

PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 22, 2017
9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
State Bar of Texas – Texas Law Center
Austin, Texas

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners	Attended	Did Not Attend
Chair, Hon. Eva Guzman, Justice, Supreme Court of Texas, Austin	✓	
Chair Emeritus, Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Justice, retired, Law Office of Harriet O'Neill, Austin		✓
Vice Chair, Hon. Rob Hofmann, Judge, 452nd District Court, Mason	✓	
Paula Bibbs-Samuels, Parent Representative, Slaton	✓	
Allison Billodeau, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor, Austin		✓
Kristene Blackstone, Associate Commissioner for Child Protective Services, Dept. of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Hon. Gary Coley, Judge, 74th District Court, Waco	✓	
Sheila Craig, Associate Commissioner (by proxy Dr. Rosanna Barrett), Office of Minority Health Statistics and Engagement, Health and Human Services Commission, Austin	✓	
Hon. Helen Giddings, Texas House of Representatives, District 109, Dallas		✓
Dr. Andrew Keller, President and Chief Executive Officer, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, Dallas	✓	
Hon. Lawrence Lujan, Chief Judge, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, El Paso	✓	
Hon. Michael Massengale, Justice, First Court of Appeals, Houston	✓	
Hon. Piper McCraw, Judge, 469th Judicial District Court, McKinney	✓	
Hon. Mary Murphy, Presiding Judge, First Administrative Judicial Region, Dallas	✓	
Cindy Patrick, Senior Program Officer, Meadows Foundation, Dallas	✓	
Hon. Ronald Pope, Judge, 328th District Court, Richmond		✓
Hon. Frank Rynd, General Counsel, Archdiocese Galveston-Houston	✓	
Hon. Peter Sakai, Judge, 225th District Court, San Antonio		✓
Hon. Michael Schneider, Judge, 315th District Court, Houston	✓	
Luanne Southern, Senior Director of Texas Strategic Consulting, Casey Family Programs, Austin	✓	
Vicki Spriggs, Chief Executive Officer, Texas CASA, Inc., Austin	✓	
Terry Tottenham, Of Counsel, Norton Rose Fulbright US L.L.P., Austin		✓
Hon. Carlos Villalon, Associate Judge, Child Protection Court of the Rio Grande, Edinburg	✓	
Lt. Col. Travis Walters, State Public Affairs Officer (FTUS), United States Air Force, Fort Worth	✓	
Hon. Royce West (by proxy Graham Keverer), Texas Senate, District 23, Dallas	✓	
Senior Judicial Advisor		
Hon. Darlene Byrne, Judge, 126th District Court, Austin	✓	
Collaborative Council		
Tymothy Belseth, Research Coordinator, Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing, The University of Texas, Austin		
M. Lynn Chamberlin, Sr. Assistant County Attorney, Harris County Attorney's Office	✓	
Irene Clements, President, National Foster Family Association, and Consultant, Butterfly Marketing, L.L.C., Pflugerville		✓
William B. Connolly, Attorney, Connolly & Shireman, L.L.P., Houston		✓

