



# CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN of COLORADO

---

## COLORADO CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING  
November 12, 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 8:04 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  
Eldridge Greer  
Karen Beye  
Victoria Shuler  
Jerene Petersen  
Claire Morrow  
Ann Roan

##### **Others Present**

Janna Fischer, Assistant Attorney General  
Stephanie Villafuerte, Child Protection Ombudsman  
Jordan Steffen, Deputy Ombudsman  
Tiffany Madrid, Director of Legislative Affairs and Policy  
Karen Nielsen, Director of Administrative Services  
Amanda Pennington, Director of Client Services  
Claire Hooker, Client Services Analyst  
Kristin Ladd, Client Services Analyst  
Heather Coffman, Client Services Analyst

#### PRESENT FROM THE PUBLIC

Jessica Heiple, New Hampshire Child Protection Agency

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Chairman Plotz welcomed everyone.

## **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*September 10, 2020, Meeting Minutes*

Chairman Plotz entertained a motion to approve the final minutes of September 10, 2020. Ms. Roan made a motion to approve the final minutes of September 10, 2020, and Mr. Eldridge seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously minus Mr. Krugman.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Heiple reported that she works for the Child Protection Agency in New Hampshire and that her office is looking to start up a new service program in their community. She stated that they are interested in learning what the CPO is doing. She reported that her office works closely with the New Hampshire Office of the Child Advocate.

*At 8:19 a.m. Mr. Krugman joined the Zoom meeting.*

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Ms. Villafuerte welcomed everyone. She reported that was going to adjust the agenda today due to board members schedules and that the Board has time to ask questions about the CPO program updates after executive session.

### **Financial Report**

Ms. Villafuerte provided the Board with the CPO's Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 operating budget report. She reported that the CPO's has a remainder of \$675,000 left in our operating budget for FY 2020-21. The bulk of the expenses go towards employee salaries and benefits. She stated that the administrative and operating budget expenses remain low.

The CPO worked with a State Court Administrator's Office's (SCAO) budget analyst and finalized the agency's budget request proposal for FY 2021-22. She reminded the Board that, like all state agencies, in May 2020 the CPO was asked to cut 10 percent from its budget due to the unexpected State budget deficient. Ms. Villafuerte stated that the CPO initially cut 3 percent from its operating expenses and reduced one of its 1.0 FTEs to a .8 position.

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO worked again in September 2020 to cut an additional 10 percent from its budget in an effort to in an effort to comply with the Office of State Planning and Budgeting's recommendations. After working with Ms. Steffen, they were only able to come up with an additional two percent. She reported that this reduction will come from personnel costs in the form of six furlough days per employee. Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO's cases have increased almost 19 percent and that the CPO needs to continue to serve the public. She reported that the office will present its proposed budget to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) in December 2020.

The Board thanked the staff for their willingness for the suggested furlough days and putting children and families in Colorado first.

## **Legal Services Report**

Ms. Villafuerte provided the Board with the CPO's FY 2020-21 legal services report. She reported that the CPO has spent \$7,300.00 and continues to utilize these legal services and assist the CPO in interpreting the agency's enabling statute.

## **Upcoming Presentations**

Ms. Villafuerte reported that the CPO is excited to host and participate in an American Bar Association's national virtual training. The webinar will explore the history function of child protection ombudsman offices around the country and how child protection systems have been impacted due to COVID-19.

## **ATTORNEY GENERAL UPDATES**

### **Selection of Board Chair**

Ms. Fischer reported that Ms. Roan was the only board member nomination for board chair to replace Chairman Plotz in March 2021.

Chairman Plotz called for a motion to approve Ms. Roan as the next board chair. Mr. Krugman made a motion to approve that Ms. Roan will be the next board chair and Ms. Morrow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Roan reported that she is excited to be working with the Board and with the CPO team. Ms. Roan will be meeting with Chairman Plotz and Ms. Villafuerte after the first of the year.

*At 8:26 a.m. Ms. Heiple left the Zoom meeting.*

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:27 a.m. Chairman Plotz called for a motion to enter executive session for CPO Board Training. Mr. Krugman made a motion to enter executive session for the CPO Board Training. 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)(11), C.R.S.

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

At 9:30 a.m. Chairman Plotz returned the meeting to open session.

Ms. Villafuerte thanked the Board for her evaluation and inquired how she may continue to engage the Board with the CPO's work. Board members stated that Ms. Villafuerte and the CPO do provide adequate opportunities for the Board to engage and that meetings provide members appropriate time to discuss agency projects and operations. Members encouraged Ms. Villafuerte to continue utilizing small working groups to discuss specific projects and issues the CPO is working to address.

Ms. Petersen asked if there was a way for the agency to keep members informed about legislative hearings and presentations. Ms. Steffen said that she would work with the team to develop a consistent communication method to inform the Board about legislative events. Ms. Steffen said those communications will begin once the 2021 General Assembly convenes and reminded the Board to utilize the agency's bill tracker on its website.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

Board members and Ms. Villafuerte thanked Chairman Plotz for his service as board chair.

Chairman Plotz reported that the next CPO board meeting will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2021 via Zoom teleconference.

**ADJOURN**

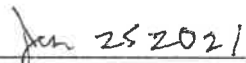
Chairman Plotz entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Krugman made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Shuler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board formally adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

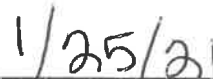
**ATTESTATION**

As Board Chair and Board Vice-Chair, I attest that these minutes of the open public meeting held on November 12, 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

