

# WASHOE COUNTY CHILD CARE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

## MINUTES

DATE: September 29, 2020

PLACE: Washoe County Commissioners' Chambers and via Zoom

### MEMBERS

PRESENT: Hayley Hamel, Child Development Specialist  
Julieta Ferraren, Recipient of Child Care Services  
Kim Franchi, Washoe County Health District  
Kristy Baker, Child Care Licensing Supervisor, Washoe County HSA

### MEMBERS

#### PRESENT

VIA ZOOM: Alexis Erlach, Recipient of Child Care Services  
Candace Dietrich, Recipient of Child Care Services  
Ryan Putzer, For Profit Child Care provider (Center)  
Kristin Mareno, For Profit Child Care Provider (Center)  
Harmony Shreve, For Profit Child Care (Home)  
Sylvia Lee, Reno Fire Department  
Brett Lee, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District  
Kathy Sobrio, Washoe County Health District – Immunization Program  
Tiffany Dyer, Nevada State Division of Child and Family Services  
Chris McCubbins, Sparks Fire Department – joined at 6:43p.m.

#### Item 1: Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Kim Franchi, and roll was taken.

#### Item 2: Approval of Minutes of March 12, 2020 Meeting

The minutes of the March 12, 2020 meeting were approved.

#### Item 3: Grading System Updates (Kristy Baker)

From the previous meeting in March there was Board discussion in regard to Board Member Hayley Hamel drafting an email to the state requesting a copy of the proposed changes.

Hayley Hamel provided the following update: Latisha Brown held a public forum where the public was able to ask questions about the proposed changes before it went to the Board of Health. Hayley felt it was no longer necessary at that point to draft a letter to the State.

Kristy also followed-up with Latisha Brown regarding the grading system and Latisha advised that although the regulations have passed, the State has not yet implemented

anything due to the COVID focus. Once they get started and generate some very tangible steps toward implementation, the State will loop us in. Kristy advised that the County has no plans to implement anything regarding the grading system until then and hopes that the county will be part of the final decision-making process.

#### Item 4: Staff to child Ratio – Regulation 24.4.A.3 Update (Kristy Baker)

Kristy Baker advised the Board had voted at the March 2020 meeting that Washoe County Human Services Agency would be more restrictive than state ratio regulations, however, Kristy still wanted Sylvia Lee to reach out to the new Fire Marshall and see what their thoughts are on the new language. Sylvia Lee had not reached out to the new Fire Marshall as it was her understanding that the vote was approved at the previous meeting and no follow-up was needed. Board members feel that the language is not clear so Sylvia Lee will follow-up with the new Fire Marshall about the States new language to see what their understanding of the change is and get back to the Board at the March 2021 meeting. Kristy wants to uphold our old language of having no more than 4 children under the age of 2 years with two (2) of those being under the age of one (1) year. Board member Julieta Ferraran pointed out the regulations do not allow for 6 children to be 2 years of age. Harmony Shreve also questioned the intent of what was written. Kim Franchi agreed that the terminology could be interpreted either way which is confusing. Kim Franchi proposes a footnote be added to # 3. Kristy will follow-up again with Latisha using the example that Julieta gave. Kristy will type up a sample draft of language intent to present to Latisha Brown for clarification. Sylvia Lee pointed out specifically # 3 with the asterisks and making a draft of the 2<sup>nd</sup> line in hopes that it would make better sense. The interpretation can be made that a provider can have 6 children less than two (2) years old - which is a lot of very little children who could possibly be not fully mobile yet, posing a safety threat under the Fire Departments rules and regulations. Sylvia Lee verified the action we need to take at the March 2021 meeting will be whatever information she obtains from the new Fire Marshall and then the drafted language. Sylvia Lee will follow-up with Kristy in 8 weeks giving her time to discuss with Latisha. Kristy and/or Sylvia will then follow-up with the Board.

#### Item 5: COVID and State Updates (Kristy Baker)

Kristy gave a brief update regarding COVID and the County partnering with State, Children's Cabinet, QRIS, and Child Care Advocacy Alliance. All partnering entities had meetings multiple times per week when COVID hit to try and support the child-care community both locally and State-wide.

