



COMMISSION ON CHILD CARE
Meeting Summary: Full Commission
October 15, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barbara Andrews, Hillary Fitis, Nuri Funes, Michelle Green, Diana Holzberger, Linda Janulis, Bernadine Occhiuzzo, Shaun Rose, Barbara Warman

GUESTS PRESENT: Debbie Moore

Michelle Green called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Visitor Presentation: Debbie Moore, Senior Policy Analyst, Maryland Family Network presented an overview of “Advocacy 101”. She provided two handouts – one on Advocacy 101 and the other on the State Child Care Subsidy Program. Discussion about the types of language that tend to work in politics – e.g. using Early Learning has proven to be the most powerful and to always talk about Education for Young Children or Early Care and Education, but never day care. The mindset in politics re: child care tends to be that it is a personal responsibility. For some legislators School Readiness is a useful concept and addressing the whole issue as a return on investment for 1) quality programming re: readiness and 2) for society.

The players at each level of government are different, but advocates can lend expertise on what the problem is and how to get answers. We can act as subject matter experts and should consider how to convey what we want or need (crafting a message) through recognizing who the decision-makers are.

State Subsidy Program discussion: re: the subsidy system is broken, but subsidy is not an easy subject to explain to lawmakers. The Child Care Block Grants early history and a “welfare mentality” or concept did not help lawmakers reach school readiness.

The subsidy program is looked at through the analogy of 3 legs of a stool: eligibility, parent co-pay, provider rates and all 3 legs of the stool are broken and need to be reconsidered. The Federal government does not have requirements re: rates, but suggestions. Eligibility levels in Maryland (State subsidy) have been the same since 2002 – they were at 50%, but are now at 30% of SMI making a \$30,000 income too rich for subsidy. The last two tiers of the program are still frozen which means no subsidy for anyone making less than \$23,676 (see handout chart for more information). Discussion continued with focus on income issues in Montgomery County and the struggle in trying to fix WPA if the State program does not work.

ACTION: The Commission voted to approve the summary of the September 17, 2014 full Commission meeting summary.

CHAIRS REPORT: Michelle represented the Commission at the Annual HHS Breakfast Work session with Council President Rice and Members Navarro and Leventhal and DHHS Director Uma Ahluwalia. Each Board/Commission report was 3 minutes and Michelle wrote the overall statement connecting all of the statements to the concept of “prevention”. She used sections of the WPA letter and parts of the Annual Report re: WPA for the Commission’s 3 minute statement.

Michelle will present on WPA and Barbara Warman will attend the HHS Preliminary Budget Forum on October 20.

Commission will begin outreach to County Council members on the Commission Annual Report and the Executive Committee will reach out to members to see who can come.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Programmatic Issues: The speaker did not attend, but Barbara Warman filled the Committee in on Early Childhood Mental Health. Speaker is rescheduled for December Committee meeting.

Membership: Vice Chair, Hillary Fitis is moving to Alaska and will resign from the Commission at the end of December completing her 3 year term. This will result in a special election for Vice Chair. There will be a recommended slate of candidates at the January Full Commission meeting.

The Chair will also be appointing new chairs of the PI and Public Policy Committees.

Barbara A. announced that Nicole Queen has been hired by the Resource and Referral Center, Early Childhood Services which necessitated her resignation from the Commission. The Membership Committee will contact the County Executive’s Office on recruiting new members.

Public Policy: New chair information (see above) Michelle and Shaun met with Chuck Short from the Executive’s office. Suggestions for advocacy included: mobilize, build excitement and interest; make personal connections with Council members; build topics and common messaging.

Discussion: a variety of ideas re: building a message and excitement.

Develop a public policy work plan re: action or monitor/add to PI, Public Policy and Executive Agendas for regular discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: CUPF regulation did not go to Council today. Right now Public Hearing scheduled for 10-23 7:30-9:30 pm. Send information to networks/speakers sign up and submit written testimony. Shaun will represent the Commission and Michelle MCCA.

Action: Meeting times discussion tabled until next meeting.

UPDATES:

Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) – Bernadine reported that the ECAC subcommittee for Literacy is preparing a letter for pediatric outreach; Barbara A. noted that parent focus groups are well under way and one was recently completed at MCCA.

State and County Early Childhood Update – No report

Announcements and Collaborations:

Barbara Warman: FSI holding their annual toy drive (flyer distributed and will be sent electronically to Barbara A.)

Linda – “Make the First Five Count”, Easter Seals now has an online assessment tool.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.