swanson, Chair called the November 12, 2024, meeting of the Children's Services Advisory Committee to order at 3:00 P.M.

2. **ROLL CALL** *15 Voting Members / 8 for Quorum*

Members Present

Miranda Swanson, Chair
Robert McPartlan, Vice Chair, DCF Ex Officio
Katie Mieras, District 3 Appointee
Jeffrey Andros, District 4 Appointee
Bob Schlitt, Jr., Member at Large
Amber Cerda, Member at Large
Commissioner Joseph H. Earman, BCC Voting Member
Frank Isele, Hospital District Appointee
Sheriff Eric Flowers, Law Enforcement Ex-officio
Hon. Victoria Griffin Judge Circuit 19 Ex-Officio
Michelle Morris, District 2 Appointee
Hope Woodhouse, District 5 Appointee
Dr. Kyra Schafte, School District IRC

Members Absent:

Doug DeMuth, Financial Appointee
Dr. David Moore, Superintendent, School District IRC, Ex-Officio
David Bailey, District 1 Appointee

Also Present:

Cindy Emerson, Community Services Director
Megan Kendrick, Human Services Manager
Robert Catapano, Human Services
Ms. Maya Miller, Community Services
Michael Zito, Deputy County Administrator
Chris Hicks, IRC Attorney Office
Jennifer Shuler, IRC Attorney Office
Michael Marsh
Carrie Lester
Ane Posey
Brooke Hall
Paula Barclay
Deana Shatley
Megan McFall
Susan Curtis
Tracey Zudans
Jody Idlette
Jan Sofield

QUORUM WAS MET

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Bob Schlitt and seconded by Katie Mieras to approve the Minutes September 10, 2024. The motion carried.

4. **COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mrs. Cindy Emerson reported Lieutenant David Bailey is the new appointee for District 1 to the committee, and will send out his background information later.

The consistency survey was conducted on October 1 and October 7, with a reminder sent on November 5, and the results showed trends in committee effectiveness and areas for growth. There were mixed satisfaction levels regarding the committee's ability to address governance-related issues and the effectiveness of training and professional development for members. Concerns were raised about the varying levels of satisfaction regarding participation from some committee members, indicating a need for improvement in engagement. The staff will ensure that materials are sent out in advance to allow committee members time to process information before discussions, aiming to improve engagement. Concerns were raised about the culture of respect and collaboration within the committee, indicating a need for improvement in these areas. New members of Children's Services will undergo onboarding training, receiving a binder with historical documents to provide context for their roles.

The committee is undertaking a strategic plan to ensure alignment of strategic priorities with decision-making processes, which is essential for compliance with ordinances.

The professional development series on impact and action had 22 attendees from nonprofits, indicating a strong interest in the topic. An additional professional development session is scheduled for December 16th at United Way, focusing on improving access to technology for participants. It was decided to continue offering professional development sessions throughout the fiscal year based on positive feedback and outcomes from the initial series.

Committee members were asked to sign up for site visits scheduled for November, emphasizing the need for main committee representation. The agencies will conduct pre-walkthrough meetings to prepare for site visits, ensuring clarity on program objectives and expected outcomes. Post-walkthrough meetings will also be held to discuss how the agencies' efforts align with their stated goals.

CSAC expensed $2.5 million, which is 98% of the fiscal year budget, with only $44,000 (2%) being returned to general funds. Most programs have expended at least 95% of their budgets, demonstrating strong financial management.

5. **CSAC COMMUNITY UDATES**

- Law Enforcement Data – No Updates.
- Hospital District Data Update – No Updates
- School District Data Update – Dr. Kyra Schafte reported that the School District was recently awarded an academically high performing district, so that's a great accolade. Academic achievement, class size, and then financially responsible, so we're proud of that.

6. **CSAC SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

Needs Assessment – The needs assessment subcommittee has met twice and is currently updating what is possible to be updated, with a 60% capture rate of information, primarily from the school district and Healthy Start. The committee received the green light to move forward with phase two of the needs assessment, which involves developing key indicators and focus areas based on community input. The next steps involve continuing with phase one updates and preparing for a more comprehensive update in January when more information will be available

Grants Subcommittee – Mr. Bob Schlitt reported that there’s nothing to report and the committee is ready to get back to meeting in January 2025.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

Mrs. Megan Kendrick reported that phase one of the Strategic Plan is finished by identifying key indicators from the needs assessment and establishing focus areas which were presented during the last meeting. We got the green light from the committee to move forward with focus areas and key indicators. This will allow us to show the layered support that is happening with multiple programs and how we're creating a return on investment back to these focus areas.