	Attended	Did Not Attend
Sarah Crockett, Public Policy Coordinator, Texas CASA, Austin	✓	
De Shaun Ealoms, Parent Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin		
Barbara Elias-Perciful, President, Texas Lawyers for Children, Dallas	✓	
Debra Emerson, CPS Director of Permanency, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Laura Figueroa, The Arbitrage Group, Inc., Katy		✓
Mike Foster, Administrator, Central Texas Table of Grace		✓
Will Francis, Government Relations Director, National Association of Social Workers/Texas Chapter, Austin		✓
Mara Friesen (by proxy Ruth Thornton), Deputy Director for Child Support, Office of the Texas Attorney General, Austin	✓	
Sadie Funk, Executive Director, Texas Alliance for Infant Mental Health, Austin		✓
Helen Gaebler, Senior Research Attorney, William Wayne Justice Center for Public Interest Law, The University of Texas School of Law, Austin		✓
Teal De La Garza, Attorney, Bill De La Garza & Associates, P.C.	✓	
Christine Gendron, Executive Director, Texas Network of Youth Services, Austin	✓	
Christina Green, Director of Public Affairs, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Austin	✓	
Sandra Hachem, Senior Assistant County Attorney, Harris County Attorney's Office, Houston		✓
David Halpern, Director, Promise Mentor Program, Seedling Foundation, Austin	✓	
Ashley Harris, Director of Policy and Community Engagement, United Way of Texas, Austin	✓	
Bruce Kendrick, Director of Outreach, Embrace Texas, McKinney		✓
Knox Kimberly, Vice President for Advocacy and Education, Lutheran Social Services of the South, Austin		✓
Kelly Kravitz, Foster Care Education and Policy Coordinator, Texas Education Agency, Austin		✓
Richard Lavallo, Legal Director, Disability Rights Texas, Austin		✓
Tracy Levins, State Development Specialist, Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health, The University of Texas, Austin		✓
Madeline McClure, Executive Director, Texas Association for the Protection of Children, Dallas		✓
Hon. F. Scott McCown, Clinical Professor and Director of the Children's Rights Clinic, The University of Texas School of Law, Austin		✓
Gabriella McDonald, Pro Bono and New Projects Director, Texas Appleseed, Austin	✓	
Susan McDowell, Executive Director, Life works, Austin		✓
Pamela McPeters, Director of Public Policy, Texas Association for the Protection of Children, Austin	✓	
Kate Murphy, Senior Policy Associate, Texans Care for Children, Austin	✓	
Katie Olse, Executive Director, Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services, Austin	✓	
Jon Olson, Director of Equity and Inclusion, Office of Minority Health Statistics and Engagement – HHSC, Austin		
Dr. Anu Partap, Assistant Professor in Pediatrics, Southwest Medical Center, Dallas		✓
Judy Powell, Communications Director, Parent Guidance Center, Austin	✓	
Mary Christine Reed, Director, Texas Foster Youth Justice Project, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Austin	✓	
Carolyne Rodriguez, Independent Consultant, Austin	✓	
Tanya Rollins, State Disproportionality Manager, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin		✓
Johana Scot, Executive Director, Parent Guidance Center, Austin	✓	
Janet Sharkis, Executive Director, Texas Office for Prevention of Developmental Disabilities, Austin		✓
Andrea Sparks, Child Sex Trafficking Unit Administrator, Office of the Governor, Austin		✓
Ian Spechler, Attorney, formerly with Disability Rights Texas, Austin	✓	
Jeanne Stamp, Senior Program Coordinator, Texas Homeless Education Office, Charles A. Dana Center, Austin		✓
Gloria Terry, Coalition President, Texas Council on Family Violence, Austin		✓
Kenneth Thompson, Fatherhood Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin		✓

	Attended	Did Not Attend
Arabia Vargas, Chair, Bexar County Child Welfare Board, San Antonio		✓
Kelly White, Executive Director, LIFT Alliance		✓
Attending Committee Members and Guests		
Holly Benningfield, CPS Adoption Program Director, Department of Family and Protective Services		
Hon. Alyce Bondurant, Judge, North Texas Child Protection Court, Wichita Falls		
Audrey Carmical, General Counsel, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin		
Frank Cervantes, Director, Department of Juvenile Services, Washoe County, Nevada		
David Chasis, CASA Volunteer		
Cathy Cockerham, Program Operations Director, Texas CASA, Austin		
Brigid Duffy, Director, Juvenile Division Clark County District Attorney, Las Vegas, Nevada		
Dr. Monica Faulkner, Director, Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing, The University of Texas ,Austin		
Hon. Roy Ferguson, District Judge, 394 th Judicial District Court, Alpine		
Maya Guerra Gamble, Attorney at Law, Austin		
Hon. Richard Garcia, Associate Judge, Bexar County Children's Court, San Antonio		
Hon. Katrina Griffith, Associate Judge, Harris County Child Protection Court, Houston		
Ryan Gustafson, Division Director, Washoe County Human Services Agency, Nevada		
Dr. Joseph Haas, Clinical Psychology, Reno, Nevada		
Paula Hammack, Acting Director, Clark County Department Family Services, Nevada		
Michelle Harper, Vice President of Child and Family Policy, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, Dallas		
Amber Hart, CPS Supervisor, Department of Family and Protective Services		
Tracy Harting, Attorney at Law, Pflugerville		
Julia Hatcher, Attorney at Law, Galveston		
Andrew Homer, Director of Public Affairs, Texas CASA, Austin		
JT Jones, Student, Angelo State University, San Angelo		
Graham Keever, Legislative Director, Office of Senator Royce West		
Kristen Krusely, CPS Caseworker, Department of Family and Protective Services		
Todd Latiolais		
Emily LeBlanc, Chief Program Officer, CASA of Travis County, Austin		
Alice LeDesma, Division Director, Washoe County Human Services Agency, Nevada		
Crystal Leff-Piñon, Managing Attorney, The Family Helpline, Texas Legal Services Center, Austin		
Aurora Martinez Jones, Associate Judge, Travis County Civil Courts, Austin		
Hon. Cathy Morris, Associate Judge, Child Protection Court of South Texas, Boerne		
Wanda Pena, Senior Director, San Antonio Field Office, Casey Family Programs, San Antonio		
Heidi Penix, Grant Administrator, Texas Center for the Judiciary, Austin		
Joshua Plesant, Office Coordinator, Angelo State University, San Angelo		
Amanda Ritchie, Greek Life and Activities Coordinator, Angelo State University, San Angelo		
Hilary Roberts, Foster Angels		
Hon. Robin Sage, Senior District Judge, Judicial Engagement Team, Casey Family Programs, Longview		
Hon. Nancy Saitta, Supreme Court of Nevada (retired)		
Raman Sandhu, Contract Administrator Manager, Family & Social Services, Health, Developmental & Independence Services – HHSC, Austin		

