

**OFFICE OF THE COLORADO'S CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN BOARD**

**PUBLIC MEETING  
March 10, 2016**

**Record of Proceedings**

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Notice of this meeting was provided pursuant to the Colorado Open Meetings Law, §24-6-402, C.R.S.

**CONVENE**

The meeting of the Office of the Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman Board was convened in the Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center, 1300 Broadway, Conference Room 1C, Denver, Colorado 80203 at 9:09 AM by Chairman Ken Plotz.

A quorum of the Board was present.

**Present at the Meeting**

**Board Members**

Chairman Ken Plotz

Vice-Chair Ginny Riley\*

Pax Moultrie

Joe Carrica\*

Charles Greenacre\*

Peg Rudden

Sarie Ates-Patterson\*

Simone Jones

Jose Mondragon\*

*\*Participated by Telephone*

**Others Present**

Stephanie Villafuerte, Executive Director/Child Protection Ombudsman

Karen Nielsen, Intake and Administrative Coordinator

**From the Public**

No one attended from the public.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **I. Public Comment –**

None

### **II. Approval of Minutes –**

Chair Judge Plotz requested a motion to approve the minutes of February 11, 2016. Simone Jones made the motion that meeting notes be approved. Pax Moultrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Comments –**

Chair Judge Plotz reported that he and Ms. Stephanie Villafuerte spoke about the two vacant appointments to the board. Judge Plotz stated that Ms. Villafuerte reached out to the Governor's office and that he plans to reach out to the House Minority leader about filling that appointment. Chairman Plotz will keep the board posted on the outcome of those contacts.

### **III. Executive Director Report -**

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte presented the Executive Director Report to the members of the board.

#### **1. Operations/Administrative Update –**

*Office Space:*

Ms. Villafuerte talked about moving to a permanent space in Suite 430. She reported that she has been working with the architects and designer to finalize the space plans and the estimated completion date is July 1, 2016.

State Judicial will be requesting an additional \$214,850.00 from the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) for FY 2015-2016 (from the original allocated \$133,000.00) for build out and office furniture. Ms. Villafuerte reported that the request was submitted to the JBC on 03/04/16 by the budget analyst and a response is expected within 30 days. Judicial has reported to the Office that details are being finalized in the form of pulling permits and getting bids for the build out. The Board will be kept apprised of progress in the coming months.

### *Technology:*

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte discussed ongoing technology issues for the Office. She reported that the MOU with Judicial does not assist with network and phones. A meeting is scheduled with Judicial later today to discuss these concerns further, as well as any budgetary impacts.

Ms. Villafuerte is working with the JBC Analyst on the Office's supplemental budget request which will include a request to cover the substantial costs related to having phones and network installed in the temporary space and transitioned to the permanent office space.

Chair, Judge Plotz, and other board members, discussed the Board drafting a letter, or contact someone at the JBC directly to assist with the Office's supplemental request. Ms. Villafuerte stated that she is working on a budget narrative and is appreciative of the Board's willingness to assist in any way. Ms. Villafuerte stated that a letter from the Board to the JBC members may be helpful and requested that the Board authorize Chair, Judge Plotz to sign a letter of support on behalf of the Board. Judge Plotz requested a motion; Simone Jones made the motion, and it was seconded by Pax Moultrie. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Villafuerte will keep the Board apprised of ways they can assist moving forward in the budget process.

Members of the Board had questions about the expenses of the new network when the Office moves into the permanent space. Ms. Villafuerte stated that the current estimated cost for 2016-2017 budget for IT is around \$20,000.00 and that the Office is presently spending an average of \$16,000.00 - \$17,000.00 annually. The Office will continue to share/utilized the Office of the Respondent Parents' Counsel's network until the buildout and move is complete.

### *Personnel:*

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte, reported that the Office continues to take calls, review complaints and make recommendations as necessary. No deadlines have been missed, and although busy, the process continues to run seamlessly.

Ms. Villafuerte stated that she has continued to look at budget numbers and looking at what money is allocated for personnel. She stated that the existing budget indicated that there was/is money for four full-time

employees which is inaccurate. Ms. Villafuerte indicated that there were unanticipated personnel benefit expenses under Judicial which have not allowed the Office to hire a fourth person. As of right now the Office is putting the "Investigator" position on hold due to the lack of operating budget.

Ms. Villafuerte continues to draft the personnel rules to meet the originally set 04/18/16 deadline. Ms. Villafuerte will forward a draft to the board members upon completion.

## **2. Financial Report –**

*Agency year-to-date Expense & FY 2016-2017 Budget:*

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte reported that after January/February billing and salaries the budget balance is \$136,757.00.

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte reported that she has spent a significant amount of time working on the budget. She believes that she has drafted an appropriate and fair supplemental amendment for FY 2015-2016 and a supplemental budget request for FY 2016-2017.