Some of the efforts included:

- Mask delivery, stipends for cleaning supplies, PPE, creative things to aid with social distancing, equipment, etc. Funds were administered by The Children's Cabinet.
- Partners for the Block Grant continued to allow subsidy payments whether the child was attending or not and if the facility closed. If a facility did have to close, extending the subsidy for any child that needed to attend a new provider (sometimes paying double for a child) and allowing it to continue as needed through June 2020.

- Cares Act Funding:
  - 152 applications were submitted under The Cares Act for homes/centers statewide - 150 were approved with \$21.56M awarded to the providers and facilities that applied. Part of the model included that the applicant needed to submit a business plan to demonstrate sustainability.
- State-wide center closure data was maintained by our staff as well as at the state level.
  - Locally we still maintain a spreadsheet and place updates on our website. Kristy is still required to send updates to state officials. Currently 92 centers remain open and 9 remain closed. At first, 60 % of centers remained open and 40% closed with capacity dropping to the 40-50% levels Homes fared a little better. Originally, homes dropped to about a 70/30 - 80/20 ratio. 70-80% remained open and 20-30% closed. Currently 97 homes remain open and 10 homes closed. Kristy gave a huge thank you to providers that were able to remain open as an essential need for families needing to work in person.

Kristy thanked The Children’s Cabinet and the State partners on the Block Grant who were amazing to work with as well as all her staff at the County for their hard work and dedication during this incredibly challenging time.

Both the State and Washoe County suspended in-person visits from late March to the beginning of July. Regulations require two (2) visits per year. Workers had to do a huge push to catch up on semi-annual inspections and annual renewals. Kristy thanked all the licensing workers for their hard work on getting those completed. Sylvia Lee commended Karen Micklish for working so hard for all the daycare centers and all of Karen’s efforts in working with Reno Fire Department. Harmony Shreve sent in a chat message also thanking Karen. Kristin Mareno sent a chat thanking everyone for their hard work. Kristy thanked all the community partners such as the Fire and Health Departments who worked with Washoe County Human Services Agency so closely during this time, helping to keep these essential services up and running.

Kristy is still currently meeting with State and community partners. The big focus is now Distance Learning programs to serve the community both currently under the school model and in preparation if schools have to close again due to COVID as we approach flu. Statewide we agreed that programs only serving school-aged children could be viewed as temporary or seasonal therefore not requiring licensure. We continue to look for funding for these programs along with tracking these programs for referrals to our community. Kristy asked members of the audience and providers to let her know if anyone is offering Distance Learning in their facilities/homes.

State affiliates asked if the County would consider allowing home providers to care for up to 4 children before needing a license. Hayley Hamel asked what the fees are

to become licensed. Kristy listed the fees involved in getting licensed. Harmony mentioned the other costs involved in opening a licensed child-care home like equipment, etc. Kristy re-iterated the fees involved just to become licensed is the application fee, the work permit card fee for all adults over the age of 18 that live in the home, CPR, initial trainings, TB tests and pet vaccinations. Harmony Shreve questioned nanny sharing. Kristy advised that one (1) nanny caring for multiple family's children in someone's home is against regulations. Kim Franchi stated she would be interested in entertaining the State's licensure rules to be consistent in this area. Kim presented an example of a nanny situation where a family has 5 children or if two family members have their children being cared for by a nanny in one of their homes. Kristy clarified that if two (2) family members share a nanny and all the children being cared for fall within the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of consanguinity then a license would not be required under current regulations for both State and County. Kim Franchi felt more comfortable after learning of this regulation. Hayley Hamel expressed her concerns about the safety in allowing a home provider to care for 4 children without needing a license or having to adhere by regulations. Ryan Putzer, Candace Dietrich and Alexis Erlach also expressed their concern. Victoria Bowers advised that the State has less options for childcare due to being in rural areas, so it makes more sense that they don't require licensure until they have more than 4 children. Victoria agrees that keeping it at 2 seems much safer. Kristy asked the Board members if this item should be voted on. All Board members voted and agree for Washoe County to remain at the current requirements for licensure being two (2) or more children.

