



Illinois Adoption Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

April 23rd, 2021

WebEx videoconference

9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth Richmond / Mark Werner

Elizabeth called the meeting to order at 9:03a.m. Jason Cummins conducted a voice roll call of council members present.

Approval of February 5, 2021 Minutes

Council

Julie made the motion to approve the minutes. Corrections were requested: spell out acronyms and make some grammatical changes to separate comments from different speakers. The motion was withdrawn so that minutes may be corrected prior to the next meeting.

Quality Improvement Center/National Training Development Committee

Christine Feldman

Christine stated that it's a countdown to the end of September. The 98-page Adoption Support and Preservation (ASAP) program manual is being revised to provide additional documentation and make sure it reflects practice statewide. The draft has been moved forward to people for finalization. They are trying to make it very user-friendly with direct links. Christine reported that the Quality Improvement Center (QIC) started with Illinois as the primary stakeholder group and the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council (IAAC) made the program what it is. Elizabeth asked for immediate feedback from the council regarding the training video. Karen Taylor indicated they are working to get training credit. They are looking at a July 1 deadline. Elizabeth reminded that the IAAC has partial ownership of the ASAP website, so council members should regularly review it to ensure that it is meeting the needs.

Office of Caregiver and Parent Support Update

Michelle Grove

Adoption Support Specialist Program (ASSP) funding has been requested. Waiting for final approval. The program plan has been created and one person has been working under the old Master Adoptive Parent program. They will have one Lead and four support specialists, and the program will be modeled after the state's Foster Parent Support Specialist program. The ASSP will have approximately work 30 hour/week contract with the Lead having a full hour contract. There was a discussion of the extent of after-hours coverage 24/7. There issues are still being reviewed. The extent of after-hours support is not expected to extensive. There will be staff support to the ASSP especially at the implementation of the program. The hope is to have the program implemented July 1st, 2021

The Deputy of Permanency, Tim Snowden, is requesting what resources are needed for both the awareness and timely completion of an adoption/guardianship subsidy. The next meeting sometime next week and the Office of Caregiver and Parent Support and send this information if anyone is interested in attending.

Michelle Grove indicated that the Office of Caregiver and Parent Support has been requested to report on the deliverables of the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council to the Regional Administrator and local Area Administrators. The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council will also be included in this report. This report will also go to DCFS senior leadership.

Statewide Adoption Update/ Path Beyond Adoption Website Update Sylvia Fonseca/Kelly King

Sylvia Fonseca reported that their goal is to ensure permanency /placement stability and the connectedness to families. She noted that there are many resources in place to start ASAP regional meetings to provide resources in person. Sylvia indicated that Kelly King is working to get the word out and is working with Christine Feldman to achieve this.

Karen Taylor stated she is working on obtaining training credits for both individualized and group along with in-person and virtual provided by the ASAP provider covering prospective adoptive parents and guardians. Hopeful this will occur as soon as next week. Credit can be up to 2 hours and very easy for the family to get this training. Sylvia indicated the 10th hour training is extremely important and the Adoption/Guardianship division is placing an emphasis on including the 10th hour training.

Path Beyond to Adoption Update- Kelly King indicate they are working on placing material on the website quickly and the website is updated regularly. Kelly stated her staff works hard to keep it updated with a focus on a very user friendly and easy to navigate design.

The annual 1800R letters are used to ascertain that parents are still legally and financially responsible for the child. They use these letters to maximize federal funding. They must have their current addresses and phone numbers even when people use direct deposit for subsidy payments. Julie Yelverton indicated the letter currently states it is voluntary. Sylvia indicated the wording will be updated and is now in the approval process. Sylvia indicated that the systems do not communicate, and the post adopt worker must receive this information. Karen Taylor stated that this issue is being covered in training. They will add this note to training and they should put a notice in the newsletter when it comes out again.

Mark Werner also made a request for a statistical update regarding the Post Adoption phone line.

Foster Parent Handbook Update

Council

Elizabeth Richmond indicated that Chapter 7 deals with and discusses Adoption/Subsidy issues. Elizabeth indicate that the subcommittee will have a meeting by the June council meeting to help with this rewrite. There is a meeting scheduled for next Friday 04/30/2021 for the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council to address foster parent issues pertinent to this rewrite. Elizabeth stated they might look into having some type of coordination between the two workgroups.

Committee reports

Membership Committee

Mark Werner

There are currently two adoptive parent vacancies in Cook County, one at-large adoptive parent, one at large professional vacancy and Julie Yelverton is still filling a vacant position in Central region. Natalie Miller also resigned, so there is an opening in Southern Region. The council is working to focus on diversity and Mark noted that they try to represent the entire state. Mark stated if council members have any prospective members then send to IAAC mailbox. Natalie Miller also resigned. Mark indicated the nomination committee will be working on identifying and filling the slots. S. Coleman-asking what a professional member is defined as. They do run an organization and would be considered a professional.

Bylaw Committee

Mark Werner

Mark noted that some changes have been made since the first reading of the bylaws. The draft bylaws will be distributed to the full council throughout

- 1) They changed “adoptive parents” to “adoption/guardianship parents” throughout.
- 2) They changed the terms for the co-chairs to have term limits. The co-chairs will be chosen from within the council and current members are the only ones that may serve as officers.
- 3) They increased professionals from six to 7.
- 4) They changed the association name.
- 5) They will have no more than one co-chair from each category.
- 6) The Co-chair will be elected in the June meeting and will serve staggered 2-year terms. FY’22 will be two new appointments, so a lottery will be held to determine terms. This will only be for the upcoming election.
- 7) Additionally, if a co-chair’s term expires at the end of serving their two years as a co-chair, they will stay on the council for one additional year as a non-voting advisory member.
- 9) Membership will start on July 1 and expire June 30. The co-chair terms will also start on the July 1 but will end two years later on June 30th
- 10) Added a virtual meeting platform to conference call options.
- 11) Quorum is 1/3 and election must be 51% of membership.
- 12) Workgroups including non-members were added to support council/committee work.

Motion: Karen Taylor made the motion to amend the bylaws with this first reading and Cara Seibert seconded. The motion carried. Draft bylaws will be distributed to the council.



aac bylaws to be
amended 2020.docx

Nomination Committee

Mark Werner

Karen Taylor and Amy Trotter will work with the co-chairs to establish a slate of officers.

Data Committee

Julie Yelverton

Julie Yelverton reported that the legislature was asking for data regarding the number of disruptions and dissolutions. Illinois had previously been counting only dissolutions, so Kelly has followed up. The committee is still waiting for clarification of the information they are asking for. The committee is on hold until they receive further clarification.

Stakeholder Comments

Alex Montgomery suggested establishing a permanency committee, collaborating with the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council. Mary Kay Collins and Julie Yelverton were both interested in this committee. Karen Taylor also volunteered if needed.

Public Comments

None

Agenda Items

Standing reports from QIC, Adoption Support, Office of Caregiver and Family Support
Bylaws
Nominations/ Elections
Moving back to in-person meetings
Update on transracial adoption
Update on the Adoption Photo Listing for Illinois