Kevin Schiller, Assistant County Manager, Clark County, Nevada
Hon. William Voy, Judge, Clark County District Court, Family Division, Las Vegas, Nevada
Hon. Egan Walker, Judge, Second Judicial District Court, Washoe County, Nevada
Erica Wheatley
Henry Whitman, Commissioner, Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services, Austin
Janice Wolf, Attorney, Children's Attorneys Project, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
Kelly Wooldridge, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Nevada

Attending Staff

Tina Amberboy, Executive Director, Children's Commission
Jessica Arguijo, Administrative Assistant, Children's Commission
Jamie Bernstein, Staff Attorney, Children's Commission
Anissa Johnson, Program Specialist VI, Office of Court Administration
Tim Kennedy, Video Conferencing Project Manager, Office of Court Administration
Monica Mahoney, Administrative Assistant, Children's Commission
Dylan Moench, Staff Attorney, Children's Commission
Patrick Passmore, Grant Manager, Children's Commission
Mena Ramon, General Counsel, Office of Court Administration
Milbrey Raney, Staff Attorney, Children's Commission
Hon. Dean Rucker, Jurist in Residence, Children's Commission
Kristi Taylor, Assistant Director, Children's Commission
Andrea Vicencio, Administrative Assistant, Children's Commission

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING REMARKS, Justice Eva Guzman

Justice Eva Guzman called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

Recognition of Guests

Justice Guzman welcomed several special guests from Nevada, visiting on behalf of the state's Court Improvement Program. Justice Guzman welcomed Dr. Monica Faulkner from the University of Texas, Judge Aurora Martinez Jones of Travis County, Judge Cathy Morris of the Child Protection Court of South Texas, Judge Alyce Bondurant of the North Texas Child Protection Court, Judge Roy Ferguson of the 394th Judicial District Court, Judge Richard Garcia of Bexar County, and from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Commissioner Hank Whitman, Associate Commissioner for CPS Kristene Blackstone, and General Counsel Audrey Carmical.

Commissioner Membership Changes

There were no changes to the Commissioner membership.

Collaborative Council Membership Changes

Justice Guzman announced several additions to the Collaborative Council: Christine Gendron, Executive Director for the Texas Network of Youth Services; Tym Belseth, Research Coordinator at the Texas Institute for Child and Family Wellbeing at the University of Texas; Sarah Crockett, Public Policy

Coordinator at Texas CASA; Kate Murphy, Senior Policy Associate at Texans Care for Children; Jon Olson, Director of Equity and Inclusion at the Office of Minority Health Statistics and Engagement under HHSC; Tanya Rollins, State Disproportionality Manager at DFPS; and Ian Spechler, formerly an attorney at Disability Rights Texas.

Committee Member Changes

There were no membership changes to the committees.

Staff Member Changes

Justice Guzman announced that Daniella Salazar's internship has ended. Daniella worked on the Legal Representation Study with staff attorney Dylan Moench during the summer and has returned to her studies at the University of Texas School of Law.

Court Improvement Program Funding Update

Justice Guzman and Tina Amberboy gave an update on the funding of the Court Improvement Program (CIP). Ms. Amberboy updated Commissioners on the status of the federal CIP funding, noting that although the CIP was not reauthorized, the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) was able to provide full CIP distribution in fiscal year 2017 – partial funding was received in October 2016 and the remainder in July 2017. Ms. Amberboy reminded members that the CIP expired in October 2016 and was not fully reauthorized by the Congress. Justice Guzman announced that the Supreme Court of Texas included funding for the Children's Commission as an exceptional item in the Court's budget and the Legislature approved the request and appropriated \$2 million for the biennium.

