

**CHARLOTTESVILLE/ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 3, 2001**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Martha Carroll, 16<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit  
Dr. Kevin Castner, Albemarle County Schools  
Robert Cox, Charlottesville Dept. of Social Services  
Dr. Michael Dickens, Charlottesville Citizen Representative  
Dr. Susan McLeod, Thomas Jefferson Health District  
Richard Merriwether, Chair  
Larry Miller, Albemarle Citizen Representative  
Jim Peterson, Region Ten Community Services Board  
Linda Peacock, City of Charlottesville  
Debby Pomerantz, Charlottesville Citizen Representative  
Kathy Ralston, Albemarle Dept. of Social Services  
Sterling Robinson, Albemarle Citizen Representative  
Marti Snell, University of Virginia  
Ruth Stone, Private Provider Representative  
Cathy Train, United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Azzurra Cox, Charlottesville Youth Representative  
Happy Darcus, Albemarle Youth Representative  
Dr. William Symons, Jr., Charlottesville City Schools  
Roxanne White, Albemarle County

**CCF STAFF PRESENT**

Saphira Baker, Director  
Rory Carpenter, Juvenile Justice Coordinator  
Gretchen Ellis, Planner/Analyst  
Terrilynn Platt, Project Assistant  
Debbie Stone, CSA Coordinator

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Ashley Adams, new area resident and human services professional  
Staci England, Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development  
Carolyn Reynolds, Focus Mediation Center

**HANDOUTS (prior to meeting)**

Agenda for January 3, 2001 CCF Meeting  
December 6, 2000 CCF Meeting Minutes  
Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee December 14, 2000 Meeting Minutes  
Two Proposed Bylaw Amendments  
Draft CCF Endorsement Policy  
“Interim Report from the Roundtable Discussion on Children Needing Extensive Services”  
Sample Issue Alert Brief  
“Synopsis of Findings and Recommendations: Risk and Need Study for the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families”  
Flyer for the Community Forum on the Blue Ridge Detention Center

**HANDOUTS (during meeting)**

Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) Summary  
Financial Report for November, 2000  
CCF Logic Model for FY02 funding application

**I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Richard Merriwether called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed the Commissioners and all others in attendance.

**II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Staci England and Ashley Adams introduced themselves.

### **III. SPECIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE ADDED AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

R. Merriwether asked if anyone would like to add an item to the agenda. No one moved to add an item.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING WITH NO ADDITIONS OR CHANGES.**

### **IV. MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2000 AND DECEMBER 6, 2000**

R. Merriwether asked if anyone had changes to the minutes of the December 6, 2000 meeting. No one moved to make changes.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 1, 2000 CCF MEETING WITH THE CHANGES STATED BY JIM PETERSON AT THE DECEMBER 6, 2000 MEETING; THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2000 MEETING WITH NO CHANGES OR ADDITIONS.**

### **V. ACTIONS FROM THE RETREAT**

#### **A. SPONSORSHIP/ORGANIZATION OF THE TJCAG LEGISLATIVE FORUM—RUTH STONE**

Ruth Stone stated that the board of the Piedmont Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) decided to take on, in conjunction with CCF, the legislative forum of the former Thomas Jefferson Child Advocacy Group (TJCAG). CASA will seek funding for a networking/recognition reception. The CCF Executive Committee and Saphira Baker would like CCF to contribute staff assistance, postage, and mailing costs to the promotion of the forum. S. Baker, R. Stone, and Ed Wayland are currently selecting a fall date, and expect to focus the forum on a panel discussion among local legislators with an opportunity for the public to voice their positions and offer suggestions for the legislators.

R. Merriwether recapped the recent discussion surrounding the TJCAG legislative forum. (See CCF meeting minutes: October 4, November 1, and December 6, 2000.) He then asked for a motion to approve CASA's leadership of the TJCAG legislative forum and CCF's participation in the planning of the event.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION APPROVED CASA AND CCF SPONSORSHIP OF THE LEGISLATIVE FORUM.**

**B. MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS AND QUORUM BYLAW REVISIONS—JIM PETERSON**

R. Merriwether asked Jim Peterson to explain the two proposed bylaw amendments. J. Peterson first described the language and intent of the two bylaw amendments and recapped the recent discussion surrounding these amendments. He then read the amendments and noted that, as per Article IX of the current CCF bylaws, the Commission had been properly notified of the changes in order for the amendments to be ratified.

