

# COLORADO CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN BOARD

## PUBLIC MEETING

July 11, 2019

### 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 Child Protection Ombudsman Board was convened in the Ralph L. Carr Building, Room 1C, Denver, Colorado, 80203 at 8:05 AM by Board Chairman, Ken Plotz.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that there was not a quorum of the board present. She directed everyone to the meeting agenda and indicated that without quorum the minutes could not be approved, nor would the board enter executive session today.

#### **PRESENT AT THE MEETING**

##### **Board Members**

Chairman Kenneth Plotz  
Eldridge Greer  
Richard Krugman  
Peg Rudden  
Victoria Shuler

##### **On the Phone**

Karen Beye

##### **Others Present**

Sueanna Johnson, Deputy Attorney General  
Stephanie Villafuerte, Child Protection Ombudsman  
Karen Nielsen, Director of Administrative Services  
Sara Embrey, Chief Analyst – Division of Child Welfare  
Natasha Mitchell, Chief Analyst – Division of Youth Services

#### **PRESENT FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

#### **AGENDA/DISCUSSION**

##### **I. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Unable to approve May 9, 2019 meeting minutes because there was not a quorum of the board present.

## III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

### A. Year-to-Date Financial Report

Ms. Villafuerte provided the board members with the CPO's FY 18-19 year-to-date operating budget report. She reported that the fiscal year is completed, and that the CPO has closed out all our expenses for this fiscal year in a timely manner. She reported that the CPO is approximately \$40k under budget but that she expects to have final numbers once the judicial accounting department has closed out the fiscal year on their end. She also explained that vacancy savings has contributed to being underbudget.

### B. Legal Services Report

Ms. Villafuerte provided the board with a year-to-date legal budget report. She reported that the CPO spent \$920 over the anticipated legal budget. She reported that when the CPO goes over budget, the funding does not come out of the CPO's operating budget but rather it comes from the attorney general's budget. The attorney general's office will then put in a request for additional reimbursement for the new fiscal year so the CPO will have adequate funding. She reported that the CPO continues to utilize the Deputy Attorney General, Sueanna Johnson's expertise.

## IV. PROGRAM REPORT

### A. Human Resource Updates

#### *Personnel*

Ms. Villafuerte reported that Ms. Parker, the CPO Legislative and Policy Analyst has left the agency to pursue a law degree. She directed the board to the final CPO Legislative Tracker that Ms. Parker had completed. Ms. Villafuerte indicated that the document highlights bills relevant to the CPO. She stated that Ms. Parker was an important part of the CPO team and that she will be missed.

Ms. Villafuerte also stated that Ms. Steffen, the deputy ombudsman, has had her baby and that she will be out on FMLA until October 2019.

#### *Staff Retreat*

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO staff participated in a two-day retreat facilitated by Cynthia James with Cynthia James Enterprises. The three goals of the retreat were:

- Integrate new team members

- Clarify the mission and vision of the CPO
- Create a positive work environment and culture

Ms. Villafuerte and the team expressed to the board that they appreciated the opportunity to have the retreat. The group indicated that they learned more about each other from the team building exercises and how the team can work more effectively together. Ms. Villafuerte referred the board to a handout that details the team's efforts and workplace agreements.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO team will continue to meet quarterly with Cynthia James. The next CPO staff retreat is August 23, 2019.

#### *Executive Coaching*

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO management team have been participating in executive coaching the last few months and will continue to do so through June 30, 2019. She reported that the management team have completed different assessment tools and are working on developing self-awareness, leadership competence and better business outcomes.

Ms. Villafuerte also reported that Ms. Nielsen has also completed some work assessments and is working with judicial human resources department on updating her job description and job classification.

#### B. Board Member Terms and Vacancies

Ms. Villafuerte directed board members to the updated board contact list that shows when each board member's term expires. She reported that she has reached out to the board members whose terms are expiring.

Ms. Villafuerte stated that Judge Plotz has been reappointed for four more years. She reported that Connie Linn and Darlene Martinez are in the process of reapplying. Ms. Villafuerte also reported that the board seat for a "former/current foster parent" is open. She reported that she will contact the House Minority Leader to fill this position.

#### C. Legislative Updates

##### *Adoption Subsidies*

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the Adoption Subsidies Bill passed unanimously in both the House and the Senate. She reported that she and Ms. Steffen attended the bill signing on May 16, 2019. Ms. Villafuerte reported that Ms. Embrey will continue to work on the rulemaking process with stakeholders surrounding this bill.

#### D. Communications

##### *SMART Act*

Ms. Villafuerte directed the board to the FY 2019-2020 Performance Plan and Performance Management Plan handouts.

### *Barefoot PR*

Ms. Villafuerte reported that Barefoot PR was initially hired to develop a statewide communications and outreach plan for the CPO. She reported that they are also creating a media calendar and are coordinating the strategy for all the CPO reports that will be released in the next month.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that one of the outcomes from the survey Barefoot PR had completed with constituents was that the CPO needs to have more consistent communication with stakeholders. She reported that ways of doing this might be a quarterly newsletter and highlighting the analyst's monthly work.

### E. Systemic Cases

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the El Pueblo, Montezuma and DYS Rulemaking Brief have all been completed. Ms. Villafuerte explained the CPO report process. She reported that once the CPO has completed the report that the report is sent to the agency. She reported that agencies have 15 business days to respond. She reported that the CPO will review their responses and make any changes if appropriate. Then the CPO will combine all responses into the CPO report and will redact any case identifying information in the report. Ms. Villafuerte reported that the final CPO report will then go to the printer and then the final redacted report will be published.

