

**MINUTES of Texas Children’s Justice Act Task Force**  
**Meeting date: April 24, 2009**

**Call to order:** A regular meeting of the Texas Children’s Justice Act Task Force, was held at the Texas Center for the Judiciary, Austin, TX on April 24, 2009. The meeting convened at 9:13AM, Chair Hon. Larry Thorne presiding.

**Members in attendance:**

Roy Block  
Cozette Bustamante  
Cathy Crabtree  
De Shaun Ealoms  
Jon Evans  
Joe Gagen  
Rolf Habersang  
Denise Hyde

Joyce James  
Margaret Lalk  
Valerie Milholland  
Dan Powers  
Fairy Rutland  
Larry Thorne  
Gerry Williams

**Members not in attendance:**

Fred Chavez  
James Lukefahr

**Staff in attendance:**

Colette Bonstead  
Cherisse Robison  
Ginny Woods

**Guests in attendance:**

Susan Miller  
Julie Shores  
Andrea Sparks

**Welcome and introductions,** by Hon. Larry Thorne. Judge Thorne welcomed members and guests.

**Adoption of revised agenda:** No additional changes were made to the revised agenda. Judge Thorne suspended vote.

**Approval of minutes:** Motion was made by Joe Gagen, and seconded by Denise Hyde, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2009 meeting. Motion carried without opposition.

**9:20 AM Legislative Update,** by Andrea Sparks, Texas CASA Director of Public Policy and Outreach.

**9:30 AM Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Update,** by Julie Shores, CFSR Lead Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Ms. Shores presented an update on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) PIP. DFPS will submit their PIP on Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, but it will not be finalized for another 6-8 months due to negotiations with the federal government. Joyce James indicated that DFPS’s appeals from Round 1 were successful and that the fines had been repealed.

**9:50 AM Three Year Assessment,** by Ginny Woods and Cherisse Robison. Ms. Woods presented the *CJA Task Force Three-Year Assessment Staff Report*. The Task Force discussed the recommended strategies and the *2009-2012 Strategic Plan*. Ms. Woods also discussed potential methods of implementing the strategies as well as the *Proposed Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants*. Ms. Robison presented the proposed *FY10 Implementation Plan*.

**Approval of Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies:** Motion was made by Joe Gagen, and seconded by Rolf Habersang, to approve the Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies, as recommended by the staff. Motion carried without opposition. See Attachment A, CJA Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies.

**Approval of Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants:** Judge Thorne suspended vote so that the criteria could be revised. Judge Thorne appointed Margaret Lalk, Fairy Rutland, and Gerry Williams to a working group responsible for compiling suggested revisions and drafting the criteria. A final vote on the Proposed Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants will be done via email. Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Dan Powers, to approve an email vote on the proposed Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants. Motion carried without opposition.

**Approval of CJA Partner Organizations:** Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Joyce James, to approve Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas (CACTX) and Texas CASA as CJA Partner Organizations. Cathy Crabtree and Joe Gagen abstained. Motion carried without opposition.

**Approval of 2009-2010 Implementation Plan:**

Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Joyce James, to set aside \$500,000 to solicit partnership grant applications. Cathy Crabtree and Joe Gagen abstained. Motion carried without opposition.

Motion was made by Cathy Crabtree, and seconded by Rolf Habersang, to set aside \$250,000 to solicit a grant application from Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to support training opportunities for CPS staff designed to strengthen levels of accountability, enhance staff support, and improve workforce retention. Joyce James and Gerry Williams abstained. Motion carried without opposition.

Motion was made by Dan Powers, and seconded by Cathy Crabtree, to set aside \$150,000 to solicit a grant application from the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases. Motion carried without opposition.

Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Joyce James, to set aside \$20,000 for the use of scholarships in FY2010. Motion carried without opposition. Task Force members are to submit possible program suggestions to the Grant Proposal Review Committee via email.

Judge Thorne called for a majority vote on the use of either (1) one Request for Proposals (RFP) in the Fall or (1) one in the summer and one in the Fall. The use of two RFPs passed by a majority vote. The Task Force set aside \$80,000 to award through the summer competitive grant solicitation process.

Judge Thorne charged the Legislative Committee with determining which Task Force strategies should be recommended to the Texas Legislature for an interim session review. The Legislative Committee will report on its recommendations at the July 24<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting.

Judge Thorne appointed Roy Block to serve on the Legislative Committee.

**Approval of 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures:** Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Cathy Crabtree, to approve the proposed 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures. Motion carried without opposition. See Attachment B, 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures.

**Appointment of 2009-2010 Grant Proposal Review Committee.** Larry Thorne appointed De Shaun Ealoms, Denise Hyde, Joyce James, Margaret Lalk, Valerie Milholland, Fairy Rutland, Cozette Bustamante, and Gerry Williams to the 2009-2010 Grant Proposal Review Committee. The Committee will be responsible for reviewing grant applications and Intent to Submit Applications (ISA) using tools provided by the staff and making funding recommendations to the Task Force.

**Discussion of CJA Task Force membership and elections,** by Ginny Woods, CJA Project Director. Ms Woods presented the current membership of the CJA Task Force by discipline and encouraged discussion on the types of individuals and disciplines the Task Force may want to add. Some suggested disciplines/organizations included the Texas Municipal Police Association, Texas Police Chiefs Association, and the Texas Principles Association. Ms. Woods reminded Task Force members that they must submit names and resumes of potential members to the Nominating Committee no later than 30 days before the July Task Force meeting.

Judge Thorne appointed Jon Evans to serve on the member Nominating Committee.

**Report on Budget,** by Colette Bonstead, CJA Financial Associate. Ms. Bonstead updated the Task Force on the current status of the budget. See Attached CJA Budget dated 4/24/09.

**CJA Status Report,** by Cherisse Robison. Ms. Robison provided status updates on the program performance of current CJA projects.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at **12:40PM.**

These minutes were approved at a Texas Children's Justice Act Task Force meeting on July 24, 2009.

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