

GAL/CASA ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

FEBRUARY 15, 2019

Members Present

Rehana Adat-Lopez, Annette Craycraft, Glenna Cheesman, Katina Silver, Suzanne Draper, Deena Personett, Cindy Booth, Coleen Connor, Magistrate Lori Morgan, Therese Miller, Kurt Kiefer, Magistrate Heather Mollo

Ex Officio Members Present

Stan Piercefield, Ann Houseworth, Leslie Dunn, Lindsay Reynolds, Teresa Lyles

Members Absent

Katie Hall, Judge Stephen Galvin, Judge Brett Niemeier, Judge Darrin Dolehanty, Kristin Bishay, Magistrate Jeffrey Miller

Welcome and Introductions

Advisory Commission Chair Coleen Conner brought the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. She asked members if they had a chance to review the November 2018 minutes, and asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Annette Craycraft made a motion, Katina Silver seconded the approval of the November 2018 minutes. There was no further discussion, and the minutes were approved as written.

Committee Reports

- Conference Committee—Teresa Lyles reported that the Conference Committee has met via conference call to recap the 2018 Fall conference and will be meeting again soon to work on plans for the upcoming Spring Conference in April of 2019.
- Legislative Committee—Annette Craycraft reported that CASA Day is coming up on March 19. Please email Annette and/or Teresa regarding the number of people coming. Annette gave an overview of the day and asked that each Commission member make sure all programs are inviting their legislators.
- Standards and Policy Committee—Coleen Connor reported that the Committee has been meeting regularly to review Best Practices and Program Standards to make sure they are updated and accurate. Leslie also reported that the Juvenile Judge's Improvement Committee has approved our draft Best Practice regarding the appointment of attorneys to children with no changes. The Committee will be meeting after the Advisory Commission meeting.

Judge's Reports

- Magistrate Mollo reported that she is on the Child Welfare Improvement Committee, and they have been working on the issue of legal orphans. They are looking at the possibility of creating "Permanency Round Tables Plus" for older youth who have been in foster care for long amounts of time. The Permanency Plus Round Tables will allow the CASA, the child, and someone the child chooses to be at the meeting. She also announced that the book Amaya and the Courthouse Mouse has been completed and will be distributed soon.

State Director Report

- Update on Impact Litigation—It is very early on at this point, and the JJIC will be keeping a close eye on this. The three counties mentioned in the complaint are Lake, Marion and Scott Counties. Leslie will keep the Commission apprised of any other updates. NCASAA put together a conference call with other states that have faced this same issue, and Leslie found it to be very informative and helpful.
- IV-E Funding for Attorneys—A new federal law called the Families First Preservation Services Act is potentially allowing IV-E funds to be used to pay attorneys for representing children in CHINS cases. There is a focus group looking at how this will all roll out in Indiana and Leslie is part of the group.
- Foster Parent Legislation—Foster parents are seeking party status in CHINS cases with this legislation (SB 1). There are some discussions about solutions that would not necessarily give the foster parents full party status, but perhaps the ability to intervene. Foster parents involved in pushing the legislation are saying that the best interest of the children is not being addressed in court. They are working on a report form for the foster parents to complete. The outcome will probably result in more involvement by the foster parents at some levels.
- CAYA Discussion--Many directors are very concerned that someone associated with a CASA program continues to introduce legislation that impacts CASA programs without discussing or following the Legislative Agreement protocol. None of the counties proposed in the bill were contacted before being inserted into the bill as pilot sites. The best solution may be that this is referred to a summer study committee. Annette would like for us to explore the possibility of composing a letter to the person to address the Commission's concerns about the lack of communication about important legislative matters.
- Year-End Data—This is the first year we have made the switch to getting data from Optima and not on paper. As we expected, the number of children served has gone down because there were fewer filings last year. However, many of the contact hours have also gone down. We know that the contact hours reported are inaccurate because it is apparent that hours and number of contacts are not being logged into OPTIMA as they should be. We need to address this so that Optima accurately reflects the hard work of our programs. Directors discussed that it is very difficult in that there are some volunteers who just won't use Optima, and there is not enough time or staff to do it. We need to let volunteers know that this is part of the volunteer work and it has to be done. Programs should consider having an OPTIMA data person on staff. We also need to look at other outcomes that we can use to show the importance and value of CASA. Leslie, Stan and the steering committee are working on data standards for programs.
- LMS-Life of a Case—We need more people to get involved in using the program in the pilot (we only had 7 people of the 30-40 asked to complete it). If interested, please email Stan and let him know.
- Grantee Winter Meetings—It has been requested that all programs/grantees participate in one of two Winter Meetings scheduled in Indianapolis on February 20 or February 22 to discuss OPTIMA use, upcoming Public Relations Grants and other topics.
- IYI State of the Child Presentation—Leslie provided information to the members about the presentation.
- Safe Hiring/Criminal Background Checks—There's been some confusion, and there will be a webinar to help clarify several issues.