Ms. Villafuerte assured the group that all board members will receive final copies of the reports.

### *El Pueblo*

Stephanie Villafuerte reported that the El Pueblo report has been finalized. She reported that she is waiting for the CDHS response which is due by July 19, 2019.

### *Montezuma*

She reported that the CPO is waiting for the CDHS and Montezuma County Human Services to respond which is due by July 19, 2019.

### *DYS Rulemaking Brief*

She stated that the CPO is waiting for the CDHS response which is due July 19, 2019.

### F. Child Welfare Division

#### *Individual Complaints*

Ms. Embrey reported that the CPO had a total of 574 individual complaints for FY 2018-2019 which is consistent with previous years. Ms. Embrey directed the board to the CPO a Five Year Analysis report. She reported that it is important to note that of the 611 case from FY 2017-2018, 17 individual cases were related to the Montezuma County Systemic Investigation that was completed by the CPO during the FY 2017-2018 and FY 2018-2019.

Ms. Embrey highlighted one of the CPO's cases and talked about how the analyst are keeping track of trends in the cases they are reviewing. The board indicated that they would like to continue to hear about the different type of cases the CPO assists with.

There was a recommendation that the CPO should present to the State Board one time a year. Ms. Villafuerte reported that Sara Embrey does attend the meeting regularly but that she agrees that this is a good idea.

Ms. Embrey reported that Amanda Pennington is the newest member of the CPO team.

Ms. Embrey also talked about the different committees and round table discussion groups that the analysts have been participating in. She stated that the CPO analysts will continue to find balance between working on cases and attending community meanings.

#### G. Division of Youth Services (DYS)

##### *Individual Complaints*

Ms. Mitchell reported that the CPO had a total of 20 DYS individual complaints for FY 2018-2019.

##### *DYS Facilities – Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center*

Ms. Mitchell indicated that the Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center has been in the press for that last six months regarding contraband, violence and escapes from the facility. She reported that the CPO has been monitoring the facility through critical incident reports and are talking about how the CPO can address these issues. Ms. Mitchell stated that the CPO will continue to follow the media/press articles and will be talking to staff and youth in the facility in the near future.

There was some discussion about whether these issues are specific to the Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center issue or whether this a systemic issue. Ms. Mitchell reported that she had identified four facilities that she plans to visit in the next quarter that have similar issues.

##### *DYS Hotline*

Ms. Mitchell also continues to work with DYS leadership to establish a free-phone service inside DYS facilities which youth may use to contact the CPO directly. The phone line has been installed on the Blue Phones within DYS facilities but is not yet in operation. She assured the group that there will be handouts, posters, education and training in the facilities to both youth and staff prior to the roll out.

##### *Facilities Juvenile Round Table Meeting*

The CPO continues to participate the Juvenile Round Table Meeting. She reported that the next meeting will be on July 25, 2019. She reported that the CPO has invited DYS representatives to attend the meeting.

### *Juvenile Justice Committee Meetings*

Ms. Mitchell reported that she attended the first Juvenile Justice Committee Meeting last week and that she will be attending regularly in the future. She reported that the committee is currently working on a validated risk assessment tool for the judicial system to use. Judge Plotz reported that he is familiar with the CEDRA and that it is difficult to read and to follow.

#### V. BOARD BUSINESS

##### A. Out of Town Board Meeting

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the out of town board meeting is scheduled for August 5-6, 2019, in La Junta Colorado. Stephanie Villafuerte indicated that we presently have four confirmed board members that are planning on attending. She reported that she will need to finalize those plans shortly. She reported that she will invite all child protection community members to the meeting.

Ms. Nielsen directed the board to the out of town meeting agenda. She asked that the board to send any questions about the accommodations or the dinner to her.

She reported that the board can plan on hearing from the CPO with a finalized plan within the next week or so.

##### B. Board Training

There was not a quorum of the board present so the board members could not go into executive session to engage in the board training today. Ms. Johnson reminded the board members that they must complete full board training.

##### C. Board Notebooks

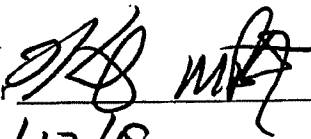
Ms. Nielsen passed out the CPO Board Notebooks to the members that were present. She explained the contents of the notebooks. Ms. Nielsen indicated that any future changes to the notebooks will be emailed to the board. The members reported that the notebooks were very thorough and helpful. Ms. Nielsen reported that she will pass out the remainder of the notebooks at the next board meeting.

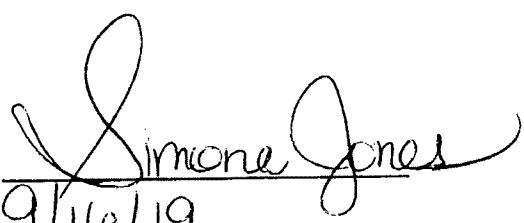
#### ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM. No motions were made given the fact that there was not a quorum.

#### ATTESTATION

As Board Chair and Board Vice-Chair, I attest that these minutes of the open public meeting held on July 11, 2019, of the Colorado 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.

Board Chair   
Date 9/12/19

Board Vice-Chair   
Date 9/16/19