Discussion particularly focused on the phrase “advanced and expressly stated excuse” of the amendment concerning membership. Larry Miller asked what would qualify a reasonable excuse. Finally deciding that encouraging notification of absenteeism is the primary function of this bylaw amendment, they rephrased the amendment to read:

Article III, Section 5. “A Commission Member who, without prior notice, fails to attend three consecutive, regularly scheduled meetings, or who misses five meetings without notice during a twelve month period, shall be deemed, after written notice from the Chair, to have resigned from the Commission, and the Chair shall advise the City Council and Board of Supervisors of such fact.”

Commissioners chose to rephrase only a single word in the second bylaw amendment, altering the statement to read:

Sentence two of Article VII, Section 3. “If a quorum convenes at any point during a meeting, then the state of quorum remains in effect to the end of the meeting even in the event that the early departure of Commission Members drops the present attendance below a simple majority.”

R. Merriwether asked for a motion to approve these two bylaw amendments with changes.

◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE BYLAW AMENDMENTS—A NEW SECTION 5 UNDER ARTICLE III AND A SECOND SENTENCE UNDER SECTION 3 OF ARTICLE VII—AS DETAILED ABOVE WITH THE STATED CHANGES.**

J. Peterson then noted that the bylaw amendments will be referred to the Charlottesville City Council and the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors for approval.

**C. REPORT BACK ON 2 PENDING “RETREAT ISSUES”**

## 1. ENDORSEMENT POLICY—SAPHIRA BAKER

S. Baker explained that the issue of CCF's endorsements of other agencies, programs, and organizations was originally raised at the October 12, 2000 Commission retreat. At the November Commission meeting, Commissioners had asked the Executive Committee to come forth with a proposal for responding to agencies who request CCF support, often in the form of letters of support for grant funding. The Executive Committee discussed this issue, resulting in a draft policy. Pending CCF approval, this policy would be posted on the listserv, the CCF website, and communicated to local agencies. The objective in designing this policy is to ensure that endorsements are granted to agencies whose programs are consistent with CCF's mission, targeted to local needs, and can sustain funding for the project beyond the grant period. The policy will provide CCF a framework for providing endorsements, ensuring a fair process, and encouraging agencies to use CCF resources to strengthen local efforts.

Marti Snell asked how many requests for endorsements are received per year. S. Baker estimated one request every two months. Susan McLeod added, however, that the number of requests is growing.

Kathy Ralston noted that the section requiring proposals to “[d]emonstrate efforts at insuring that the proposed service does not replicate or compete for funding with a high quality local program, and is coordinated with existing services,” assumes that competition is a negative. Cathy Train added that the language suggests only one program in a community can do well in providing a given service. It is possible, she continued, for more than one program in a single community to perform equally well at providing this service. S. Baker replied that the language is intended to avoid duplication of efforts. C. Train responded that duplication is not necessarily bad if all the services provided are needed and used in the community. S. Baker asked for suggestions in a change of wording. R. Stone suggested “unnecessary duplication.” S. Baker added that she can simplify the language of the policy to be less specific.

R. Stone proposed adding a sentence which would require the agencies to write the draft letter of support, rather than requiring S. Baker to draft these letters.

Michael Dickens mentioned his concern that providing endorsements at all could potentially expose CCF to legal allegations for choosing not to provide a letter of support. Is there a way to legally protect the Commission, he asked. Would including a paragraph in the policy denying legal responsibility be sufficient? R. Stone asked if Lisa Kelley, the Assistant Charlottesville City Attorney, could look into the legal issues. S.