Program Coordinator Report—Teresa Lyles

Regional Updates

Region One

- A new CASA volunteer program will be starting in White County. They are going to become a multi-county program with Carroll County CASA. Carroll County Director will oversee both counties but plans to hire a coordinator to work with the volunteers and the courts in both counties as well. The addition of White County CASA in Region One means that we have 100% coverage in that Region and brings the total number of counties in the Indiana Network to 85.

Region Two

- Leslie and Teresa will be meeting with new Huntington County Circuit Court Judge Davin Smith in early April to discuss the process. Judge Smith submitted a letter of Interest to the State Office.
- We received a Letter of Interest from Adams County regarding the start-up of a CASA program in 2019. Leslie has met with the judge previously, and we are waiting to hear back as to whether he wants another face-to-face meeting with our staff about proceeding.

Region Three

- No programmatic changes or regional updates in Region Three this quarter.

Region Four

- New Posey Circuit Court Judge Craig Goedde also submitted a Letter of Interest regarding the start-up of a new CASA program there. Leslie and Teresa will be meeting with him in early April as well.
- Crawford County—Neither Betty McNair nor Duane GoFourth are with the Crawford County CASA program any longer. The judge there is conducting a search for a new program director.

Upcoming Events

- Winter Meetings—February 20 and 22, 2019 (Indianapolis)
- CASA Day—March 19, 2019 (Statehouse)
- Spring Director's Meeting—April 23 and 24, 2019 (Brown County)
- State Conference—October 3-5, 2019 (French Lick)

Meeting Adjourned

Future Commission Meetings: May 17, August 16, November 15, 2019

GAL/CASA Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2019

Members Present

Suzanne Draper, Katie Hall, Kurt Kiefer, Deena Personett, Rehana Adat-Lopez, Cindy Booth, Annette Craycraft, Therese Miller, Magistrate Mollo

Members Absent

Coleen Connor, Katina Silver, Kristin Bishay, Glenna Cheesman, Judge Stephen Galvin, Judge Brett Niemeier, Judge Darrin Dolehanty, Kristin Bishay, Magistrate Jeffrey Miller

Ex Officio Members Present

Leslie Dunn, Lindsay Reynolds, Stan Piercefield, Teresa Lyles

Welcome and Introductions

In the absence of Commission Chair Coleen Connor, Katie Hall called the meeting to order. Minutes from February were read. Annette Craycraft moved that the minutes be accepted as written; Rehana Adat-Lopez seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

State Director's Report

New Process for Commission

The Supreme Court is adopting a consistent process for all committees and commissions, which will result in a few changes for this commission. We have previously elected members on a calendar year basis. Now, new members of the Commission (both CASA directors and judicial members) will be elected or appointed based on the state fiscal year and the terms will begin on July 1 each year. We will also now have term limits. Members can serve two, three-year terms and then must rotate off the Commission. Commission members whose terms expire on June 30, 2019 are Annette Craycraft, Katie Hall, Therese Miller, Glenna Cheesman, Magistrate Morgan and Magistrate Miller. Everyone except Glenna Cheesman has served two terms and will now rotate off the Commission. Existing committees and committee chairs will remain in place this year for continuity.

Update on Impact Litigation

The lawsuit seeking attorneys be appointed for children in all CHINS cases which was filed about 3 counties (Marion, Lake and Scott) has been dismissed. The lawsuit will be re-filed naming the judges in those counties. The judges will be represented by someone at the Attorney General's office.