A survey will be sent out by the end of the week to gather feedback on goals, strategies, and tactics from committee members, which will be compiled and presented back to the committee for discussion. The goal is to achieve a 10% increase in the number of stakeholders providing feedback on the community survey, indicating a focus on enhancing engagement. An asset map has been created and is available on the website to identify areas of support and areas needing more attention, which will help in decision-making. The first quarter update will include geographical data on the children served by each program, helping to identify service gaps in different districts.

Staff continued to provide further information regarding the focus areas, goals, indicators and strategies for the strategic plan.

Staff requested committee members to help increase their visibility by letting them know about the work they are doing with other organizations so that CSAC can be represented when possible.

As part of improving governance within the committee, the committee will offer training for new board members and make it available as a public meeting to all members for a refresher, ensuring everyone is informed about the CSAC guidebook. The committee plans to conduct an annual review of their governance policies, including conflicts of interest and financial oversight, to ensure transparency and accountability.

Regarding all of the information provided for the Strategic Plan, Mrs. Emerson informed the committee that staff are absolutely willing to listen to them, and give them the chance to process it, marinate on it, and then get the collective feedback. Staff will come back to the committee and provide the consistency, where do we feel comfortable and maybe make some moves. But if there's anything that individuals are in complete disagreement with, please call Cindy directly so she can work on it on her end to see what we can do to make sure we're on the right path. Staff are here to facilitate the conversation and by no means push anything.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

Subcommittee elections: Mrs. Miranda Swanson informed the committee they should have received the applications for the different subcommittee vacancies; she also provided the total number of members that are currently on each committee and the maximum number of members for each committee. Instructions for how the applicant introductions, comments and/or questions and voting would take place.

Mr. Jeffrey Andros asked the question: “If we can have four more on the needs assessment and we have three applicants, why can't we just have all three applicants go on?” Mrs. Emerson’s reply: “Someone can make a motion for that.”

A motion was made by Jeffrey Andros and seconded by Bob Schlitt to approve that the 3 applicants be added to the Needs Assessment Subcommittee; to include: Brooke Hall, Jody Idlette and Janet Sofield. The second was tabled in order for each applicant to give a 1-minute introduction of themselves. A motion was made by Jeffrey Andros and seconded by Bob Schlitt to approve that the 3 applicants be added to the Needs Assessment Subcommittee. The motion was open for discussion and there was no discussion. The motion carried in favor.

NEW BUSINESS (con't)

Mrs. Swanson continued with subcommittee elections for the Grants Subcommittee. Each applicant was allowed 1 minute to introduce themselves. The following applicants were present: Tracey Zudans, Michael Marsh, Sue Curtis and Paula Barclay. Jan Williams was not present; however, her resume and profile were provided. (Applicant attendance was not a requirement for voting purposes). After the applicant introductions, Mrs. Swanson explained the process is "if any one of the members would like to nominate one of the applicants to be a member of the subcommittee, there's a motion and then we wait to see if there's a second. Then there could be any discussion and then after the discussion we would vote."

Mrs. Katie Mieras proposed the question: "Would any of the applicants want to be the ninth member of the needs assessment? Like is that a consideration so that there's a place for everyone?"

Mrs. Michelle Morris made a point that "Michael Kint is serving on both subcommittees and if we want to try to get everyone (new applicants), maybe we should figure out how, if we want two people on this one or one person on both boards."

Mr. Bob McPartlan asked the question: Have we considered having an alternate (grants subcommittee member) if one of the 15 people who are seated on the subcommittee decides to leave before the grants take place in May. The County Attorney and Mr. Zito provided feedback that this is not a good option.

Further discussion was about the process of adding members and term limits. Staff confirmed the term limits and that no one is terming them out.

Paula Barclay stated that she would like to be considered for the Needs Assessment if it would solve the problem of having space for the present applicants for the Grants Subcommittee to be voted on the committee.