Baker said she would ask L. Kelley for assistance. R. Stone suggested that language asserting CCF's full discretion in its endorsement decisions be woven into the proposal. J. Peterson suggested changing the sentence which states that "CCF staff will review requests and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for *approval*" to read "for *consideration*." The following sentence should be rephrased to say that the Executive Committee will "*attempt* to hold a special meeting for *consideration*," should the timing of the endorsement not coincide with a monthly meeting.

◆ **THE COMMISSION AGREED TO TABLE ADOPTION OF THE ENDORSEMENT POLICY UNTIL THE LEGAL CONCERNS COULD BE ADDRESSED.**

**2. CITY/COUNTY/NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS—LINDA PEACOCK**

L. Peacock prefaced the discussion by saying that the issue of how and if CCF should conduct work particular to any neighborhood originally came out of the retreat. L. Peacock, R. White, and S. Baker had gathered and concluded that CCF, in their opinion, should continue to focus its analysis on the region rather than specific neighborhoods, but could make neighborhood-based recommendations. If CCF members should ever have any particular observations about a neighborhood, then the issue should be brought before the Commission to explore. In terms of special projects, CCF may contribute staff assistance as long as it does not impede on the work of the Commission; and if the staff feel the project will be too time-consuming, then the Commission needs to approve staff assistance for the project. Meanwhile, CCF will connect with the two neighborhood planning departments to coordinate gathering of census data that will be valuable to human service agencies and CCF.

◆ **THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE RECOMMENDATION PUT FORTH THAT CCF CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE REGION.**

**VI. REPORTS FROM WORK GROUPS**

**A. CSA COMMITTEE—BUZ COX**

B. Cox passed out the November CSA financial summary, explaining that since the CSA Committee did not meet in December, no written report is available. He reported that, year-to-date, 228 unduplicated children have been served by CSA dollars. Since November 1999, CSA spending has increased by 11 percent and the number of children served has increased by 19 percent. B. Cox mentioned that since CSA funds for services are encumbered in three month increments, they are

able to predict their spending through December 2000. As of now, a particularly large amount has already been encumbered, though it is not yet spent. This large figure, however, may be related to Medicaid spending which generally appears on the report as encumbered but is not covered by CSA funds unless Medicaid denies payment. The City has submitted a supplemental funding request to the state CSA office to cover the cost overage, and B. Cox believes the request will be approved, though he has not yet received the formal notice.

M. Snell asked if B. Cox had ever encountered a situation in which children were removed from placements due to a lack of CSA funding. B. Cox replied that the situation had not yet occurred because they have always received supplemental funding, yet he noted that the situation is feasible. L. Peacock asserted that, since CSA services are legally mandated, any negative cash flow would become a burden on the localities; thus the likelihood of a child becoming displaced is low. On another issue, L. Peacock noted that the 11 and 19 percent figures indicate positively that Medicaid is paying for services more often than it has in the past.

K. Ralston allowed that the County's CSA budget is in slightly better shape than last year. They have not yet submitted their supplemental request, but plan to do so. This year, in fact, the County has engaged in *unencumbering* previous purchase orders which are considered dead or void at this time; the funds were over-encumbered and will not be used. K. Ralston also mentioned that Medicaid and Title IV-E reimbursement pays for certain children with particular eligibility criteria. In the County, currently 50 percent of children in foster care are eligible for Title IV-E funding, compared to 45% statewide.

C. Train asked whether County children tend to be more or less expensive than City children. K. Ralston noted that when children needing extensive services were studied, County children tended to be older than their City counterparts, thus commanding a higher foster care rate and often requiring more expensive placements.

S. McLeod announced that the State and Local Advisory Committee will meet the following day, January 4, to develop its annual work plan; this committee has been asking for input. B. Cox mentioned that J. Peterson is the chair of that committee. J. Peterson explained that the State and Local Advisory Committee members were asked to gather information concerning their priorities, and they welcome any suggestions from the Commission. He also noted that this group had originally been very active when they were preparing their initial recommendations but had then moved into a lull as these recommendations were implemented. They hope at this next meeting to move into a new era of activity.

