

**Calgary and Area Child and Family Services  
Board Meeting #01-190405  
APPROVED MINUTES**

**April 19, 2005**

**High River Multi Service Team Office**

**Present:** David Pickersgill (Chair), Art Cunningham, Jean Creagh, Jeanette Nicholls, Eileen Grant, Bill Dickson, Christene Howard, Amber Hewwing, Sharon Davis, Marie Poelman, Shawn Ottewell

**Regrets:** Cathy Sinclair-Smythe, Cathy Thompson

**Presenters:** Ann Rowbotham, CFSA Staff, Youth in Transition to Adulthood  
Marnie Johnston, McMan Youth, Family and Community Services Association, Life Skills Facilitator for Youth in Transition to Adulthood  
Mandy Latiff, High River MST, Manager  
Cindy Wilson, High River MST, Team Leader

**Ex Officio:** Bonnie Johnston, CEO

**Administration:** Beverly Fournier, Pat Johnston, Sandra Gafos (recorder)

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**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

Community Liaison Committee requested the Youth in Transition to Adulthood Presentation be placed first on the agenda. Agenda approved by consensus.

**2. Receive Minutes for March 15, 2005 Planning Session**

The minutes of March 15, 2005 Planning Session were received.

**Business Arising**

Jean Creagh consulted with Chris Brennan and Bonnie Johnston regarding the option of CFSA donating surplus funds to the Legacy Fund. Since the Advancing Futures Bursary Program addresses this funding issue it was decided not to proceed. Most important consideration was given to staff and their personal commitment to promoting the Legacy Fundraiser.

**3. High River Staff Sharing**

Bev Fournier, Executive Manager of the High River Multi Service Team, welcomed and thanked everyone for visiting the office. Bonnie met with the staff prior to the Board meeting to discuss the challenges and opportunities of working in a rural part of the region.

Bev welcomed Cindy Wilson, Team Leader, who has been with the office for five years; and Mandy Latiff, Manager. Mandy also manages the Richmond office and supports the staff with her enthusiasm and extensive knowledge of Children's Services.

Mandy informed the Board about the satellite office in Claresholm that works closely with the High River Multi Service Team. The workers in the rural area have the opportunity to participate directly with families in their homes. The caseload for this office at any given time is between 130 – 135 families (cases). The office also has an adoption worker, daycare licensing

officer, fostercare worker and three administrative support staff. There is always one worker on call and they rotate on a daily basis. The office also works with three in-home support agencies, who meet twice a year to review their progress and processes. The office staff regularly attends interagency meetings where they have an opportunity to identify gaps in services and learn about upcoming programs. The office also works closely with several school divisions and mental health to identify any child that may be a threat to the community or a risk to themselves. There is a binder identifying protocols and training is in place for coordination of information and development of an action plan should an emergency situation occur.

Discussed some of the challenges of working in a rural part of the region in relation to the new Enhancement Act. Due to the new caseload management of each file, workers and families must attend court more often in Calgary. In previous years, there was a circuit judge available. Consideration will be given by the Management Team to discuss the option with Justice to re-establish a circuit judge.

Cindy described the commitment and dedication of the social workers on her team. All social workers are 'generalist', which means they carry the file from beginning to end. There have been cases where a social worker spends several years working with a family on different strategies until the best outcomes are found for the child and the parents. There have been instances where the case has been closed for two years and the social workers will check in with a child to make sure the best placement made at time is still the best placement to date.

David thanked Cindy and Mandy for their presentation and noted that it was a good reminder of why we are here.

#### **4. CEO Dialogue (Bonnie Johnston)**

It was a pleasure to visit with the High River office staff and to hear about their care and commitment to the Region. There have been challenges in dealing with complex cases and managing changes within the Ministry.

The Alberta Foster Parents Association is hosting the National Conference in Calgary from June 28 – July 3, 2005. Since the workshops and sessions are very relevant to our practice, the Region will sponsor fifteen staff positions at the conference. To show our support, the Region will make a \$2,400.00 contribution toward t-shirts for the children.

Briefly discussed the booklet titled "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" submitted on behalf of the Grandparents Advocacy Group. Jean Creagh, the Board Liaison with the Community Coordinating Council for Children with Special Needs mentioned that this has been an issue for about a year. The group decided to communicate their message by developing this booklet.

**Action:** To be discussed at the May Board meeting.

Bonnie met with the Deputy Chief of Police and Chief Superintendents for the Calgary Board of Education and Catholic Board of Education to begin building strategies to build healthy communities. Each organization is feeling the pressures and effects of a growing city.

#### **5. Finance and Audit Committee (Jean Creagh)**

##### **a) Report from Finance and Audit Committee**

Year End preliminary results (March 31st) would indicate that we expect to be in a "break even" position at year-end. The forecasted surplus of \$203,000 is about one tenth of one percent of our budget. The starting budget for the fiscal year 2005/06 will consist of funds equivalent to our actual expenditures for 2004/05. As the first quarter unfolds, this budget funding will be adjusted to reflect the new funding model being designed by a committee of

authorities from across the province. It is unknown what the impact of this new model will be on our funding at this point.

Discussed lawsuit funds included in the budget. Every budget year, the Department informs the Region regarding the pending lawsuit amounts to be included in the budget. During the meeting with the Assistant Deputy Ministers in February 2004, the Board was informed that the Region or the Department would pay insignificant or minor costs.

**Action:** Jean will review notes from the Department and follow up with Bonnie prior to sending an email to the Board.

**b) Financial Statements**

Included as information.

