

## **Family Services Review Commission Meeting**

**April 5, 2007**

**HSB-252**

**Members present:** Doreen Binder, Diane Cohen-Alpert, Shirley Kaping, Rosemary Lazzari, Mavel Morales, Rob Potter, Angela Sanchez , and Michael Ware (by phone)

**Members excused:** Maggie Bagon, Jessica Chanay and Peggy Kennerly

**Members absent:** Kim Freeman, Bonnie Davidson and Miranda Herrera

**DHS staff present:** Ramona Foley, Mickey Serice, Jim Neely, Vic Todd, Dave Lyda, Belit Stockflesh, and Nancy Sathrum

**Guest:** Erin Kelley-Siel, Governor's Office, Health and Human Services Policy Advisor, Lori Morphis

**Administrative Handouts, sent via email prior to the meeting:** Meeting Agenda, Draft Minutes of the April 5, 2007 FSRC Meeting, FSRC 2006 – 2007 Strategic Plan, DHS Summary of Complaints Report for February 2007, Self-Sufficiency Programs Update E-mail, CAF Self-Sufficiency Programs Status Report, USDA Recommendations for the Farm Bill 2007, Degree Completion Initiative Update, Draft TANF Time Limit Update, Office of Civil Rights Voluntary Compliance Agreement Draft Final Data Report

**Additional Administrative Handouts at meeting:** FSRC Member Roster, List of Self Sufficiency Program Legislative Bills as of 4/2/07, February 2007 CAF Public Assistance Caseload Statistics, Self-Sufficiency at a Glance for February 2007, Sample TANF Time Limits Letter

### **Greeting and Roll Call:**

Meeting called to order at 8:42 a.m. with a membership quorum in attendance. Michael Ware participated by phone.

### **Chair Report:**

- Action and follow-up items: None outstanding.
- Approval of Minutes:
  - Mike Ware motioned and Rosemary Lazzari seconded the approval of the March 1, 2007 FSRC meeting minutes and the March 12, 2007 Legislative Committee minutes as written. Vote of approval was unanimous. **(Nancy requested a copy of the Legislative Committee minutes for the FSRC files.)**
- Commission membership status: Mavel Morales, Oregon Law Center in Ontario, has been appointed.
  - The Governor's Office notified us that they will send a letter to Bonnie Davidson (Policy Specialist) and Miranda Herrera (Former Recipient) regarding their resignations.

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- We have two open positions; one advocate and one recipient/former recipient.
- Mavel informed us that letters were sent by the Governor's Office to the two other Oregon Law Center staff to let them know they won't be appointed at this time.  
**ACTION:** Nancy will request copies of letters for FSRC files. (**Letters Rec'd 4/9/07**)
- Grievance Report: Members were provided the DHS Summary of Complaints Report for February 2007 for review.
- Office of Civil Rights Data Report in packet. Members appreciated receiving this report. **ACTION – Dave Lyda:** Please provide quarterly report for members. Members also liked the DCI and Time Limit Report. A sample TANF time limit letter was distributed. 382 letters have gone out statewide, with approximately 140 in Multnomah County.
- Copies of rule changes are being sent to FSRC members.

### **Guest: Erinn Kelley-Siel, Governor's Office:**

Erinn joined the meeting at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made around the table. Erinn provided a brief update on the TANF Reauthorization legislation. There are only 3-4 policy differences between the two bills. The amendments to both bills will be made to HB 2469. The reception on both sides of the isle has been positive and the bills have been incredibly well received.

The Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB) made an investment in caseloads and enhanced the funding to bring new TANF elements on line.

The session is moving very fast and there is a commitment to adjourn on June 29<sup>th</sup>. There is about 1½ weeks (April 18) to move new bills that have a fiscal impact. Next month, Ways and Means will begin work sessions to pass out the budgets. Then they go through the opposite chamber to get a majority vote on both sides.

### **Critical issues:**

1. The co-chair budget didn't include everything in the GRB. Erinn described the differences in the budgets which amount to 13 to 15 million. The budget doesn't reflect the investment for safe children and self-sufficient families. There will be a significant effort to bring the discussion back to the original vision. General funds might have to be shifted from other areas within DHS if funding bills don't pass. There was a request for members to get the message out to partners.
2. Erinn will share a fact sheet on SB 184 on alcohol and drug addiction services. Nancy will share with FSRC members. (**Done: 4/5/07**) Please use it as a tool when attending information meetings. Rep. Schrader and Sen. Nolan have asked that the bill be sent to Sen. Carter's subcommittee for hearing.
3. Food Stamps and Farm Bill: In an attempt to engage people to understand how limited food stamps are, the Governor has declared the week of April 23rd as

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“Hunger Awareness Week” and challenged citizens to live on an average food stamp weekly allotment of approximately \$21 per person. Nancy to send out information from Erinn’s office. **(Done 4/17/07)** To emphasize the message of healthful eating, the Food Bank is taking strides to obtain more fresh and frozen foods and grocers are participating in the Fresh Alliance Program of flash freezing items for distribution. Erinn encouraged the FSRC to participate in the Governor’s Challenge

Questions:

1. Are they stuck on anything that we could help support?
  - a. Sanctions policy: preference is to have a strong, continuous assessment process to assure that clients don’t end up with sanctions.
  - b. Length of maternity leave: current state statute is 90 days per child and the federal law is 12 months for lifetime of person. If state passes a law different from federal policy, the additional expense would have to be entirely state funded to stay in compliance. As discussions continue, changes are being made with amendments.
  - c. Assessment and evaluation process: Work continues to meet the recommendations of the TANF Oversight Committee. The assessment and evaluation process are better served through policy and rules to retain some flexibility. The Oversight Committee could be reconvened to handle the rule/policy changes as they are needed.

