



Alaska Citizen Review Panel

Members

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Alaska Citizen Review Panel evaluates the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protection agencies for effectiveness in discharging their child protection responsibilities. The Panel is mandated through CAPTA 1997 (P.L. 104-235), and enacted through AS 47.14.205."

Citizen Review Panel January 6, 2015 Teleconference

Present: Dana Hallett, Diwakar Vadapalli, Donna M Aguiniga, Rodreshia Dunbar

Absent: Jen Burkmire, Margaret McWilliams

Minutes

1) Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

2) Approve minutes

- December 2, 2014 CRP minutes: Not reviewed
- December 12, 2014 CRP and OCS: Approved with corrections to the spelling of members' names.
- A couple of topics from the minutes were discussed further. Dana initiated the discussion around employee evaluation, including evaluation of upper management. Questions include whether evaluations are completed and if they are done in a timely manner. This is part of the running list of topics that the panel wants to continue having on the radar with OCS.
- Note: the running list of topics should be posted to the website. This list was reviewed at the last retreat, and continues to be an active list.
- Turnover and retention was the other topic that continues to be on the radar and is on the running list of topics. CRP needs someone to constantly keep track of regular updates expected from OCS. OCS sends quarterly data on turnover, but often because CRP reminds them to share their information. Diwakar was unsure if CRP has

received data from the quarter ending September 30. Data is available since December 2012. Diwakar asked that Information Insights create graphs to post online, similar to the sample he created.

- Diwakar stated that CRP is aware of two workforce studies. Recruitment effort is another issue. Christy talks about their effort to improve recruiting with things like videos and stuff but have not had positive results with retention. Employee survey summary results are posted on the OCS website. The survey has not been done every year. One was done in 2013 and maybe 2012, but before that it was 2009. They don't have enough resources to keep up with all of the surveys each year. Christy asked for input and Diwakar gave input, assuming they would do it in 2014.
- Brief discussion of the court hearing issue for children placed at Northstar that arose during our Anchorage site visit. The issue is larger than OCS, perhaps something for the Court Improvement Project to tackle.

3) Review and Approve Operating Guidelines

Everyone had a lengthy time to review. Donna will email minor editing points. Dana raised the issues of quorum. Donna said it should be the majority of the Panel and the Panel agreed.

Operating guidelines are a living doc that we will continue to improve and add to as we go along. Any amendments shall have a majority vote. Put on agenda for the retreat. Use that time every year to reassess and re-evaluate. There are other things such as how to do site visits should be some sort of manual that is comprehensive and clear. Should it be part of the policy? Put as practices in an addendum form? Should have all of this at one place. Diwakar envisions one physical or virtual binder that has everything they need and can be given to Panel members when they join. Dana, Donna and Diwakar agree.

Officially adopt them with changes by Dana and Donna, with posting on the website as soon as possible, but no later than January 31.

4) Items to follow up with OCS

- Specificity of the annual report response

Diwakar is right on track. This happens every year. We also need to be more specific. Dana suggested we should put some thought strategically into how we can move in that direction and how we can encourage OCS to move into that direction. We also need to be more specific in our presentations. Having our plan more specific, returning to the work plan through the year, all these would help. This is a broader topic that should be for the retreat.

For this year, identify areas that could be more specific so they are more useful for CRP and OCS. For example, something CRP can follow up specifically in 60 months or some timeline. For OCS, useful to report on here are recommendations and here is what we did. We can provide an example to share with OCS. Donna noted that having examples will be helpful. This is what we are talking about and what we want; we get same generality. It would be received better if we find the lack of specificity in the report and in the response. Diwakar noted the only specific thing he saw in the response was in-home services plan to be done by June 2016. The five year CFSR plan is not as clear as he hoped it to be. Not sure what they plan to do. Dana suggested that since OCS is setting a date that far out, we could easily ask for progress updates periodically.

Members were strongly encouraged to read the report in detail and compare it with our annual report. Both have plenty of room to improve. Diwakar will sit down with Donna to talk more about this. OCS has received our reports well. Whenever new ideas come, Christy first is resistant and given enough time to think about it, there is usually accommodation there. There has been a lot of improvement over past few years and room to continue to improve.

- OCS staff as Panel members

Rodreshia wanted to talk about her new position as an OCS employee and how the Panel feels about it. She noted she doesn't have a problem resigning from the Panel, but she would like to stay and can see how she could be useful. But she would want it to be very clear how she can be efficient and not have it be confusing. She doesn't want to be put in a compromising position.

Diwakar leaves.

Rodreshia talked to Sarah who talked to Travis. They see it as a conflict. Ultimately it would be a discussion with the Panel. If the Panel is all in agreement, then the next step would be to talk to Travis and explain how the Panel would use her involvement. Rodreshia noted she wants to feel supported with the Panel and with OCS. It would have to be an internal decision and a formal approach. Donna suggested a six month leave of absence to get a better feel for the job and role and then see if it might be possible to straddle both worlds and how it might be workable. The Panel would have to have a clear vision of what they'd have her do. Rodreshia suggested returning in three months could come back and share what she's learned. Dana noted that we need to get the whole Panel engaged in this. We have some time. Put on agenda for Feb meeting.

Rodreshia suggested that she should not be involved formally at this point. She noted that the new people don't know her. Since joining the Panel she moved from Barrow and has lost two members of her family. She appreciated the Panel's understanding. She could offer a perspective in addition to that gained

when she ran the residential unit. She will work for the ICWA unit and be working with tribes and will be 100% AK Natives.

Dana asked Rodreshia to please email Diwakar asking for a hiatus in her Panel membership. He also asked her to send each member a link to site she mentioned. Diwakar can decide how will approach this.

5) Select dates for retreat

Last year's dates were June 6-8. Dana proposed as close to last year's dates as possible. He suggested the first or second weekend in June and we look at people's schedules.

Donna noted that for the Southeast site visit she would like to go to Sitka, if possible.

6) Next meeting dates

- Friday, January 9, noon to 1:30 p.m. monthly meeting with Christy and Travis
- Tuesday, February 3, noon to 1 p.m. monthly meeting