Third Round Distribution:

There will be a third-round distribution again this year, and programs will be receiving information about the deposits by the end of the state fiscal year. There was discussion about the possibility of changing the statutory formula to meet the needs of programs to maintain a stable program and staff when the CHINS numbers vary so much. We could possibly poll programs to ask what it takes to maintain their programs financially at the present time to determine how much it costs to run a program. In the past,

Leslie has been told it is probably not wise to make changes to the statutory formula because it has worked pretty well through the years and, if we open that up, we don't know what kind of formula or statute we would end up with.

DCS/CASA/PD Training:

Judges on the JJIC are working with DCS to develop a training for DCS attorneys to help improve their litigation skills in CHINS and TPR matters. A pilot training was facilitated in Tippecanoe County in April 2019 with several of our CASA programs attending. They want to duplicate this across the state, with Monroe and Clark Counties being next on the schedule.

LMS-Life of a Case

Leslie recently met with the new staff member in charge of the LMS project. We had less people participate in reviewing the Life of a CASA LMS and we are hoping that more people will start using it and provide additional feedback. Based on the limited feedback we have so far, we may start "chunking it out" (breaking it into shorter sections) and we may add more voice/verbal components.

PR Grants

We've heard that many billboards are going up! Some directors are having to work with their county council members on contracts for the billboards before they can be purchased and installed. Some counties are joining together to decide the best places to put billboards so they can use the funds the most efficiently and effectively.

Foster Parent Form

There has been a draft form created for foster parents to file at CHINS hearings, and some of the questions about CASA are concerning. There is a meeting next week to talk about changes that need to be made so that a collaborative form can be created with input from the court and other stakeholders. The form that is currently on the foster parent's website is not the official form that has been finalized by the collaborative group. It was agreed by all that training is necessary for the foster parents to better understand the role of DCS, CASA, foster parents, the law, etc.

Expansion Areas

As previously discussed, some programs are starting to take on other roles at the request of the court since the CHINS numbers are declining in some counties. CASA directors are helping with Dual Status facilitations, mediation projects, and family recovery courts. They are also being asked to serve on other types of cases including IA's, delinquency cases, guardianships, contested adoptions and divorce/custody cases. Magistrate Mollo mentioned that some judges mentioned at a district meeting recently that they need more GAL's on high conflict dissolution cases.

Optima Update— (Stan Piercefield)

Optima recently made several significant updates to its mobile version, and it seems to be going very well. Optima is also making several other changes by the end of this month. One is the addition of a "services" tab, and a place to track an email, phone, or social media information at the child level. Across the country, OPTIMA has tracked 15 million hours, and Indiana has over a million hours, and has tracked 67,000 kids since we've started using the system.

Committee Reports

Conference Committee – (Katie Hall) Shawn Harper will be our keynote at the conference October 3-5. Since Shawn is a former NFL player, we are considering a sports theme such as, “Giving Kids the Winning Edge.” Please provide ideas for breakout session speakers to Katie or Teresa. Comments about Brown County were discussed.

Legislative Committee – (Annette Craycraft) Next year is a short session, so we may be looking at February instead of March for an event. This year’s event was very well received and attended.

Standards and Policy Committee – (Coleen Connor) Next meeting on July 12, 2019.

Judge’s Report

- Magistrate Mollo—CWIC is working on the Legal Orphans Project.

Program Coordinator’s Report – (Teresa Lyles)

REGIONAL UPDATES

Region 1

- White County—White County will be starting a new CASA volunteer program in the next month. They are joining with the existing program in Carroll County, and the new program will be called Carroll/White County CASA. Current Carroll County Director Abbie Diener will be managing both counties.
- Tri-County CASA (Fountain, Parke and Warren Counties) --The Tri-County CASA Program will be opening a remote office in Parke County (the base office is in Fountain County) and has named Sarah Ginter as the director of that county. Audrey Hayman remains the director over the entire program.

Region 2

Adams County and Huntington County—Leslie and Teresa have met with judges in both Adams and Huntington County regarding their interest in starting a new certified GAL/CASA program. Huntington County is currently considering the possibility of either starting their own program, or possibly joining another nearby established program. Adams County plans on making their current attorney GAL (Beth Webber) the director of the newly forming program and will be working on submitting certification documents soon.