**CAF Report, Ramona Foley, Mickey Serice, Vic Todd and Dave Lyda:**  
**TANF Reauthorization, discuss status of TANF bill, revised TANF regulations and TANF policy changes:**

Vic reported that the House Committee Work Group is discussing what the law should include and keeping details in policy and rules to allow the flexibility to make necessary changes. There has been discussion and agreement on child support. Larger issues that are still being discussed include deprivation, time limits, and the sanctions policy.

Both TANF bills have been heard and a work group has been formed to merge the two bills into HB 2469. This bill will come back to committee with amendments for consideration.

**ACTION:** Dave to notify Nancy when amended bill is available so it can be sent out to FSRC members.

A copy of the time limits letter was distributed. The basic letter is sent to clients when they reach 42 months. A follow-up letter is sent if client doesn’t respond to DHS. Letters are being sent out each month. The letter has been developed in alternate formats.

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OCCF connection: Mike agreed to assist Rosemary. Mickey Lansing has been out of the office but Mike is staying in contact with OCCF.

### **Child Neglect – General discussion about how child neglect is addressed by the State**

Neglect and threat of harm are the largest categories in the state. Our preference is to serve struggling families prior to the child entering the Child Protective Services (CPS) system and being removed from the home.

Oregon is one of the few states to track the number of child welfare cases also receiving TANF benefits. Ramona participated in a video conference that addressed this cross over. It was organized by Jack Tweedie and included approximately 2,000 people from over 100 sites. She shared information on our Family Support and Connections Program.

**ACTION:** Nancy will provide the web site. (Done 4/5/07)

It was suggested that we invite Mickey Lansing from the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OFFC) to attend a FSRC meeting to discuss front-end programs to help eliminate kids from entering the child welfare system. Additional front-end investments, healthy start, parenting classes, etc. are needed. How can this responsibility be shared with community partners? The Specialists positions to address these issues were removed from the GRB; how will it be addressed by DHS? Where should the process begin? With an OB during the pregnancy, the hospital at birth, the schools? Review as a commission to discuss options.

Diane also suggested inviting Katherine Cahn, Portland State University, Child Welfare Partnership, to a meeting to discuss neglect and threat of harm training around the state.

### **Farm Bill – discussion related to food stamps**

There is a matrix in the meeting packet that outlines the issues. The new Federal regulations will eliminate some of the flexibility of our current program. Lobbying is continuing to support retaining the current flexibility. Patti Whitney-Wise thinks the lobbying will continue at the State and Federal levels. Some proposed changes are very good; pilots will be offered, support will be provided, and nutrition information will be integrated in the food stamp program.

Update – Belit Stockfleth, Food Stamp and Prevention Program Manager, joined the meeting to report on current activities:

- Outreach efforts continue, specifically to the senior population;
- A kickoff on a fruits and veggie campaign is under way to increase nutrition information;
- Improving application process to make it more customer friendly;

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- Piloting new process in Astoria, St. Helens and Lake and Marion County. We will expand process as partners come on board to assist us.

Jim attends the Interagency Coordinating Council on Hunger (ICCH) meetings and will send minutes from a recent meeting to Nancy to forward to members. **(Done 4/10/07)**

Mavel requested statewide statistics. Statewide data by county and branch are on our web site in data books. **ACTION:** Nancy will send web link where statistics can be reviewed. **(Done 4/20/07)**

**ACTION:** Belit to provide update on Farm Bill each month for review.

### **FSRC Strategic Plan: Review and discuss 2006-07 status**

Goals and objectives: Rob read over goals; we are currently working on state level of goals. Review periodically throughout the year, possibly every 4 months.

### **Committees:**

- Legislative Committee: Rosemary and Jessica were recognized for their work this month with the legislative process. Both did a great job testifying before the Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee and the House Health Services and Women's Wellness Committee. Rob was recognized as well for his testimony. Michael will attend the Ways and Means Public Hearing at Jefferson High School tonight. May have hearings around the state. **(Nancy sent hearing locations on 4/10/07.)**
  - Chanay – discuss Legislative Committee activities. Not in attendance.
- Administrative Rule Committee for Customer/Client Department-wide Policy: Angela Sanchez gave an update on the first meeting of this work group. They went through the policy line by line to address concerns. The new draft was distributed for the next meeting scheduled for April 16th. Angela liked the process and appreciated the different feedback but believes that many customer service issues can't be regulated; attitude, compassion, etc. and training is needed. Staff are overwhelmed and there continues to be high turnover.

Rosemary asked about the privacy issue for client interviews. Although some offices have interview rooms, many offices continue to use desk-side interviews that lack privacy considerations.

We can push for policy changes that are in the best interests of the client. **ACTION:** **Rob Potter:** Include issue on agenda while CAF Administration is present. Include intention to establish foundation to provide services in a respective, private way; use of conference rooms, taller cubicle walls, doors on cubicles. Angela will check with Lori to see if it is a public meeting, and if she can release draft document. **ACTION:** **Angela Sanchez:** If given the go ahead, Angela will send to Nancy who will forward to Commission.

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Should we submit a letter of support on tobacco tax to fund addiction services? Discussion should also include increase on liquor taxes. The FSRC would like to support but there wasn't a quorum in attendance to approve.

### **May 3, 2007 FSRC meeting agenda:**

- Department-wide customer service policy: Discuss and push for policy changes that are in the best interests of the client.

Next Meeting: The next FSRC meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2007, 8:30 a.m. to noon, in HSB-252. Please let Nancy know if you plan to attend by Video Conferencing or phone.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.