**c) Approve Business Plan**

Discussed the last page of the Business Plan titled 'Statement of Operations'. As per previous discussion not to include Section C to the Business Plan, the Statement of Operations reflects the cost of doing business; therefore, the Preamble no longer matches the recent attachment. Jean proposed changes to the Preamble.

It was agreed by consensus to insert Jean's new paragraph.

**The 2005-06 Business Plan was approved by consensus with noted changes.**

**Action:** Sandra to forward changes for Preamble and other noted changes prior to submission to the Department.

It was noted that the 2005-06 Business Plan addresses Education in relation to children in-care and FSCD children, it does not address Aboriginal Children in the Education system. A question was raised as to 'Why the Department selects certain Performance Measures and not others and the rationale in tracking these performances?' To be considered for the 2005-06 Business Plan.

**6. Community Liaison Committee (Bill Dickson, Chair)**

**a) Plan for addressing Youth Issues**

The Community Liaison Committee together with the Community Coordinating Council Co-Chairs identified 'Youth Issues' as a common issue in each of their communities. As a result of this meeting, the Community Liaison Committee and Child and Family Services Authority Management Team identified a program titled "Youth Transitions to Adulthood" that addresses some of the issues identified. This program does not directly address issues for families with children with disabilities. Currently there are other strategies to address the transitioning for children with disabilities. As a governing Board, the next step toward community engagement would be to engage other governing Boards, eg. Education, into conversation. It is an opportunity for the Board to provide a voice for our youth as they transition to adulthood.

**The Board agreed by consensus to bring together the Boards of the Partners on the Youth Transitions to Adulthood Committee as a first step in our Community Engagement Strategy.**

**b) Annual Gathering**

The Annual Gathering is scheduled to take place at the Grace Baptist Church on May 26. Each Board member is encouraged to attend this event. Cathy Thompson is currently planning the event with three Community Coordinating Council Co-chairs, Mezaun Lakha-Evin, Lynn Robbins and Stephanie Graves-Beckman. Catherine Buchanan will be invited and presented with a gift for her many years of valuable contribution to the Board.

**c) Community Coordinating Council Reports (Amber Hewwing)**

Amber Hewwing, Board Liaison with the Heart of the Northeast Community Coordinating Council, attended two Board meetings at the Heart of the Northeast Community Solutions Community Resource Centre (CRC). A report was distributed detailing the services of the resource center, the new initiative and the challenges of operating a resource centre.

**7. Strategic Planning Committee (Jeanette Nicholls, Chair)**

**a) June 17 Board Retreat**

Proposed the following agenda for the Board Retreat in June.

- Review and reconfirm the Strategic Directions
- Board Assessment to be considered
- Morning session – develop new Committee Work Plan
- Afternoon session – review Committee Work Plan for overlap

The Board approved the agenda.

The Committee suggested rescheduling from the full day on June 17 to the evening of June 21, due to the June 10 and 11 Board Development Conference. The afternoon session can be accomplished at individual Committee meetings. **The Board members supported this change.**

The Formation Meeting for the new Committees will take place after the appointment/reappointment of Board members, which is expected in mid-May.

**b) Work Plans**

Reviewed the revised Committee Work Plan template.

**c) Board Evaluation**

The Department is currently receiving extensive feedback for the individual Self Assessment. **The Board agreed by consensus to postpone the Self Assessment until the feedback is reviewed and to proceed with the Board Assessment portion using this Region's 2004-05 feedback.**

**d) Assessment of Core Governance Policy Handbook**

Discussed the questionnaire sent by the Department. Each Board member to submit feedback by April 22.

The Department will re-establish the committee that previously assisted with the development of the Core Governance Policy Handbook. The Committee will review the feedback and recommend changes. The Strategic Planning Committee recommended Amber to represent the Region. The Board agreed by consensus to have Amber Hewwing represent the Board.

**7. Updates and Reminders**

- **CD 'They Gave Me More Than Their Name' (Sharon Davis):** The Board listened to a song written by Doug MacDonald, who is an aspiring country singer from High River currently living in Nashville. Doug was adopted by a High River family and recorded a song about his experience.
- **New Board member (David Pickersgill):** Thirty applications were received. The interview panel consisted of Art Cunningham, David Pickersgill and Bob Elliott, Human Resources representative. The panel interviewed 11 applicants. The panel considered immediate and

future needs of the Board. Recommendations will be made to the Minister to consider some of the candidates for future vacancies.

- **Kananaskis Conference (Sharon Davis/Marie Poelman)** The conference was deemed a huge success with approximately 300 attendees. Every detail was well thought out, organized and the speakers were informative. The pre-conference for FCSS and CFSA Board members was a learning experience for everyone who attended. It was noted Board members recognized that Board operations varied amongst each other and that some of the FCSS wear 'two hats', either as Governance or as Operations. On the last day of the conference, attendees worked in groups to perform skits related to the importance of partnerships.
- **Complex Kids (Eileen Grant):** The sponsorship committee met February 16, 2005 to review progress to date and reconfirm the commitment to this project. A commitment was made to increase staff relations between the Calgary Health Region and Calgary and Area CFSA during the next year. This initiative has moved from a project status to program status. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Information Sharing between Calgary Health Region and Calgary and Area Child and Family Services was developed. The MOU is to outline the legal parameters of sharing client information between our two systems. There will be an opportunity for the Board Co-Chairs to share this model at the Assembly of Co-Chairs.
- **June 10/11 Board Development Conference Agenda (Eileen Grant):** The conference is an opportunity to meet and network with other CFSA Board members in the province and to exchange information.
- **Board Development Meeting (Eileen Grant):** Part of the work of the Board Development Committee has been the planning of the Board Development Conference in June and the development of a Board Orientation Manual that is currently in its third draft.

#### 14. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.