Region 4

- Posey County—Leslie and Teresa traveled to Posey County to meet with the judge regarding his interest in starting a new GAL/CASA volunteer program there. There was a shift in judicial officers in Posey County due to the early retirement of the Superior Court Judge. Now Judge Goedde, who Leslie met with at the judicial conference, will be doing criminal rather than juvenile cases and Judge Clowers will handle the juvenile cases. Both the circuit court judge and the newly appointed superior court judge were present at the meeting in Posey County, and we will be touching base with them again soon to discuss their plans for the start-up of the program, hopefully in the near future.
- Crawford County—Megan Timberlake has been named the new director of the Crawford County CASA program. State Office staff has traveled to Crawford County to meet with both Megan and

her judge. Stan Piercefield is currently working with the program by facilitating their first initial training, and 4 counties are also joining in on the training,

- Spencer County—Tina Gehlhausen resigned as the director of the Spencer County CASA program in the last quarter, and program staff member Katie Thompson has been named the new director.

Other Updates

- The Spring Directors Meeting was held in Brown County April 23-24 with 72 people in attendance
- Regional trainings on the topic of the use of psychotropic medication for foster youth are scheduled for the following dates and locations:
 - June 12-Indianapolis
 - June 26-Crown Point
 - June 27-Muncie
 - July 11-Indianapolis
 - July 31-Bloomington

Program and Regional Updates

- Vanderburgh County: June 3—DCS Ombudsman coming to conduct a 3-hour training for staff and volunteers.
- Marion County: June 1—Annual Super Hero Run

Suzanne Draper motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Kurt Kiefer seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Next Meeting: August 16, 2019

Indiana GAL/CASA

Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

August 16, 2019

Members Present

Magistrate Kimberly Schmaltz, Tonya Ruble-Richter, Kurt Kiefer, Deena Personett, Coleen Connor (Chair), Katina Murray, Leslie Hendricks, Glenna Cheesman, Brenda Matuszkiewicz, Suzanne Draper, Kristin Bishay, Judge Stephanie Campbell, Annette Craycraft, Cindy Booth, Rehana Adat-Lopez

Ex Officio Members Present

Leslie Dunn (State Director), Lindsay Reynolds, Stan Piercefield, Teresa Lyles

Guest

Julie Whitman, Executive Director, Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Members Absent

Judge Stephen Galvin, Judge Darrin Dolehanty, Magistrate Heather Mollo, Magistrate Susan Orth

Welcome, Introductions and Approval of Minutes from the May 17, 2019 Meeting

Indiana GAL/CASA Advisory Commission Chair Coleen Connor called the quarterly meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. New members to the Commission were welcomed, and members stated their names and program or court affiliations. Ms. Connor then asked the group if they had reviewed the meeting minutes from the last meeting on May 17, 2019. All agreed that they had received and read the minutes and Kurt Kiefer moved that the minutes be accepted as written; Deena Personett seconded the motion. With no further discussion held, the all members voted in favor of accepting the minutes.

Committee Reports

Commission Chair Coleen Connor asked the chairs of the GAL/CASA Committees to provide an update to the Commission:

- State Conference/Training Committee—Katie Hall, Committee Chair
 - Katie was unable to attend the meeting in person but joined the meeting via phone. She reminded the members that the theme of this year's conference is "Giving Kids the Winning Edge." The conference will be held at the French Lick Resort on October 3-5, 2019. Registration for the event has already begun, with over 200 people registered for the conference thus far. The Committee will be assisting with all aspects of the conference, and members are working closely with the State Office.
- Public Relations and Legislative Committee—Annette Craycraft, Committee Chair
 - Annette provided both a written and oral report to the Commission. She discussed federal legislative updates as well as state legislative updates. Annette emphasized the importance of the bill reauthorizing CAPTA that will be before Congress again soon and the importance of educating members of Congress about CASA and keeping the current language that requires a GAL/CASA (rather than requiring only an attorney) in for

abused and neglected children. Likewise, it will be important to educate freshman members of Congress on the importance of CASA as we begin to prepare for the 2020 National CASA conference in Washington, D.C. The Committee will be meeting again after the November 15, 2019 Advisory Commission meeting. They will begin planning CASA Day 2020 at the State House. The State Office will assist by creating a poll of our directors to determine contacts they may have with our legislators.

