



# CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN of COLORADO

---

## COLORADO CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING  
May 14, 2020

### Record of Proceedings

---

*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 via Zoom teleconference at 8:02 a.m. by Board Chairman, Kenneth Plotz.

A quorum of the Board was present.

#### **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

##### **Board Members on Zoom**

Ken Plotz, Chairman  
Simone Jones, Vice Chairman  
Richard Krugman  
Pax Moultrie  
Victoria Shuler  
Peg Rudden  
Eldridge Greer  
Jerene Petersen  
Claire Morrow  
Ann Roan

##### **Others Present on Phone**

Robert W. Finke, First Assistant Attorney General

##### **Others Present**

Stephanie Villafuerte, Child Protection Ombudsman  
Jordan Steffen, Deputy Ombudsman  
Karen Nielsen, Director of Administrative Services  
Tiffany Madrid, Director of Legislative Affairs and Policy  
Amanda Pennington, Director of Client Services

Claire Hooker, Client Services Analyst  
Kevin Lansing, Client Services Analyst

**PRESENT FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Pursuant to guidance handed down by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) regarding the spread of COVID-19, Chairman Plotz facilitated the meeting via teleconference. Board members and CPO staff participated via Zoom teleconferencing.

Chairman Plotz, welcomed everyone and thanked board members for their flexibility and participation. He stated that due to state deficient concerns and budget deadlines the CPO staff were required to meet, the agenda would be shortened for the meeting.

Chairman Plotz reported that Ms. Villafuerte would be giving a brief executive director report. He directed the Board to the handouts and asked them to reach out to Ms. Villafuerte if there were any questions.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*March 12, 2020, Meeting Minutes*

Chairman Plotz entertained a motion to approve the final minutes of March 12, 2020. Dr. Krugman made a motion to approve the final minutes of March 12, 2020, and Ms. Shuler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

**General Operations -**

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO staff have been working remotely since March 13, 2020. She reported that the staff continues to operate without disruption to citizens, community partners, stakeholders and legislators while ensuring the safety and well-being of the team.

She stated that the CPO continues to communicate regularly with the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) and CDPHE regarding COVID-19 updates as they relate to the county human services departments, the Division of Youth Services (DYS) and the Division of Child Welfare (DCW). The CPO will continue to monitor how any new policies impact the systems that serve children and families and how to advise the families the CPO serves.

Ms. Villafuerte stated that the CPO communicates regularly with Supreme Court Administrators Office (SCAO) regarding when and how employees will resume operations at the Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center.

She stated that SCAO continues to communicate with the CDPHE about health and safety concerns to staff and the public. Ms. Villafuerte reported that CPO staff will continue to work remotely. She will update the Board if any circumstances change.

Ms. Villafuerte directed the Board to the Agency Operations report which contains updates regarding all of the CPO's programs, outreach and communication efforts and special initiatives.

#### **Client Services Team**

Ms. Villafuerte stated that the CPO client service analysts' caseloads have increased in the past few months. She reported that the CPO has more than 100 open cases and that the Client Services team continues to take calls regarding traditional child welfare concerns, as well as COVID-19 related case concerns.

#### **Human Resources**

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO has hired a new client services analyst. She reported that Kevin. Lansing started in April 2020. Ms. Villafuerte stated that Mr. Lansing has been virtually onboarded and that he is actively taking cases. Mr. Lansing introduced himself to the Board.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the eighth FTE position remains vacant at this time.

#### **Financial Report**

Ms. Villafuerte provided board members with the CPO's current FY 19-20 operating budget report. She directed the Board to the Excel spreadsheet with the line item expenditures. Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO is currently under budget.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that because of the unexpected budget deficient the state is facing; the CPO has been asked to cut its expenditures for the 2020-21 fiscal year. Ms. Villafuerte stated that she was working with CPO staff and SCAO financial analysts to determine the best way to incorporate these cuts into the budget. A plan will be submitted to the Joint Budget Committee. Ms. Villafuerte stated that she will continue to keep the Board informed of the outcome of the hearings.

#### **Legal Services Report**

Ms. Villafuerte provided the board with the CPO's FY 19-20 legal budget report. She reported that the CPO has been allocated \$13,000 and has spent \$9000 in FY 19-20. She stated that the CPO will continue to utilize Mr. Finke's expertise throughout the remainder of the fiscal year.

#### **Communications**

##### ***Website***

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO continues to work with Barefoot PR and Peak Creative to re-design the CPO website. She stated that the new CPO website will improve the user experience, will be easier to navigate, and will ensure that the CPO is providing the public with consistent and timely updates.

##### ***Issue Brief***

She reported that in April 2020, the CPO has issued a brief about prioritizing child protection workers



during the COVID-19 outbreak. The brief called on Colorado's leaders to prioritize child protection workers or critical employees to be prioritized as first responders so they can get the equipment they need to protect themselves, and thus, continue to protect our children. She reported that the brief was shared with, and was well received by, child protection stakeholders across Colorado.

### ***Outreach***

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO staff have also participated in a number of stakeholder groups and have put out numerous articles around COVID-19 and the impacts that it has had on the child protection system.

The Board congratulated the CPO team for their continued outstanding work during this pandemic.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:23 a.m. Chairman Plotz called for a motion to enter executive session for legal advice from Mr. Finke regarding the amended Board By-Laws for the Ombudsman 360 Evaluation, develop a schedule for the Ombudsman annual review, discuss the out-of-town board meeting and term limits for the CPO chairman position. Dr. Krugman made a motion to enter executive session. Ms. Shuler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session was held for the Board to receive legal advice pursuant to  
§24-6-402(3)(a)(II), C.R.S.

The Executive Session was recorded in compliance with  
§24-6-402(2)(d.5)(I)(A), C.R.S.

At 9:10 a.m. Chairman Plotz returned the meeting to open session.

### ***Motion 1***

Chairman Plotz called for a Motion to approve amended Board By-Laws regarding the Ombudsman 360 Evaluation. Dr. Krugman made a motion to approve amended Board By-Laws regarding the Ombudsman 360 Evaluation and Ms. Roan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### ***Motion 2***

Chairman Plotz called for a Motion to create a subcommittee to address the Ombudsman evaluation process. Dr. Krugman made a motion to create a subcommittee to address the Ombudsman evaluation process and Ms. Shuler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Plotz reported that a subcommittee will be created to address the Ombudsman evaluation process.

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Chairman Plotz reported that the next CPO board meeting will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2020, via Zoom teleconference.

### **ADJOURN**

Chairman Plotz entertained a motion to adjourn. Dr. Krugman made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Jones

seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board formally adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

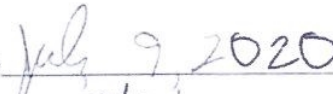
**ATTESTATION**

As Board Chair and Board Vice-Chair, I attest that these minutes of the open public meeting held on May 14, 2020, 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.

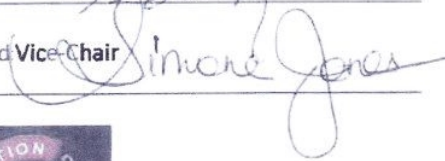
Board Chair



Date



Board Vice-Chair



Date