#### **1. CNES ROUNDTABLE REPORT—SAPHIRA BAKER, DEBBIE STONE**

S. Baker introduced the "Interim Report from the Roundtable Discussion on Children Needing Extensive Services" and briefly recapped Debbie

Stone's presentation of this report at the previous meeting. S. Baker then requested Commission approval on the "Next Steps" indicated in the report and asked for a Commission member to serve on the new work group which will move forward with these next steps. K. Ralston added that the original CNES work group had invested so much effort in the original report and roundtable that they would like to ensure the continuance of the new report's recommendations. D. Stone noted that though she had derived the recommendations in the report from comments made and issues raised at the roundtable discussion, other next steps are possible.

B. Cox suggested that the Commission either a) establish a work group with the charge to select the next steps and then implement them, or b) select the next steps and then establish a work group with the charge to implement the Commission-selected next steps. B. Cox then stated his preference for the next steps numbered 4 and 5 stated as "Tackle domestic violence in cooperative efforts throughout the community to lessen negative effects on children's intellectual, emotional and behavioral development" and "Fill the gaps in local services." L. Peacock suggested that next step number 2—"Bring services into the communities where and when they are needed most"—is also very important. She also noted that next steps 4 and 5 are closely linked to the mission and work of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee. R. Merriwether suggested the Commission adopt all five of the next steps. M. Snell mentioned that next step number 1—"Continue and expand upon the 'team approach' of collaboration among agencies"—seems more like an ongoing process which could be incorporated into the actions of the other 4 steps. S. Baker, responding to L. Peacock's mention of the JJAC, suggested involving JJAC members and affiliates in the new work group who would bring JJAC perspectives and efforts in next steps having to do with the new Assessment Center.

K. Ralston, agreeing with a previous suggestion from B. Cox, suggested forming the work group from highly energetic and knowledgeable people who would then be asked to select the next steps based on the needs they assess and their particular interests. K. Ralston then volunteered to lead a new work group in the discussion and selection of the five priority recommendations. D. Stone offered herself as a point of contact for the formation of this group. L. Peacock asked why the existing CNES work group is not taking on the next steps. S. Baker explained that the previous CNES work group had effectively dissolved once they presented the "Children Needing Extensive Services Work Group Report." Those involved in the previous CNES work group may join the new work group, however the new work group will not necessarily be comprised of the same people. Given this information, L. Peacock suggested that the new work group bear a different name to distinguish itself. M. Snell

volunteered to join the new work group. J. Peterson asked if any communication or information had been sent to the approximately 60 people who attended the roundtable discussion and if these persons had been invited to join the work group. D. Stone responded affirmatively, noting that a few had expressed some interest, and all had received the full report.

R. Merriwether asked for a motion to approve a new work group charged with recommending and implementing a selection of next steps as outlined in the “Interim Report from the Roundtable Discussion on Children Needing Extensive Services.”



**THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE FORMATION OF A NEW WORK GROUP TO SELECT AND IMPLEMENT ONE OR MORE OF THE NEXT STEPS AS DETAILED IN THE “INTERIM REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON CHILDREN NEEDING EXTENSIVE SERVICES.”**

**B. DATA MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP, ISSUES ALERT BRIEFS—MICHAEL DICKENS**

M. Dickens displayed the sample “Issue Alert Brief.” This format will be used, he explained, to remind people about *Stepping Stones*, to regularly share new data uncovered by CCF, and to stimulate community discussions surrounding this data. Issue Alert Briefs will be circulated on a regular basis, and will generally consist of one page of discussion and one page of graphs with citations and explanations.

M. Snell asked how the Issue Alert Brief would be distributed. M. Dickens suggested posting the briefs on the CCF website and mailing the briefs to specified recipients. M. Snell wondered if the local newspapers would be interested in publishing the briefs, or, in the least, publishing the graphs with some associated commentary. K. Ralston suggested sending the briefs to the *Washington Post*. L. Peacock thought the Public Involvement Work Group could take charge of circulating and publicizing the briefs. S. McLeod asked if the Data Management Work Group had a particular plan for continuing these briefs. Who will decide the content of the subsequent articles, she queried. M. Dickens replied that initially they plan to use *Stepping Stones* data, however, beyond that, they have not yet coordinated a plan. C. Train suggested connecting each brief to some current event in the community. K. Ralston agreed that the data should be framed in the context of a community issue. M. Snell suggested involving journalists in the reporting of these briefs. L. Miller added that WINA will begin airing expanded news reports which will focus on a single topic and run intermittently for a full 24 hours. K. Ralston, indicating the content of the sample Issue Alert Brief—student enrollment in school supported extracurricular activities—noted the variance between the County and City.

