

Washington County Citizens Review Panel

“Citizens partnering with Child Protective Services to keep children safe.”

April 19, 2016

- **Attendance:**

- Members present: Julia Welter, Nissa Knutson, Mary Doyle, Sarah Amundson, Mel Laughton, Bonnie Treacy, Deb Eckberg (Chairperson), Nancy Zupfer, LaJuan McIntyre, Jan Hayne, Teri Bottum
- Members absent: Dawn Hyland

- **Old Business**

- A brief review of old business was given for new members Jan Hayne and Teri Bottum
- Child Abuse Prevention Month activities:
 - County Board Resolution
 - Library Displays: High praise from panel and a special thank you to Julia Welter for her hard work in pulling them together. Woodbury branch was not able to accommodate a display.
 - Nancy’s article in the Purple Page Newsletter
- Courthouse bookshelf for kids—Donations needed
 - Anyone who would like to contribute may bring books for children 10 years through young adult to Nissa Knutson at the Cottage Grove office. It might be nice to have a couple small stuffed animals or toys in case parents bring younger children with them to court.
- Little Free Library for Wash Co. CPS offices:
 - Nancy volunteered to meet with Nissa to discuss action items for this project and will present the project at the May meeting.
- Shadowing Wash Co Social Workers: Nissa sent email to those wishing to shadow social workers. It is the responsibility of the panel members to contact the social workers to make arrangements.
- Draft Letter of Appreciation to Social Workers for Social Worker Appreciation Month (March): Mike drafted a letter that was accepted and highly praised by the panel.
- Ideas for ongoing recognition of and outreach to social workers: It was decided that panel members will divide up and provide breakfast/brunch/coffee treats for the Cottage Grove and Stillwater (Forest Lake will be included in the Stillwater office) offices. Nancy, Bonnie, and Mike volunteered to take the Cottage Grove office in May. Deb, Jan, and Teri volunteered to take the Stillwater office in June. Sarah and Nissa will email with possible dates and details.
- Article from Mary “Perceptions of State Child Welfare Administrators Regarding Federal Mandated Citizen Review Panels”: A brisk discussion about the articles which produced a very good Q&A session with visitors/new members. Sarah explained the reconsideration process and the underlying philosophy. We discussed Child Mortality Reviews and the way they were handled in MN, the Gov. Task Force Initiatives, etc. Mary reviewed the language of the federal law establishing the panels and the 4 charges of the CRP.

- **New Business**
 - Presence of the CRP at the Washington County Fair:
 - Sarah will find out and report back whether or not Community Services will have a table/booth at the fair. If this is the case the CRP will sign up for several hours to be present.
- **County Update (Sarah):**
 - Washington County earned all of its proposed funding plus we earned the “withhold” portion due to excellence in social worker child monthly visits and timely contact with children following placement. Washington County Family Services earned an additional \$222,000.00 (withhold portion) due to excellent performance.
 - In addition the positions hired with the 1st grant which Sarah had previously described, the additional money will be used for year-long special projects such as family service workers to provide for more parent/child visits, transport children, etc.
 - There has been a huge increase in the number of families coming into child protection; this may be due to several factors including: screening changes, increased drug use in Washington County, and population growth.
- **DHS Update (Mary):** Minnesota recently had its Title IV-E review and passed with flying colors!!!! Out of the 80 random files chosen the federal reviewers found only 4 issues. The state’s CFS review is coming soon; Washington County is not one of the counties that will be reviewed this time.
- **Meeting adjourned at 6:20**

Next Meeting is May 17, 2016

Minutes: Nancy

Snacks: Nissa