

**PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

MINUTES OF MEETING

November 30, 2007
1:30 P.M.

205 W. 14th St.
Supreme Court Courtroom
Austin, Texas

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

Chair Justice Harriet O'Neill called the first meeting of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families to order on November 30, 2007 at 1:35 p.m. The meeting was held at the Supreme Court Courtroom in Austin, Texas.

ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS

The following members were present:

Hon. Darlene Byrne, Judge, 126th District Court, Austin
Hon. Camile Glasscock DuBose, Associate Judge, Child Protection Court of South Texas, Uvalde
Bruce Esterline, Vice President for Grants, The Meadows Foundation, Dallas
Stewart W. Gagnon, Partner, Fulbright & Jaworski, Houston
Albert Hawkins, Executive Commissioner, Texas Health & Human Services Commission, Austin
Joyce M. James, Assistant Commissioner, Child Protective Services, TDFPS, Austin
Hon. Patricia A. Macias, Judge, 388th District Court, El Paso
Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Justice, The Supreme Court of Texas, Austin
Carolyn Rodriguez, Director if Texas Strategic Consulting, Casey Family Programs, Austin
*Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez, Senior Partner, Rodriguez, Colvin, Chaney & Saenz, L.L.P.,
Brownsville*
Hon. Dean Rucker, Presiding Judge, 7th Region, 318th District Court, Midland
*Fairy Davenport Rutland, Director, Appeals Division, Texas Health & Human Services
Commission, Austin*
Hon. Cheryl Lee Shannon, Judge, 305th District Court, Dallas
Hon. John Specia, Senior District Judge (Ret.), Plunkett & Gibson, San Antonio
David M. Williams, San Saba County Attorney, San Saba

Others in attendance were:

*Tina Amberboy, Executive Director, Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and
Families*
Margaret Bennet, Director/General Counsel, Legal Division, Office of Court Administration
Sylvia Griego, Executive Assistant, Supreme Court of Texas
Scott Jones, TexDECK Project Manger, Office of Court Administration
Teri Moran, Executive Assistant, Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families
Mena Ramon, Deputy General Counsel, Office of Court Administration
Connie Sanders, Specialty Courts Program Director, Office of Court Administration.

Kristi Taylor, Staff Attorney for Children, Youth & Families, Supreme Court of Texas
Bryan Wilson, Grant Administrator, Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families

OPENING REMARKS AND JUDICIAL COMMISSION OVERVIEW

Justice O’Neill welcomed members to the first meeting of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families (Commission) and asked members to introduce themselves and briefly describe their involvement in CPS cases. She urged everyone to carefully read the comprehensive Supreme Court Order Establishing the Commission because it not only summarizes the two-year effort to create the commission, but also delineates the Commission’s goals.

Vice Chair Judge John Specia added that the Commission’s work would impact the nation’s future and not just the future of Texas because one in 13 children in the United States lives in Texas.

Justice O’Neill said she envisions the Commission functioning as a high-level group that directs, and reviews and approves work done by committees.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Tina Amberboy briefly reviewed the history of the three federal Court Improvement Program (CIP) grants – Basic CIP, Data and Training. She described a few projects under each grant and summarized the grant approval process, pointing members to the budget summaries of each grant enclosed in their meeting notebooks. Grants have and will be approved based on how they further CIP grant goals and the 23 recommendations outlined in the existing CIP strategic plan, which the Commission will be charged with updating next year.

Ms. Amberboy was invited to be an onsite reviewer for the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) beginning in March 2008. She will conduct case reviews and interviews with stakeholders in Dallas.

Ms. Amberboy has participated in the Texas Partnership for Family Recovery, a joint project of several groups that has worked to develop protocols for partnering families who are in the CPS system with appropriate substance abuse and mental health treatment. She added that she and other staff are involved with initiatives to increase the number of drug courts in the state.

Ms. Amberboy reviewed the meeting notebook contents.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Consider proposed committee structure, chairs, and liaisons.

Justice O’Neill directed members to the proposed committee structure found under tab five and invited comments. Judge Specia asked to add Stewart Gagnon to the Legislative Committee. Before a motion was made for a committee vote, committee members began discussing the next action items.

See action item number five for the committee’s vote on this item.

2. Consider proposed collaborative council members.

Kristi Taylor led a brief discussion about the collaborative council's size, and how it is difficult to be inclusive and at the same time keep the size manageable. Ms. Taylor has learned from other states that a large council can become too unwieldy to be effective. She asked members to comment on the proposed collaborative council members found in their meeting notebook under tab five. Members suggested adding representatives from the following categories:

- Mediation/Mediator
- Education (from mainstream, in addition to the existing charter school category).
- Immigration
- Faith-based organization
- Domestic Violence organization

Mr. Rodriguez moved to accept the proposed collaborative council with the addition of a representative each from the above-mentioned five categories. Mr. Esterline seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Consider establishment of executive committee. Proposed members: Harriet O'Neill, John Specia, Darlene Byrne, Camile DuBose, Joyce James, and Dean Rucker.

No motion was made to approve this action item individually. Its approval was carried within action item number one, the approval of the proposed committee structure. See action item number five for the committee's vote on this item.

4. Consider Executive Director expense authority with Executive Committee approval.

Ms. Amberboy explained the need for her to have the authority to approve certain expenses within previously approved budget categories in between Commission meetings, such as authorizing individual staff travel for trainings.

Mr. Rodriguez moved to authorize the executive director expense authority with the approval of the Executive Committee. Mr. Esterline seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Consider Executive Committee approval for expenditures/other decisions via email or conference call.

Members discussed the matter and agreed that when necessary, executive committee members should be able to made decisions via conference calls and email.

After members discussed the action items, Mr. Rodriguez made a motion that combined three action items into one. He moved to accept the proposed committee

structure, including the executive committee, as found in the meeting notebook and to authorize the executive committee to act on the commission's behalf in between meetings. Mr. Esterline seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Adopt Meeting Calendar.

Justice O'Neill directed the members to the calendar in the notebook showing the following proposed meeting dates:

January 18, 2008

April 11, 2008

June 27, 2008

October 17, 2008

Judge Specia suggested that the members accept the proposed meeting dates without a vote and no motion was made. The members agreed to the dates without a vote.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2008, from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A location in Austin will be announced later.

ADJOURNMENT

Justice O'Neill adjourned the meeting at 2 p.m.