R. Merriwether asked for a motion to approve the format of the Issue Alert Brief.

◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE FORMAT OF THE ISSUE ALERT BRIEF.**

**C. JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL COMMITTEE—GRETCHEN ELLIS**

G. Ellis explained that, one year ago, the Department of Juvenile Justice mandated the use of a risk assessment tool to rate court-involved youth. Subsequently, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee decided to apply this tool retroactively to assess characteristic trends in local children previously involved in the courts. The result is the “Synopsis of Findings and Recommendations: Risk and Need Study for the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families,” approved by the JJAC several weeks prior. In addition to the factors the risk and needs assessment tool measures, the study also measured several other factors. G. Ellis added that though the children studied are court-involved youth, some of the factors bear significantly on children generally in the community. Subpopulations within the court-involved youth population were also studied, in part to provide a profile of the youth who will likely inhabit the Blue Ridge Detention Center. The report concludes with three recommendations, two of which are specifically directed at the Commission.

L. Peacock mentioned again that the recommendations of this report overlap with the CNES Roundtable Discussion next steps. She also wondered if the JJAC report should be mailed to participants of the Blue Ridge Detention Center Forum or perhaps be posted on the CCF website. R. Carpenter also proposed making the report available at the Blue Ridge Detention Center Community Forum.

G. Ellis asked the Commission for approval of the recommendations in the report. M. Snell asked if G. Ellis intended for the Commission to approve all the recommendations or just the CCF-focused recommendations. S. Baker responded that the JJAC was seeking approval of the report itself.

K. Ralston noted that on page eleven of the report, the numbers regarding poverty seemed lower than she would have anticipated. She wondered if these numbers seemed odd to anyone else. G. Ellis qualified that the percentages reflected children whose families received TANF, Food Stamps, and/or Medicaid. The report will be amended to reflect this. She then added that some of the individuals in the study received assistance prior to the inception of TANF.

R. Merriwether asked for a motion to adopt the “Synopsis of Findings and Recommendations: Risk and Need Study for the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families.”

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE REPORT TITLED “SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: RISK AND NEED STUDY FOR THE JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE/ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES” AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN.**

## **VII. UPDATE—SAPHIRA BAKER**

### **A. CCF LOGIC MODEL**

S. Baker shared with the Commission the CCF logic model which was included in CCF’s annual funding application to the City and County.

### **B. BLUE RIDGE DETENTION CENTER COMMUNITY FORUM**

S. Baker invited the Commissioners to attend the Blue Ridge Detention Center Community Forum which will be held Tuesday, January 23, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in Lane Auditorium of the Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road. L. Peacock added that the forum will bear significantly on the selection of the Blue Ridge Detention Center superintendent.

### **C. AGENCY BUDGET REVIEW**

The Agency Budget Review Team has assembled and the process is underway. Commissioners can expect a report on the findings of the team at the March CCF meeting. S. Baker, noting trends, said that while the number of agencies applying for City/County funding has not increased, the agencies are requesting 41% more from the County and 21% more from the City than they were allocated for FY01. Also, while the quality of the applications are mixed due to the new Outcome Measurement framework, generally those who attended the training produced higher quality applications.

### **D. OFFICE ON YOUTH CERTIFICATION**

CCF was officially certified by the Department of Juvenile Justice as an Office on Youth until September 23, 2003.

**E. WEBSITE**

Within the next month, a letter will be sent to the work groups inviting them to give input in the content of the work group pages on the CCF website.

**VIII. MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

R. Merriwether announced that the *Daily Progress* had named Sterling Robinson as one of its "Distinguished Dozen," and he congratulated S. Robinson.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.