- OPTIMA Steering Committee—Katina Murray, Chair; Stan Piercefield, Consultant
 - Katina and Stan provided updates on new OPTIMA system enhancements:
 - The Reports Section has been modified to include documentation. If you want more information about what the report contains, you can now click on the icon next to the report for that documentation.
 - A new custom report is now available called “Petitions—Active Children” that lists the information in petition number sequence
 - OPTIMA is now offering hour long (free) webinars on a variety of topics once a week for staff and supervisors
 - The OPTIMA Steering Committee met on August 6, 2019 and approved two requests from the network:
 - Add the social media tab to the Family Members section
 - Link placement information to the Contact Log data entry screen
 - These requests have been submitted to Evinto for implementation
 - New members to the OPTIMA Steering Committee are Leslie Hendricks (Grant County) and Brenda Matuszkiewicz (St. Joseph County)
- Certification, Standards and Best Practices Committee—Coleen Connor, Chair
 - Coleen stated that all members received an email prior to this meeting with recommended changes/additions from this Committee for the following:
 - Addition of the OPTIMA Steering Committee to the By-Laws
 - Cindy moved that the addition be accepted; Rehana seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
 - Updates to the By-Laws for the Indiana Supreme Court Advisory Commission on GAL/CASA
 - Updates to bullets 3 and 4 of the responsibilities of Commission members
 - Updates to Article II regarding the Election and Terms of Commission Members
 - Updates to the role of the Certification, Standards and Best Practice Committee
 - Updates to definition of the By-Laws Committee
 - Katina moved that these changes be accepted as a group; Suzanne seconded the motion.
 - Discussion—Kurt Kiefer asked if it was possible to add a footnote to the document noting the date of the revision. All agreed this would be beneficial and it will be added.
 - With no further discussion, all voted in favor.

- Addition of the words “supervising visits” to Standard #9 of the Program Standards
- Changes to the language of Standard #25 of the Program Standards that requires the program staff and/or director who recruit, train, or serve as volunteers themselves to complete the 30-hour initial training, as well as 12 hours of continuing training each year.
 - Deena moved that we accept both changes to the Standards; Glenna seconded the motion.
 - Discussion—Kristin asked if the change to Standard #25 included employees such as marketing employees. Leslie and Coleen both responded that the Standard only applies if the employee is working directly with volunteers.
 - With no further discussion, all voted in favor.
 - The changes to the Standards will now go to the Court for approval.
- Addition of the Best Practice on Responses to Child Fatalities
- Changes to the Best Practice on Non-U.S. Citizens as Program Volunteers
- Clarification of the Best Practice on Volunteers Supervising Visits
 - Rehana motioned that all 3 of these Best Practice amendments be accepted as group; Glenna seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and all voted in favor.

Judges’ Report

- Judge Campbell stated that she withdraws the GAL/CASA from JC and GU cases when they close and asked if that was the case with everyone. Leslie mentioned that the GAL/CASA should be withdrawn in GU and DR cases because they never actually close. In a JC case, if the GAL/CASA is removed prior to the end of the CHINS case, then an order withdrawing the GAL/CASA should be filed. The case closure order can also include the dismissal of the GAL/CASA. Judge Campbell submitted that this may be something that should be mentioned in the Wednesday Newsletter from the Court, or perhaps be added to the Bench Book.

State Director’s Report

State Director Leslie Dunn provided the follow report to the Commission:

- Judicial Survey—National CASA
 - National CASA has worked with the NCJFCJ and Chapin Gall to create a Judicial Survey regarding evidenced-based practice of appointing GAL/CASA volunteers in juvenile cases. If a judge is a member of the NCFJFCJ, they would have received a link from them in their email. If not, Leslie asked that directors forward and/or encourage their judges to complete the 25-question survey as more responses are needed. The survey ends on August 23, 2019.
- Foster Parent Form and Foster Parent Relations/Training

- Adams County CASA—We are still working on the certification process with Beth Webber who will be serving as the Program Director for our newest program in Adams County. Certification documents are due to be submitted to our office by August 30, 2019. Ms. Webber will be attending our upcoming conference and related meetings. Adams County will be the 86th county in Indiana to have a certified GAL/CASA volunteer program.