Adoption of May 12, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Justice Guzman directed members to Tab 2 and noted that members had the opportunity to review the May 12, 2017 minutes. Justice Guzman asked if there were any other corrections or discussion. There were no corrections or discussion points raised.

ACTION: Justice Guzman asked for a motion to adopt the meeting minutes of the May 12, 2017 meeting. A motion was made to adopt the minutes; the motion was seconded. The attending members voted to approve and adopt the meeting minutes unanimously.

Nevada guests were invited to introduce themselves.

Justice Guzman announced that a brochure was created highlighting the work of the Commission over the past ten years.

DFPS UPDATE, Commissioner Hank Whitman discussed the effects of hurricane Harvey and the Department's response to the disaster, noting that all children in DFPS care are safe and accounted for. Commissioner Whitman announced that the launch of extended payments to families participating in kinship care placements. As of September 1, 2017 families who care for a child through a kinship placement will be eligible to receive limited monthly payments, in an effort to extend the opportunity for a child to be placed with a relative rather than into the foster care system. Commissioner Whitman

noted the Department's goal of fifty percent of placements to be kinship placements. Commissioner Whitman also announced that as of September 1, 2017 the Department of Family and Protective Services is a stand-alone agency and no longer under the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. DFPS will now report directly to the Governor of Texas. Commissioner Whitman reported on the efforts at DFPS to retain employees and reduce employee turnover.

Associate Commissioner for CPS Kristene Blackstone reported on the work of the Department's partners in law enforcement, the faith community, Texas CASA, and child placing agencies (CPAs) to assist the agency's response efforts during hurricane Harvey. About 4,000 children were in CPA foster homes in the impacted area and DFPS communicated with them regularly and ensured all children were accounted for. DFPS staff met and communicated with the 363 families in reunification cases in the affected areas; with the 2,959 children with their current families in the affected areas; and with nearly all of the 6,500 families serviced through family base safety services (FBSS) cases. Ms. Blackstone noted that DFPS has a protocol in place for instances when its staff cannot get in contact with a family or child. Ms. Blackstone also noted the agency's internal response to assist its own staff affected by the storm.

Justice Guzman discussed the orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas in the wake of hurricane Harvey's impact. All orders issued by the Supreme Court are available on the court's website at <http://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/>.

COMMISSION MEMBER UPDATES

Hon. Piper McCraw reported on a CLE hosted at the 469th District Court regarding communicating with non-verbal children in the CPS system. Judge McCraw noted that several of her court's attorneys attended the Son-Rise Program, which offers training to parents and professionals caring for children challenged by Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) and other developmental difficulties. The attorneys who attended the training were able to take some ideas to several special education programs at area school districts. More information on the program is available here: <http://www.autismtreatmentcenter.org/contents/about-son-rise/what-is-the-son-rise-program.php>.

Luanne Southern commented on the meeting on September 20, 2017 with the Children's Commission and visiting guests from the Nevada Court Improvement Program (CIP). Ms. Southern reported on the Casey Family Programs Texas team's work with DFPS on issues specifically focused on preventing the need for foster care and reducing the number of children in foster care in Texas, and the work of the Casey Family Programs Judicial Engagement Team to assist the judiciary of various jurisdictions improve outcomes for children in foster care. Ms. Southern remarked on the Texas Team's efforts to provide leadership development activities for DFPS regional directors and their leadership teams across the state, currently expanding from Harris County into Region 3B and Region 7. Ms. Southern discussed Casey Family Programs' support regarding prevention and early intervention (PEI) in Texas.

Ms. Southern updated the Commission on the Casey's work with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago regarding data analysis of Texas children with complex needs.

Dr. Andrew Keller reported on the recent report from the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) on the current landscape of trauma-informed care (TIC) in Texas. The full report is available online at: <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/83503/trauma-informed-care-final-report.pdf>. Dr. Keller discussed three bills regarding mental health passed in the 85th Legislative Session: Senate Bill 74 includes a two million dollar rider designed to help any certified rehab provider to surge capacity (800 additional slots) for children in foster care with intensive mental health needs; House Bill 1600 creates an annual screening for mental health needs within the Medicaid system; and House Bill 13 gives the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) a ten million dollar grant program for communities to address mental health needs. Dr. Keller reported on MMHPI's work with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to connect mental health counselors with programs and agencies responding to victims of hurricane Harvey in an effort to more readily address trauma. Dr. Keller announced the upcoming release of a comprehensive report of all of the children's mental health services in Harris County on October 30, 2017.

