



**Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center
Governing Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 26, 2005
1601 E. Main Street
Urbana, Illinois**

Minutes

Members Present: Dr. Kathleen Buetow, Chairman, Carle Clinic
Chief Daniel Driscoll, Secretary/Treasurer, Mahomet Police Department
Mr. Matt Burgess, Clinical Supervisor, The Mental Health Center
Ms. Lolita Dumas, Acting Site Administrator, Illinois Department of
Children and Family Services
Lt. Dave Nelson, University of Illinois Police Department
Superintendent Judy Pacey, Regional Office of Education
Sgt. Bryant Seraphin, Urbana Police Department
Sgt. Jeff Wooten, Rantoul Police Department

Members Absent: Champaign County Mental Health Board
Champaign County Probation & Court Services Department
Champaign County State's Attorney's Office
Champaign County Sheriff's Office
Champaign Police Department

Others Attending: Michael Williams, Executive Director, CAC

Call to Order

After finding a quorum present, Chairman Buetow called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Approval of Minutes

Superintendent Pacey offered a motion to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2005 Regular Meeting of the CAC Governing Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burgess. There was no further discussion. Motion approved.

Approval of Application for Funding from the Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois Medical Services Funding Initiative

As reported at last month's Board meeting, Mr. Williams applied for grant funding from the Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois Medical Services Funding Initiative. Although the grant application had not been completed as of the date of that meeting, Mr. Williams completed and submitted the application to the CACI on April 29, 2005, and he provided each Board member with a copy. On May 18, 2005, Mr. Williams learned that we were not among the applicants receiving funding from the CACI. Nevertheless, Mr. Williams requested that the Board retroactively approve submission of the grant application.

Sergeant Wooten offered a motion to ratify submission of the Application for Funding from the Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois Medical Services Funding Initiative. The motion was seconded by Chief Driscoll. There was no further discussion. Motion approved.

Budget Report

A copy of the CAC Budget Report for the month ended April 30, 2005 was provided to each of the Board members. Mr. Williams stated that, although there were no unusual expenditures to report for the month of April, a total of \$1,400.30 was expended for employee and MDT member training.

Director's Report

As suggested by Chief Driscoll at last month's meeting, Mr. Williams prepared Certificates of Appreciation for members of the Key Club at Centennial High School who painted the Secondary Waiting/Support Group room at the CAC. Mr. Williams presented those Certificates to the students at their meeting on May 16th. Mr. Williams thanked Chief Driscoll for his suggestion and Mr. Gordon for his assistance with printing the Certificates.

Child Abuse Prevention Month activities wrapped up on April 30th with Kid-Apalooza, a festival celebrating the community's children held at Douglass Park. Mr. Williams reported that, although the event was moved inside due to inclement weather, it was well-attended.

Mr. Williams highlighted training opportunities provided to staff and members of the Multidisciplinary Team during the past month:

- Mr. Williams attended the CAC Directors' Annual Retreat in East Peoria on May 4 and 5.
- On May 6, 2005, CAC Case Manager Jill Breen and Intern Jessica McMeyer attended *Cultural Competency Training Part III: Latinos and Mental Health* sponsored by the Mental Health Agencies Council.
- Senior Assistant State's Attorney Troy Lozar attended *The Youngest Victims: Investigating and Prosecuting Cases Involving Preschool Children* presented by the National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville, Alabama, on May 11, 12 and 13.
- Urbana Police Department Investigator Cory Koker, Assistant State's Attorney Robin Stoller, and SAO Child Victim-Witness Counselor Kathy McGee are attending *Finding Words Illinois* (a 5-day child forensic interviewing training program) being held in Springfield this week.

Mr. Williams added that CAC Case Manager Jill Breen and Crisis Interventionists Nancy Barnes and Paula Hetzel will attend "*Cherish the Children – Issues for Today's Children,*" a day-long training sponsored by the McLean County Children's Advocacy Center on June 3, 2005.

Mr. Williams noted that Jessica McMeyer completed her internship at the CAC on May 6, 2005 and he thanked her for her valuable assistance, particularly with the child victim support group program.

Each of the Board members was provided with a Summary of CAC Activity for the month of April. During the month of April, 24 children were interviewed at the CAC. That number includes 18 children accepted for case management services and 6 non-victim siblings/witnesses. Thus far during May, 11 children have been interviewed at the Center, which includes 9 children accepted for case management services and 2 non-victim siblings/witnesses.

Communications

Mr. Williams reported that no communications had been received on behalf of the Board.

Other Business

Extensive discussion was had regarding the topic of audio/videotaping child interviews at the Children's Advocacy Center. Mr. Williams read for the Board an excerpt from a recent Illinois Supreme Court decision (*People v. Cookson*) in which the Court stated, "...While we believe the lack of a contemporaneous video recording does not render the interview unreliable [citation], we once again strongly admonish law enforcement personnel and social workers to record those interviews whenever possible."

Mr. Williams advised the Board that he visited the Macon County Children's Advocacy Center last week to view the recording system they installed in June/July 2004. That equipment is a PC based system that allows the Macon County CAC to record interviews on a computer hard drive. Following the interview, copies are made for law enforcement, the State's Attorney's Office, and DCFS. After a designated period of time, the recording is deleted from the hard drive. Mr. Williams suggested that a similar system might be appropriate for Champaign County. Mr. Williams also reported that, although State's Attorney Julia Rietz could not be present at today's meeting, he has discussed this issue with her and she supports the premise of audio/videotaping child interviews at the CAC.

Further discussion ensued. The topics of discussion included: whether or not parental consent to record interviews is necessary under Illinois eavesdropping statutes, the advantages/disadvantages of recording direct to DVD vs. recording to the hard drive of a PC based system, whether or not audio/video recording of child interviews places the interview and/or the interviewer "on trial," child forensic interviewer training, the number of CACs in Illinois that are audio/videotaping compared to those that aren't, the desirability of capturing a verbatim copy of the interview including the child's behavior changes which may not be apparent in notes taken by observers, the process of disclosure which may include the child denying abuse happened while being interviewed at the CAC yet making a subsequent disclosure during a non-recorded interview, the use of expert witnesses, types of cameras (stationary, remote control, dome, multiple), the absolute necessity of being able to clearly see/hear the child and the interviewer, the cost of various recording systems, and maintaining the security of recordings at the CAC.

Chief Driscoll offered a motion to direct Mr. Williams to explore the feasibility of audio/videotaping interviews of children at the CAC and to report back to the Board his findings. The motion was seconded by Lt. Nelson. There was no further discussion. Motion approved.

In addition, at the request of Sgt. Seraphin, Mr. Williams will contact State's Attorney Julia Rietz and ask her to be present at next month's Board meeting to discuss the impact of Illinois eavesdropping statutes on recordings made at the CAC.

New Business

None.

Announcements

Mr. Williams announced that the next Board meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 23, 2005.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Superintendent Pacey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Chief Driscoll and the meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael B. Williams
Executive Director