REGION THREE

- Floyd/Washington County CASA, Inc.--There has been a change in governance for the program. While the program had been under the umbrella of another agency for years, it has broken off to become a stand-alone non-profit. Debbie Mefford remains in the position of program director.

REGION FOUR

- Greene County CASA—Previous Program Director Samantha Flath left the program in July to make a career change. Former staff member Sahrayah Blackburn was named as the new director last week.
- Pike County CASA, Inc.-- Previous Program Director Kelli Gordon also recently left the program to make a career change. Andrea Sharp has been named as the new program director.
- Sullivan County CASA—Former Program Director Susie Piece has retired. Joanne Davis has been named as the new Director.

STATEWIDE TRAINING

The State Office recently hosted training on the topic of Psychotropic Medication and Our Foster Youth in 5 locations across the state. Dr. Leslie Hulvershorn facilitated the trainings that were well received by all who attended. Registration numbers for each training location were:

- June 12-Indianapolis (60)
- June 26-Crown Point (52)
- June 27-Muncie (50)
- July 11-Indianapolis (56)
- July 31—Bloomington (64)

Program and Regional Updates

- Kurt Kiefer (Miami County) asked if the JC filings in any other counties was down significantly. Among the directors present, some reported their numbers were down while other reported they were up.
- Rehanna Adat-Lopez (Lake County) reported that her judges have been asking for CASA appointments on IA cases because their CHINS numbers are down. However, she does not have the resources to cover those cases
- Glenna Cheesman (Vigo County) said she was having issues with DCS telling others involved in their cases not to communicate with CASA. Leslie stated that she may be able to talk to her contacts at DCS about this because she does not believe that is consistent with the philosophy of DCS Central Office to cooperate and collaborate with CASA on the local level.

Kurt Kiefer moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Glenna seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Next Meeting: November 15, 2019

Indiana GAL/CASA

Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2019

Members Present

Judge Darin Dolehanty, Suzanne Draper, Coleen Connor, Deena Personett, Kurt Kiefer, Cindy Booth, Judge Stephanie Campbell, Tonya Ruble-Richter, Leslie Hendricks, Judge Stephen Galvin, Glenna Cheesman

Ex Officio Members Present

Leslie Dunn, Teresa Lyles, Stan Piercefield, Lindsay Reynolds, Kirbie Rogers

Members Absent

Katina Murray, Brenda Matuszkiewicz, Kristin Bishay, Magistrate Heather Mollo, Judge Susan Orth, Magistrate Kimberly Schmaltz, Rehana Adat-Lopez

Guests/Committee Chairs

Annette Craycraft

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the August 16, 2019 Meeting

Read and reviewed. Kurt Kiefer moved that the minutes be accepted, and Suzanne Draper seconded the motion. After no further discussion, all members voted in favor and the minutes were approved.

Introductions

Committee Reports

- State Conference/Training Committee—Katie Hall reported that over 700 people attended the 2019 conference. Evaluations from attendees have been submitted and are predominately positive. The Committee will be meeting soon to review them. Tentative dates for the Spring Director's meeting are April 20-21, 2020 in Carmel. The 2020 State Conference will be September 24-26 in Fort Wayne. Leslie added that both of our keynote speakers were exceptional at our recent conference.
- Public Relations and Legislative Committee—Annette reported on current federal legislative updates. She focused on the reauthorization of CAPTA and potential cuts in VOCA funding. There are conflicting stories as to the reasons for the potential cuts and Annette is seeking out more answers so that we know where to focus our efforts. The Legislative Committee is meeting later in the afternoon to work on CASA Day 2020 which will be held on Wednesday, March 4. She will be reminding people to let her know about important legislation that involves children and/or our work.
- Certification, Standards and Best Practices Committee—Coleen reported that the Committee has been meeting on a regular basis and continues to dig into our Best Practices to update them

and to discuss any new considerations brought to the attention of the Committee. Several changes were accepted by the Commission at our August meeting, and Leslie and Coleen gave a presentation at the recent State Director's Meetings update everyone on the changes.