Ms. Cindy Patrick updated the Commission on the North Texas group of philanthropic foundations work to help Fort Worth and other regions prepare for community-based care. Ms. Patrick reported on the philanthropic community's work to support Harvey recovery efforts by the state, as well as local non-profits at work on the restoration phase and how to help relocated children and families reach services. Ms. Patrick announced the Philanthropic Regional Conference will be held in Tahoe, Nevada in October 2017. The regional conference is attended by philanthropists from eight states and focuses on the funding opportunities of the region.

Hon. Darlene Byrne reported as the Senior Judicial Advisor to the Commission. Judge Byrne announced that she has accepted the invitation to chair the Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care (SCTIC), a collaboration between the Commission, MMHPI, Texas CASA and DFPS to follow up on the MMHPI report on TIC. The SCTIC held its first meeting on July 28, 2017 in Austin with nearly 100 professionals from all over the state to discuss the current TIC landscape in Texas.

Ms. Kristi Taylor noted the SCTIC has created four workgroups: Organizational Leadership workgroup, chaired by Renee Calder Price; Child Welfare System Reform workgroup chaired by Andrew Homer; Cross-systems Collaboration workgroup chaired by Christine Gendron; and Funding, Data, and Evaluation workgroup chaired by Katy Bourgeois. Ms. Taylor explained the SCTIC Chair and Workgroup Chairs will draft a statewide strategy over the remaining months of 2017.

Mr. Graham Kever reported on behalf of Senator Royce West. Mr. Kever announced that suggestions to interim charges are due on September 22, 2017. Mr. Kever discussed some bills from the 85th Legislative Session, including Senate Bill 999, which aimed to align judicial processes for emergency removals with court order, emergency removals without court order, or non-emergency removal. Mr. Kever reported that the sunset on the permanency care agreement program was repealed. Mr. Kever

also noted that Senate Bill 1444 regarding De Novo reviews was vetoed during the session, and that another bill to require the guardian ad litem to stay with the child when the child transitions from temporary conservatorship to permanent did not go to hearing in the Senate.

Hon. Mary Murphy reported that the administrative judicial regions were increased from nine to eleven following the legislative session. Judge Murphy noted that the Presiding Judges of the administrative judicial regions appoint the associate judges or visiting judges who hear the CPS cases. Judge Murphy announced that the Presiding Judges annual evaluations of associate judges who hear CPS cases in their region are due in September 2017. Judge Murphy explained that the evaluations include a new procedure that allows formal input from various stakeholders. Judge Murphy also reported on the need for more judges in the first administrative judicial region and some counties' inability to handle all cases with the resources currently available.

Justice Michael Massengale reported that the First Court of Appeals courthouse received little damage from hurricane Harvey and subsequent flooding and is being shared with other courts that currently not operational. Justice Massengale updated the Commission on the work of the Training Committee, announcing the Child Welfare Judges Conference (CWJC), scheduled for November 13-15, 2017 at the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort in Bastrop, Texas. During CWJC the Commission will release the 2017 version of the Child Protection Law Bench Book with updates that reflect the legislative changes from the recently concluded legislative session. Justice Massengale updated the Commission on the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) Child Welfare Law Specialization (CWLS), noting the exam commission will be reviewing and finalizing exam questions and turning in final drafts to TBLS in October. Justice Massengale reported on the Child Abuse and Neglect Track 1-Day CLE within the Annual Advanced Family Law Course held on August 9, 2017 in San Antonio, Texas, with subsequent video replays will be held in Houston, Dallas, and South Padre Island. The Commission awarded 119 scholarships to qualified attorney's to attend the one day CLE session.

Justice Massengale discussed the State Bar Committee's work to develop the Child Protection Law Section. Justice Massengale announced that the live webcast Trial Skills Training (TST) was rescheduled from August to October 3 due to hurricane Harvey. The TST webcast will offer six hours of CLE to participants. Justice Massengale also reported on the House Bill 7 Task Force meeting on August 18, 2017. Justice Massengale published an opinion regarding issues associated with incarcerated parents, services provided to incarcerated parents, the duties of lawyers, caseworkers with respect to an incarcerated parent, and how kinship placements and sibling placements can factor into the best interest analysis. The opinion is dated July 24, 2017 and is available on the First Court of Appeals website and Westlaw.

