

FCRO Advisory Committee Minutes  
September 19, 2012  
Hruska Law Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
635 S. 14<sup>th</sup> Lincoln NE

MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

NO. 2

- Call to Order      A meeting of the FCRO Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, September 19, 2012. Notice of the meeting, pursuant to statute, was published. Craig Timm, the Advisory Committee Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.
- Roll                      Advisory Committee Members present were: Michelle Hynes, Sheree Keely, Sandy Kruback, Elizabeth Neeley, and Craig Timm.
- Staff present were, Linda M. Cox, Mary Furnas, and Heidi Ore.
- Guest Present: Senator Bob Krist
- Open Mtgs Law      Chairperson Craig Timm stated that the Open Meetings Law and Agenda for the meeting were posted per law.
- Minutes                      The minutes from the August 30, 2012, meeting were discussed. Elizabeth Neeley moved to approve the minutes from the August 30, 2012 meeting. Sandy Kruback seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sandy Kruback, Sheree Keely, Michelle Hynes, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against.
- Senator Krist              Senator Bob Krist addressed the Advisory Committee and thanked them for time on the agenda and congratulated members for being asked to serve from the list of several qualified persons who applied.
- Senator Krist stated that by passing LB 998 in the last session, the Legislature returned the Foster Care Review Office to the mission first envisioned by Senator Jerome Warner as an autonomous oversight agency, clarified the Committee and Executive Director's roles, and removed any real or perceived conflict of interest from the Committee.
- Senator Krist stated that in his opinion the former Board opposed giving the Legislature the facts about Safe Haven and Privatization, had a conflict of interest with the FCRO's mission, was in conflict with the former

Executive Director, was too directly involved in the agency's operations, and was more focused on pointing fingers internally than working on behalf of children in out-of-home care.

Senator Krist stated that the FCRO was the Legislative's eyes and ears, that quarterly reports were required but more reports were welcome, that analyzed and raw data/information should be shared to with the Legislature, especially concerning children in out-of-home care.

Senator Krist asked the Advisory Committee to hire the most qualified person possible for the FCRO Executive Director's position and asked members to block out any conversations, rumors, etc. they might have heard about the former Executive Director.

Senator Krist posed that in the future the FCRO could assist in tracking and evaluating preventative measures, assist Nebraska's work towards establishing like data sets to assist in State-to-State comparisons of the number of children in out-of-home care, help Nebraska craft good policy, and help the Legislature allocate Child Welfare funding wisely.

Senator Krist asked the Committee to consider him a Cheerleader and a resource and stated that Senator Campbell should also be considered a good resource. Senator Krist thanked Linda Cox for her testimony before the Health and Human Services Committee and asked that she not be overworked while she is covering the two positions.

The Committee thanked Senator Krist for attending.

#### Agenda

Craig Timm asked the Advisory Committee members to review the Agenda. Seeing no changes, the meeting continued.

#### Interim Dir. Report

Linda M. Cox followed up with the Committee on their motion to increase her salary and stated that her salary had been increased as of August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, rather than July 1, 2012. Heidi Ore reported that she learned after the Committee's meeting that enacting retroactive pay increases was prohibited by Nebraska's Constitution.

Ms. Cox delivered the FCRO's first Quarterly Report per 43-1303(4) on September 13, 2012, to the Health and Human Services Committee. Craig Timm from the Advisory Committee attended.

Ms. Cox stated that the FCRO's Biennium Budget was submitted by September 15, 2012, per Statute. Ms. Cox stated that copies would be provided to Committee Members.

Ms. Cox stated that staff and Committee member's comments on the FCRO's Rules and Regulations would be incorporated prior to a public hearing. The Committee discussed the promulgation process, asked that the draft Rules and Regulations be posted on the website, and other stakeholders, such as the Judiciary, be contacted and given a chance to comment. The Public Hearing was set for December 4, 2012, at 9:00 a.m.

#### Personnel Contact

Sheree Keely reported that she had contacted Vikki Logan from State Personnel who said that a staff person from State Personnel would post the Director's position on the State of Nebraska Career Center website and gather and send all the applications, cover letters and resumes to the Committee. Ms. Keely stated the position would need to be open at least 6 days, a salary range could be posted, and a press release could be issued. Ms. Keely also reported that Ms. Logan had several suggestions for additional sites for the notice to be posted.

The Committee discussed the process and decided to post the job opening on several professional websites, that posting the position in trade magazines would be unpractical given the timeframe, that post graduate schools should be noticed, that a cover letter and resume would be required along with the application, that supplemental questions would be used to assist in scoring applicants, that the posting would begin October 1, 2012 and would remain open for 45 days, that a press release would be issued, that the salary range would be listed between \$85,000 – \$100,000, and the offer would be extended based on qualifications and experience.

#### Survey & Results

Elizabeth Neeley stated that she had received the results for the anonymous staff survey regarding preferred qualifications for an Executive Director and general feedback regarding the agency. Ms. Neeley reported that some staff had asked that the results be discussed in Executive Session to protect staff reputations.

Sandy Kruback moved to go into Executive Session to protect staff reputations. Sheree Keely seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a role call vote was taken. Sandy Kruback, Sheree Keely, Michelle Hynes, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against.

- Executive Session** The Advisory Committee went into Executive Session at 2:06 p.m. Michele Hynes moved to come out of Executive Session at 2:33 p.m. and Elizabeth Neeley seconded the motion. Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken. Sandy Kruback, Sheree Keely, Michelle Hynes, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. No further motions were made during Executive Session.
- Director Job Description** The Advisory Committee discussed in detail the FCRO Executive Director's Job Description, qualifications, essential duties and responsibilities. The Committee worked together to determine the FCRO Director's requirements for education, data skills, administrative skills and communication, incorporated staff's suggestions and recommendations, and reached consensus on the updated FCRO Director Job Description. The Advisory Committee also discussed specific supplemental questions available through the State Personnel Job site that would be asked as applicants applied for the position.
- Comments** Elizabeth Neeley stated she was able to join a meeting the FCRO staff had with DHHS Consultants looking at the upgrade or replacement of N-FOCUS as outlined by LB 1160. Ms. Neeley stated that that FCRO staff shared the current limitations as well as recommendations for improvements to the N-FOCUS system.
- Ms. Neeley also shared she attended a child welfare forum sponsored by Nebraska Appleseed and the State Policy Advocacy and Reform Center, SPARC, on DHHS' Structured Decision Making process (SDM). Ms. Neeley thought SDM could potentially improve outcomes for children if uniformly implemented. Committee members discussed difficulties within the Child Welfare system, documentation deficits both in files and on N-FOCUS and DHHS' inconsistent determination of when children are placed into care voluntarily.
- Next Meeting** The Advisory Committee set the following meeting dates: October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1-5 p.m., November 20<sup>th</sup>, from 1-5 p.m., December 1<sup>st</sup> beginning at 10:00 a.m., December 4<sup>th</sup> from 1-5 p.m., and December 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Advisory Committee members determined next steps for members to complete prior to the next meeting.
- Adjourn** Elizabeth Neeley moved to adjourn. Sandy Kruback seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Sandy Kruback, Sheree Keely, Michelle Hynes, Elizabeth Neeley and Craig Timm voted for the motion. There were no votes against. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.