Judge's Report

- Beginning 11/01/2019, Judge Galvin is now appointing CASA volunteers on informal adjustments because the CHINS filing numbers are down. They are using the triage tool as a guide. He is concerned that the situations that are deemed as IA need to be more closely watched for the best interest of the children. He is going to watch to see how the volunteers report back on the IA's they are serving on. So far, there have been a few CASA volunteers reporting back that parents are working with DCS and the IA was exactly what was needed. Volunteers are visiting the children, but since there are no scheduled hearings, he is asking for a report at the end of the IA period (either 6 months or a year) to assure that the children are safe and a full CHINS is not necessary. So far, it is not clear what the failure rate is going to be. He hopes to be able to report back as to what the outcome is/was.
- Judge Campbell said she's had the issue of DCS asking CASA to file motions for various things in the case because they cannot. Leslie stated that is happening often around the state and gave the example of the CASA asking for per diem for relative placements.

State Director's Report

- Foster Parent Form- The Bench Book Committee shared the Foster Parent Form with Leslie and she provided input, but after that, additional changes were made that we did not know about. DCS added a provision in which foster parents reported if they have been given a copy of the GAL/CASA report when we are not allowed to provide it to them because they are not a party. Discussion was held about the issue, and everyone on the Commission agrees that it should be taken out. Leslie will convey that information to Judge Graham. Judge Galvin added that he suggests that DCS and CASA are separated on the report form for the sake of clarity. The form and the instructions will be on the DCS website. The report form is not required for the foster parent. The foster parent can choose to do nothing, use this report, or use a different reporting format.
- Fiscal Year Data/SOJ--Leslie provided a copy of the information that we provided to the Chief Justice regarding data from the last state fiscal year.
- Optima Update-Stan discussed the recent updates to OPTIMA. He also discussed the importance of protecting our information from data breaches. He continues to audit passwords used by volunteers for the system to ensure that they are no longer using the original default password that was initially provided. Leslie added the ongoing issue of some programs continue to disregard putting data into OPTIMA as required. She said this is a violation of our Standards and of the grant terms. We may need to start holding grant funds until programs are in compliance.
- National CASA Conference/Speaker-Leslie shared that National has reached out to Leslie to ask if she has a way of contacting VP Pence to speak at the 2020 NCASAA Conference. The Commission feels she should decline.

- 2020 Grants-Our staff is currently reviewing all 86 Matching and Capacity Grant Applications and will present recommendations to the internal grant review committee very soon.
- Handling Other Types of Cases- Discussed the possibility of starting a custody training/manual in the future but there are some concerns about us handling these types of cases. It may be better to focus more on helping in IA's, guardianships and adoption cases.
- Multi-County Programs/Issues-There is currently a plan for two of our multi-county programs to break off to become separate/stand-alone programs. Leslie wants to require a financial sustainability plan of the program that is breaking off as part of their program certification. This would also be true of smaller counties planning to start a program. Members agree that this is a reasonable request to ask of newly forming programs no matter the reason.

Program Coordinator's Report

Program and Regional Updates-

- Judge Campbell let us know that although Sarah Ginter is leaving Parke County, she has spoken with Judge Swaim and Judge Wesch about the possibility of having one full-time director for their two counties.
- Suzanne—DCS Townhall Meeting yesterday regarding Family First Preservation Services Act (FFPSA), new federal legislation that will result in more in-home CHINS and less removals of children. All residential providers will have to meet standards and use approved practices. There is no current substance abuse model in Indiana. Director Stigdon said this should be in place by the end of 2020, but Leslie said she heard that this may be extended into 2021. Leslie said Angela Reid-Brown of our office will speak (or help us get a speaker) for our Spring Meeting in April to talk about this with the program directors. Suzanne suggested that anyone who gets an invite should attend the Townhall meeting. David Reed spoke about FFPSA at our conference, and we can send his PowerPoint out to Commission members.

Meeting Adjourned

Kurt motioned that we adjourn, and Cindy seconded. Meeting adjourned.

2020 Meeting Dates: February 21, May 15, August 21, November 20