

**Child Protective Systems Oversight Committee**

Tuesday, March 21, 2017 | 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Child Abuse Prevention Center

4700 Roseville Rd, North Highlands, CA 95660

**MEMBERS**

Present	Present	Present
X Alexander, Roy	Johnston, Maynard (Chair)	X Uda, Betsy
X Bell, Michelle	X Maulfair, Virginia	X Zone, Sharon
Claar, Jane	Ore, Chris	
X Edison, Joni	X Saika, Tony	
X Felion, Sister Jeanne	X Solomon, Christina	
X Powells-Mays, June (Counsel)		
X Nosce, Abigail (Staff)		

**Call to Order**

Acting Chair Joni Edison called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm. Quorum was established.

**Review Meeting Minutes**

The February 14, 2017 meeting minutes were reviewed. **Motion was made by Sister Jeanne Felion, and seconded, to approve the February 14, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion carried.**

**DHHS Ombudsman – Meet and Learn**

DHHS Ombudsman/Civil Rights Coordinator Susan Anderson introduced herself and educated the committee about her role. *[See Attachment A for materials distributed]*

- The Ombudsman is a neutral party who helps to resolve complaints or answer questions about Health and Human Services departmental policies and practices.
  - Susan has previously worked for CPS, having 19 years of experience in working with families across two counties. She has also worked with the Child Death Review Team.
- Her role as Civil Right Coordinator mainly involves answering questions about court orders and helping people understand the process. In this role, she also monitors DHHS sites' compliance with civil rights laws.
- Her office receives calls for a variety of reasons including: complaints about how a CPS case is being handled, mental health resources when existing have been exhausted, adoptive family issues with payments, parents with open CPS cases inquiring about where their children are, complaints about In-Home Supportive Services, and other calls for issues not within the scope of Sacramento County DHHS.
  - Anyone can call: children, parents, grandparents, relatives, foster parents, attorneys, physicians, therapists, social workers, teachers, related agencies or community organizations.
- How the Ombudsman can help:
  - Provide information, answer questions, and identify staff or resources to address issues
  - Research departmental policies and procedures that may assist in resolving complaints
  - Facilitate prompt resolutions in an independent, impartial, objective and professional manner
  - Assure matters are treated in a confidential manner as appropriate
- What the Ombudsman cannot do:
  - Does not have the authority to overturn a court decision or make recommendations to the court

- Cannot investigate matters when appeals or law suits are pending against the County
- Unable to give legal advice
- Cannot ensure implementation of any recommendation made following their investigation
- Personnel and disciplinary matters are referred to a department manager for the appropriate action
- Other help Susan provides:
  - Sometimes attends meetings with people, acting as a neutral third party, for support
  - Helps people understand if their rights were violated
  - Connects people with resources that may help them resolve issues that are outside the scope of Sacramento County DHHS
  - Lends a sympathetic ear to people needing to talk through their problems
  - Empowers people to voice their concerns and take action to resolve problems

#### Member questions/comments

- What kind of training does this position receive?
  - The person in this position generally has vast experience in working with CPS clients and knowledge of the inner-workings of the DHHS systems of care and courts.
  - New Ombudsman trains with the previous Ombudsman.
  - Industry knowledge is kept current through trainings such as the National Ombudsman Conference
- How many calls does your office receive daily?
  - It is hard to gauge, as calls that do not pertain to connecting to or help with services are not logged. Many calls of this nature are received regularly.
- How are people who constantly call handled?
  - They always receive a return call and Susan will attempt to give them resources, explain processes to them, and try to help them understand what she can and cannot do.
- Does your office track trends, identify themes and make recommendations?
  - Yes, data reports to the DHHS Director are compiled annually and data collection is being refined.
- Members noted there was a significant drop in complaints about IHSS between 2015 and 2016. This may be a result of the re-initiating of a Quality Assurance unit in Senior and Adult Services.

#### **2016 Annual Report**

- The committee reviewed the final draft of its 2016 Annual Report. **Motion was made by Sister Jeanne Felion, and seconded to approve the final draft of the 2016 Annual Report. Motion carried.**
  - Abigail Nosce will email the final draft of the 2016 Annual Report to DHHS/CPS for submission to the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the CPS Oversight Committee.
  - CPS will draft and email Abigail the Board Letter that presents the 2016 Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors. Abigail will forward the Board Letter to the committee for review.
- The committee worked on and completed a first draft of the 2016 Annual Report PowerPoint presentation.
  - Abigail will email the draft to the committee for further refinements, receive edits, and submit the final presentation to DHHS/CPS.

#### **Announcements**

None.

#### **Public Comment**

None.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:59pm**