

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE/CHILDREN'S JUSTICE ACT
PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

July 31, 2020

A meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Court Appointed Special Advocate and Children's Justice Act programs was held on July 31, 2020. As a result of the state of emergency declared by Governor Northam due to COVID-19, the Advisory Committee conducted this meeting by electronic communication means without a quorum of the Committee physically assembled at one location. However, a quorum was present virtually.

Members Present

Molly Dellinger-Wray
Shardell Gerald
Allison Gilbreath
Shannon Hartung
Judge Jerrauld Jones
Sandy Karison
Malcolm King
Alicia Lenahan
Jennifer Newman
Giselle Pelaez
Pat Popp, Chair
Judge Thomas Sotelo
Ashley Thompson

Members Not Present

Robin Foster

Staff Present

Jenna Foster (DCJS)
Melissa O'Neill (DCJS)
Terry Willie-Surratt (DCJS)

Guest

Chase Whittaker (University of Richmond
Law Student Intern)

- I. **Call to Order:** Pat Popp, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM. A verbal roll call was taken.

- II. **Approval of Minutes:** The committee received and reviewed the draft minutes of the January 31, 2020 meeting. Alicia Lenahan made a motion to approve the January 31, 2020 minutes. Molly Dellinger-Wray provided a second and Giselle Pelaez abstained. Motion was approved by verbal roll call vote.

III. Recognition of Advisory Committee Member Service – Melissa O’Neill recognized three members whose terms of service on the Advisory Committee have ended. Hum Cardounel, Julia Fuller-Wilson, and Robin Morgan will each receive a certificate of appreciation. The Department of Criminal Justice Services is grateful to each for their commitment, dedication and service to the Committee.

IV. Set Meeting Dates for Next Year – The Advisory Committee agreed to meet on the following dates for the next year:

October 30, 2020

January 29, 2021

April 30, 2021

July 30, 2021

V. By-laws Approval – The Advisory Committee received a copy of the proposed changes to the by-laws in advance of the meeting for approval. Jennifer Newman made a motion to approve the by-laws as presented, and Malcolm King provided a second. After a brief discussion, the motion was approved by a verbal roll call vote.

VI. CASA Program Update - The committee was previously provided a written update regarding the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program. Melissa O’Neill provided information on the CASA programs’ response during the pandemic. CASA volunteers continue to serve children through virtual and sidewalk visits and CASA programs quickly adapted training from in-person to virtual platforms. DCJS moved to virtual grant monitoring and will meet all requirements for site visits by the end of the calendar year.

The Advisory Committee engaged in a discussion on the role of CASA volunteers in collaborative team meetings with system partners. The discussion focused on the importance of the independence of CASA volunteers and the limitations of restrictions on confidentiality and information sharing.

VII. Children’s Justice Act Program Update - The committee was previously provided a written update regarding the Children’s Justice Act Program. Jenna Foster highlighted areas of interest.

The Advisory Committee engaged in a discussion regarding training delivery during and after the pandemic. Members were provided a list of questions in advance of the meeting to assist DCJS in consideration of alternative methods of training delivery.

VIII. Child Protective Services/Citizen Review Panel – Shannon Hartung, Child Protective Services Program Manager, Virginia Department of Social Services, provided an overview of the Department of Social Services response during the pandemic. Members were also given an overview of the Citizen Review Panel recommendations for the next year.

IX. New Business – Due to the cancelation of the April meeting, the committee was unable to appoint a nominations committee for the appointment of new officers. Shardell Gerald and Pat Popp agreed to serve in this capacity.

X. **Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 12:22 PM.

Next meeting dates:

October 30, 2020

January 29, 2021

April 30, 2021

July 30, 2021