A motion was made by Hope Woodhouse and seconded by Frank Isele to approve that Paula Barclay be added to the Needs Assessment Subcommittee. The motion was open for discussion and there was discussion regarding whether Mrs. Barclay would serve better on the Grants Subcommittee due to her financial background. The motion carried in favor.

A motion was made by Bob Schlitt and seconded by Michelle Morris to approve that Michael Marsh be added to the Grants Subcommittee. There was discussion about any conflict of interest with Team Success applying for the grant; it was stated that anyone on the grants subcommittee would have to recuse themselves from the vote when there's a conflict of interest. The motion carried in favor by the following vote:
Aye: Amber Cerda, Bob McPartlan, Bob Schlitt, Commissioner Joe Earman, Dr. Kyra Schafte, Frank Isele, Hope Woodhouse, Jeffrey Andros, Katie Mieras, Michelle Morris, Miranda Swanson and Honorable Victoria Griffin

Public comment from Mr. Marsh.

A motion was made by Hope Woodhouse and seconded by Jeffrey Andros to approve that Susan Curtis be added to the Grants Subcommittee. The motion was open for discussion and there was no discussion. The motion carried in favor by the following vote:
Aye: Amber Cerda, Bob McPartlan, Bob Schlitt, Commissioner Joe Earman, Dr. Kyra Schafte, Frank Isele, Hope Woodhouse, Jeffrey Andros, Katie Mieras, Michelle Morris, Miranda Swanson and Honorable Victoria Griffin

Public comment from Susan Curtis.

A motion was made by Bob McPartlan and seconded by Jeffrey Andros to approve that Tracey Zudans be added to the Grants Subcommittee. There was discussion about this being the last spot available and needing to consider having someone with stronger accounting expertise and experience on the grants subcommittee; as well as a discussion regarding a standard procedure on when to fill vacancies on any of the committees. The motion carried in favor by the following vote:
Aye: Amber Cerda, Bob McPartlan, Bob Schlitt, Commissioner Joe Earman, Dr. Kyra Schafte, Frank Isele, Hope Woodhouse, Jeffrey Andros, Michelle Morris, Miranda Swanson and Honorable Victoria Griffin;
Nay: Katie Mieras,

Public comment from Tracey Zudans.

Discussion was made regarding the process of voting for subcommittee members. Mrs. Kendrick stated she would be happy to take everyone's suggestions and format them for consideration at a later meeting.

Motivational Edge: CSAC Staff received and provided the email received from Ian Welsch stating that the organization is respectfully declining the grant award in the amount of $15,000. This is due to receiving less funding than initially applied for and the high turnover of staff in the region.

DCF Funded Agency Updates: Three agencies have been affected by the reduction or elimination of DCF funding, which is critical for their preventive care programs. Mr. Frank Isele reported that the hospital district is currently the only source of funding for some programs that have been cut by the state, raising concerns about sustainability and emphasized looking for additional support from community foundations and other partners to help sustain the affected programs currently funded by CSAC: Prevention Works, Fatherhood and Trauma Informed Care. Representatives from each program provided an update on the plans to make up for the shortage moving forward.
The total amount of unallocated CSAC funds discussed was $143,810, which includes $128,810 that was not allocated and $15,000 that came back to the committee. The committee agreed that they need to establish a process for agencies requesting funding outside the annual RFP window, rather than making allocations based solely on immediate requests from a few agencies. There is a concern about how to handle funding requests outside of the RFP window, especially if similar situations arise in the future. The committee is wary of reopening requests for every agency that faces funding issues.

A motion was made by Bob Schlitt and seconded by Frank Isele to approve that the committee do a special recommendation to the County Commission for 50% of what these agencies indicated today for shortfalls for these programs as follows: $32,500 for Prevention Works, $25,000 for Fatherhood and $7,000 for Trauma Informed Care with the idea that this is not because we have money sitting in our pockets to burn but because this is an emergency situation that is effecting the children of our community. Discussion was about fiscal responsibility; or the committee offering a letter of support for the programs and letting the county commission decide; and further discussion went forth from the committee; The motion was tabled until the next meeting.

9. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
No public comment.

- **ADJOURNMENT**
No further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 4:57PM by Miranda Swanson.
A recording of this meeting is on file at the office of the Community Services Department and available upon request.

Prepared By Recording Secretary: Ms. Maya Miller