#### Item 6: Department Update (Kristy Baker)

The department has had many changes in both workers and supervisors over both Child Care and Foster Care programs. In Child Care, Maggie Moore left the department in May. Kristy Baker introduced Victoria Bowers (previously supervised by Kristy Baker) who has moved from the Kids Kottage Liaison to Child Care Licensing taking Maggie's position. Victoria Bowers was previously a child-care licensing worker and is returning to the field. Sadly, Karen Micklish and Kristy Baker will be retiring. Karen is retiring in early/mid-October and Kristy will be retiring, in early January. Kristy advised that there may be some shifting of caseloads once the new person comes on board and there will also be a new supervisor over the Child Care Licensing Unit. Kristy Baker thanked the Board members for all their time and commitment over the years. Hayley Hamel questioned if a replacement has been chosen for Kristy. Kristy advised there hasn't been just yet although they are working on that and hope to have her replacement chosen soon to be able to train under her for at least a few weeks prior to her departure. Kristy promises to take care of everything discussed in today's meeting before her departure. 😊 Kristy gave a heart-felt Thank You to Anne Dahms - Office Support Specialist over Child and Foster Care Licensing and Dayna Berry – Office Assistant II, expressing that she would not have wanted to do her job without Anne throughout all these years.

😊

In Foster Care, Melissa Coates is now the supervisor over Foster Care Licensing, replacing Laura Caprioli who moved to Recruitment & Training due to the vacancy left by Mikie Franklin. Mikie Franklin moved over to the Adult Services side of the department.

Item 7: Next Meeting Date March 10, 2021 from 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.

The next Washoe County Child Care Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2021 from 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.

Item 8: Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda

Rebecca Vizna with UNR Cooperative Extension came up to the podium and advised that she brought her Child Development class (current students and future leaders in Early Childhood Education 😊) with her to the meeting – about 10-12 audience members. Rebecca acknowledged knowing Kim Franchi for many years and knowing Julieta Ferraran as a previous graduate of UNR. Rebecca wished Kristy and Karen the best in their retirements. Rebecca asked how many of the 101 licensed centers are represented by the Board. Kristy advised that 3 centers and 1 home provider are represented by current board members which is clearly not enough. Rebecca would like to get many more ECE community members attending and involved on the Board. Kristy thanked Rebecca for attending and thought it was wonderful of her to bring her current students with her. Kim Franchi asked Rebecca to please reach out to Anne Dahms if she has anyone looking for employment within the Child Care community or for involvement on the Child Care Advisory Board.

Myra Yeargan, Director of Caughlin Preschool came up to the podium and thanked Kristy and Washoe County Human Services Agency for all their help during this COVID crisis. Myra also thanked Karen for everything she has done to help her over the years. Myra interned with Karen for a few months. Myra asked if the language for the ratios could be written as age zero up to three (3) years but no less than two (2) of them being under the age of one (1). Kristy confirmed that she will follow-up with Latisha Brown at the State and asked Myra to please send this to her in an e-mail so she can compile everything she needs to address with Latisha Brown at the State.

Kim Franchi commended Karen Micklish in her absence as she has been phenomenal during this COVID situation spending hours beyond hours with certain centers if they needed her expertise.

Kristy asked everyone if they could please bear with the new licensing workers and the new supervisor who won't have the historical knowledge that the previous workers had. Kristy made sure to re-iterate that the department is truly here to serve.

Chris McCubbins (Sparks Fire Department) advised Kristy that he would be more than happy to assist the new workers and supervisor with fire regulations in whatever way they

need. Kristy was very appreciative and thanked Chris for his willingness to help the new folks that come on with the department over the next several months.

Kim Franchi said a parting farewell to Kristy as this is her last Washoe County Child Care Advisory Board meeting and a shout out to all the Board members for being in attendance this evening.

There were no further questions or comments from either the public or the board members. The meeting was adjourned at 7:08p.m.