The Office submitted a supplemental request to the Joint Budget Committee for an additional \$24,850.00 for FY 2015-2016 (which includes transition expenses, legal fees and board expenses) and an additional \$334,379.00 for FY 2016-2017 (which includes new positions, outreach/travel budget, and increased salaries and operations costs). The JBC analyst will present the supplemental in whole, or in part, on behalf of the Office. Ms. Villafuerte will keep the Board apprised.

## **3. Marketing Communications/Statewide Outreach -**

*Next Steps:*

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte is continuing her work on an organizational assessment of the Office to include compliance with outreach and communication expectations and statutory requirements.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the Office has previously only visited fourteen out of the sixty-four counties because of a lack of resources. The Office intends to reach out to the counties regarding the functionality and purpose of the Office in the coming year. Ms. Villafuerte along with Deputy Ombudsman, Sabrina Byrnes developed a state wide outreach plan focusing on 12 counties, especially in the rural communities. Funding

for this, and other outreach efforts, was built into the Office's supplemental budget request for FY 16-17. The Board will be kept apprised of further development and implementation of this plan.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the Office has increased its workload by nearly 300% since opening in 2010, and has outreached, through meetings and conferences, to nearly 1,000 people. Data reflects that the primary contacts to the Office have been by grandparents, parents and relatives; however, data reflects few calls from educators, stakeholders and mandated reporters, demonstrating a need to reach out to the public and other system stakeholders.

The supplemental budget request for FY 16-17 will address the need for the Office to come into compliance with statutory mandates regarding outreach and education. The request will address this issue specifically by requesting funding for a full-time Communications Director and a part-time Administrative Assistant. Additionally, the request included funding for a variety of communication tools (i.e. list serve engines and video conferencing) which will allow the Office to contact our constituents and the public more efficiently.

The Office is continuing work with our web master to have the website updated with new information and personnel changes.

#### *Executive Director Meetings in February 2016 –*

Executive Director Ms. Villafuerte reported to the Board the meetings she has attended in February 2016 which included:

- ✓ CDHS Child Fatality Review
- ✓ Colorado Legislature Children's Caucus
- ✓ Judicial human resources (2)
- ✓ Judicial budget analyst/accounting (4)
- ✓ Ombudsman database (John Jenkins)
- ✓ Build out (3)
- ✓ Legislative members/meetings/phone consults (6)

#### **4. Public Policy –**

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte directed the board members to the Legislative Bill Tracker 2016 handout and outlined how the Office can, and may, support the individual bills.

The Board discussed the draft bills, and more specific concerns regarding SB-16-103, a clean-up bill for the Office and the language around "Advisory Board" as referenced in the bill.

Chair Judge Plotz stated that he attended the meeting of SB-16-103 and that is passed unanimously in the Senate Committee and now moves on to the House Committee. There was a motion from Pax Moultrie to strike the words "Advisory Board" from the record. Simone Jones seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. Judge Plotz agreed to state the Board's position at the Capital next week.

Ms. Villafuerte advised the group on the importance of the Office remaining neutral on this piece of legislation and further, she will remove herself from any discussions regarding the bill or its language and intent.

#### **5. Agency Update -**

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte directed the Board to the handout they received on the Analysis of Ombudsman Contacts summarizing data for the current Fiscal Year thru February 2016, for their review.

#### **6. Next Steps –**

*Executive Director Agency Assessment:*

Executive Director, Ms. Villafuerte reported that she continues to review the Office policies, practice, and procedures and will be developing a "State of the Office" report for the Board. She anticipates completion in written and verbal form by mid-April 2016.

Ms. Villafuerte continued to talk about developing a strategic plan and Office profile for fiscal year 2016-2017 with an anticipated completion date of May 2016. The purpose behind this plan will be to educate the public and grow the public's trust and understanding about the overall functions and actions of the Office. The anticipated implementation date for the strategic plan is July 1, 2016.

#### **ADJOURN**

Chairman Judge Plotz stated that the next meeting scheduled for April 14, 2016, at 9:00 AM. He suggested that if there is nothing new to report to the Board that the next meeting be cancelled and the next meeting set for May 2016. It was opened for discussion. The other board members agreed.


Simone Jones moved to adjourn. Peg Rudden seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

The Board formally adjourned the meeting at 10:12 AM.

**ATTESTATION**

As Board Chair and Board Vice Chair, I attest that these minutes of the open public meeting held on March 10, 2016 of the Office of the Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman Board substantially reflect the substance of the discussion and action taken related to the matters under the authority of the Board and in compliance with the Open Meetings Law, § 24-6-402, C.R.S.

  
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Board Chair

  
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Board Vice-Chair

5/12/16  
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Date

5/18/16  
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Date