

# Family Services Review Commission Meeting

**October 2, 2008**  
**8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon**  
**HSB-252**

**Members present:** Jessica Chanay, Diane Cohen-Alpert, Ellen Gradison, Yesenia Gutierrez, and Rosemary Lazzari

**DHS staff present:** Xochitl Esparza, Erinn Kelley-Siel, Jim Neely, Marge Reinhart, Mickey Serice, Laurie Stewart, Vic Todd, and Verona Turner

**Members excused:** Maggie Bagon, Doreen Binder, Kim Freeman, Peggy Kennerly, and Michael Ware

**Guests:** Sherrie Burrell and Stephanie Tama-Sweet

**Meeting materials sent via email prior to meeting:** Meeting Agenda, Draft Minutes of the August 7, 2008 FSRC Meeting, Draft Minutes of the September 4, 2008 FSRC Meeting, September Parents as Scholars (PAS) Update, August 2008 Self-sufficiency at a glance, August 2008 Public Assistance Caseload report, August 2008 Complaint Summary and Narrative Report

## **Additional Handouts at meeting:**

- Family Services Review Commission 2008-2010 Strategic Plan Outline

## **Greeting and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 a.m. without a quorum in attendance.

## **Chair Report:**

- The meeting agenda was reviewed – no changes. The minutes were not approved because there was no quorum. Instructions were held.
- Members expressed asked for an update on Nancy Sathrum's recovery. Everyone was happy to hear Mickey Serice state that she was doing well and will perhaps return to work next week.
- **Membership:**
  - Stephanie Tama-Sweet has expressed an interest in joining this commission, but has not yet decided. She will attend meetings for a while.
  - Members expressed concerns about the difficulties experienced getting travel reimbursements for attending FSRC meetings. Jessica Chanay stated that emails had been exchanged between FSRC and DHS and she was under the impression this problem had been resolved. The decision was made to wait and see if these issues come up again.
  - Diane Cohen-Alpert suggested more people of color be appointed to this Commission.

## **DHS Presentation: Erinn Kelley-Siel, Mickey Serice, Marge Reinhart, Vic Todd, Xochitl Esparza**

**RPI Events:** The FSRC Commission welcomed the DHS staff members. Mickey Serice stated a letter had been sent to FSRC regarding RPI events. This schedule will be posted on the web link and Mary Anne Camp's telephone number will be published as a contact person for people who have questions. Plans are to have several of the events over the next couple of years.

Commissioners asked about details. **ACTION:** A suggestion was made to ask DHS representatives who are working on RPI make a presentation to FSRC during the November meeting.

**Potential DHS Budget Cuts:** Mickey Serice said the first step will be to look at programs already in place and support those before funding new things. At this time DHS is a half-billion dollars

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short of being able to support programs at current levels. The required 10% budget reduction options are posted on the DHS website. Erinn Kelley-Siel stated that due to a significant down turn in revenue she recommended the commission prioritize the most important areas they feel should be preserved. She stated it is important to keep the communication lines open and keep in mind how challenging things are right now.

**Legislative Concepts:** Vic Todd updated the commission on the legislative concepts. Jessica asked DHS to share the CAF Legislative concepts so the FSRC legislative committee can review and make recommendations to pursue specific items. **ACTION:** Mickey stated he would send them. **(Done: 10/2/08.)** Vic also noted work is being focused on the issue of client eligibility; ways to shorten the eligibility process, and align programs.

**Staffing issues:** Jim Neely reported that 5,000 additional clients have been added to TANF and 43,000 more clients are receiving Food Stamps due to the current economic climate, yet they still have the same level of staffing. The first issue is the increase in caseload and the second issue is the reduction in revenue. There will be very few new POPs that will move forward. If they move, it will be at the expense of existing programs. There is a hiring freeze on the table, with the exception of case managers, child welfare workers and supervisors. Jessica asked about staff re-balancing. Jim said they would be addressed district by district. Rosemary Lazarri brought up the issue of clients being shifted to another office for help, some of whom do not own a car, such as a client from Medford traveling to Ashland for assistance. It was also noted Portland area clients are trying to commute to different offices to obtain help. **ACTION:** Jim was not aware of this and said he would check on this issue of clients having to travel to a different city to obtain help.

**Parents as Scholars (PAS) program:** Xochitl Exparza discussed the implementation of PAS. This program has been well received and DHS has received over 180 applications that are currently being processed. Rosemary asked if DHS had sent information to colleges advising them of the program. DHS has done some outreach to colleges, but additional outreach may be needed.

**Guest: Marge Reinhart** The commissioners review their strategic plan goals areas and asked Marge Reinhart about specific items being pursued by the Client Services Committee, particularly the grievance form. She stated there are gaps in the system and realizes trends are not being addressed as a group. **ACTION:** Marge will address complaint issues with district managers regarding the underlying issues of resolution in their districts. Marge agreed the form seems to be inadequate and has only been in place about two years. Marge also suggested it would be helpful for the FSRC to schedule an hour of overview training from the DHS Staff Lean Leaders.

**Other Discussion Items:**

A work group is being formed to prepare for the Legislative session. The group will be Rosemary Lazzari, Jessica Chanay and Stephanie Tama-Sweet.

Discussion of drafting a letter to Erinn Kelley-Siel was discussed. **ACTION:** Rosemary will create an outline of the letter and send it to the commissioners for review.

**Letter to the Governor:** The FSRC discussed drafting a letter to the Governor to emphasize what should be preserved in his budget. **ACTION:** Jessica volunteered to create an outline (using the

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letter sent to Bruce Goldberg as a reference). She will send out an email to the commissioners for review.

- Make the outline
- Everyone look at 10% cuts
- Decide on recommendations

Erinn Kelley-Siel suggested using the following format:

1. Held harmless – Why
  - a. Explain your reason
2. State that you understand there may have to be cuts made, but make the cut as small as possible and do not allow these programs to go away.
  - a. Explain your reason

**Future Agenda Items:**

- IRCO – DHS relationship
- RPI reports
- DHS rebalance
- RPI overview from DHS: Marge Reinhart suggested a one hour overview training from Lean Leaders (can be scheduled with DHS Staff)
- Finish goals review
- DHS Rulemaking process
- Ethics presentation
- Invite Eric Moore, Budget Analyst to explain the Governors budget

**Next Meeting:** The next FSRC meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2008, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon in Room 252 of the Human Services Building.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.