

Oversight Commission on Children, Youths, and Families – Minutes
Tuesday, October 4, 2022, 1:00 PM
[Act 129/H.265](#)

Website:

<https://aoa.vermont.gov/content/oversight-commission-children-youths-and-families>

Members present:

Representative Daniel Noyes, Senator Ginny Lyons, Xusana Davis, Lynn Messier, Shela Linton, Stephen Dale, Amy Rose

Absent:

Nate Farnham, Laura Schaller

Guests:

Mark Hughes, Christine Hughes, Kalii LaRochelle

Welcome and Introductions:

All present introduced themselves. Mark and Christine shared their background and context about the DCF system. Mark shared that children of color are 60% more likely to be involved in the child protection system and 40% more likely to be adopted than white children. The group discussed the urgency of the moment and the need to set the Office up well.

Review and Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

Agenda and minutes were approved as drafted.

Public Comment:

Mark shared the work he has been doing with DCF to address racial disparities in Vermont. Asked if DCF has had input into the job description. Raised frustration with the bill and the job description and said the Office needs to impact the data that we have.

Hiring Process and Commissions Roll:

Dan reviewed the Commission's role in the hiring process. Once the job description is complete, HR will advertise for the position. Commissioners should share the posting and may reach out to the press. Commissioners will interview candidates and nominate candidates to the Governor. Goal is to complete that by early December.

Job Description:

- Dan thanked KaLii for her work on the job description. She used language from the bill to create a first draft.
- Shela expressed frustration with the job description as written. Expressed the need to add in the problems that this Office will be addressing (white supremacy culture, gender, disability, mental health, economic disparities, and more). She shared that we want the description to attract candidates that are interested in that work.

- Xusana suggested advertising the job outside of the usual network to bring in more candidates.
- It was suggested that we link to the bill within the description.
- It was suggested that we think about the outcomes that we want to achieve throughout this process.

How Will All Members Have Access to Resumes?

Likely through Dropbox or a google drive.

Shall a Subcommittee be Formed?

The Commission did not discuss a subcommittee for reviewing applications.

What Makes a Good Advocate?

Rep. Noyes, Shela, and Stephen agreed to meet and come up with an initial list of “desirable traits” for the Advocate.

Deputy Advocate:

The Advocate will hire a deputy advocate to assist in the work. This will not happen until July.

BGS Office Space:

BGS is exploring physical office space for the Advocate and Deputy Advocate. The current budget will need to cover salary, office, and equipment as well as any costs connected to hiring and relocation. Rep. Noyes is following up to ensure that the OCYFA will be in the next FY budget.

Placeholder Bill:

Rep. Noyes offered to put in a placeholder bill for the OCYFA.

Next Meeting:

The next meetings have not been scheduled yet and will be soon.

Adjournment:

Senator Lyons moved to adjourn the meeting, Shela provided a second, and motion passed unanimously.

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