Vicki Spriggs reported there are currently 71 CASA programs in Texas that serve 213 of the state's 254 counties. Ms. Spriggs announced that while Texas CASA final fiscal year 2017 numbers are not currently confirmed in all parts of the state due to hurricane Harvey, the number of volunteers is estimated to surpass the 10,000 mark and the number of children served is estimated at 30,000. Ms. Spriggs commented on the successful collaboration with DFPS in response to the hurricane. Ms. Spriggs reported

on the continued permanency initiatives at Texas CASA to keep children with families and find families through the Collaborative Family Engagement (CFE) and consolidation with the work surrounding Permanent Management Conservatorship (PMC). Ms. Spriggs announced the Texas CASA annual conference in Galveston on October 19 – 21, 2017.

Ms. Spriggs reported on the efforts of the Texas CASA media campaign to increase volunteers. The Texas CASA strategic plan includes the goal to have 78% of children in the Child Protective Services (CPS) system being served by a CASA volunteer by the year 2020. In fiscal year 2016, Texas CASA saw an 8% increase in volunteers; for fiscal year 2017 Texas CASA estimates a 12% increase. Ms. Spriggs also reported on CASA's work on recruitment and retention of volunteers, including a pending publication of a recruitment handbook for volunteers. Ms. Spriggs announced that Texas CASA expects to have results from the Child Outcomes Volunteer Effectiveness (COVE) study by March 2018.

Hon. Lawrence Lujan reported on an increase in calls for service to the El Paso Police Department for mental health issues involving both adult and children in the community. Judge Lujan also noted that the El Paso Police Department is in the process of creating a crisis intervention team to improve the way local law enforcement and the community responds to members in crisis. The El Paso City Council set aside \$315,000 to stand up a crisis intervention team of fourteen officers to form a co-responder program that will typically involve a police officer and a clinician responding to members in crisis. Judge Lujan noted that the City of El Paso hopes to have the crisis intervention team implemented by February 2018.

Judge Lujan announced that he a contact for reference as an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) specialist who has served as a qualified expert witness for ICWA cases in New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, New York, Wisconsin, and South Dakota. Judge Lujan announced the Native American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA) Annual Conference on October 10 – 13, 2017 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Judge Lujan noted an ICWA training available at the National Indian Child Welfare Association on November 7 – 9, 2017 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Judge Lujan also reported on the El Paso County Juvenile Mental Health Court, known as Project Hope, and the El Paso County Crossover Court. The goal of both courts is to provide services in the El Paso area, to help prevent sending children out of the El Paso area for services, and also to prevent children from entering the formal Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) system.

Hon. Michael Schneider reported on the effect of hurricane Harvey on the Juvenile Courts in Houston. Judge Schneider noted he was asked to serve on the Developmental Committee for the upcoming State Bar Section on Child Protection Law. Judge Schneider reported on the Basic Committee projects. The Commission staff recently met with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid to discuss the possibility of a statewide sealing project. The Legal Representation Study Subcommittee last met on July 21, 2017 to discuss the purposes, goals, and the time line of this study. Judge Schneider reported the Family Helpline through Texas Legal Services Center has seen an increase in callers over the summer since its launch in February 2017. The Family Helpline received 440 unique callers with issues effecting 816 children and 1,380

family members, relatives, and fictive kin. Judge Schneider discussed the work of the Judicial Workgroup addressing Disproportionality (JWD), including the Beyond the Bench: Law, Justice, and Communities Summit and an upcoming meeting on November 14, 2017 in conjunction with the Child Welfare Judges Conference in Bastrop, Texas. Judge Schneider reported on the updates in the Child Protection Law Bench Book to reflect the federal finding regulations and advisory guidelines to ensure greater protection for families and kids who are covered by ICWA. Judge Schneider also reported on the eleven Attorney Resource Letters sent from the Commission since the May Commission meeting.

Judge Schneider announced that he has accepted a position as an Adjunct and a Research Scholar at Columbia University relating to issues about juvenile drug courts including screening and services. Judge Schneider discussed a possible longitudinal study over the next five or ten years to determine what kind of treatment is effective. Judge Schneider will work alongside Dr. Carl Hart in the Department of Psychology.

Hon. Gary Coley reported on the work of the Heart of Texas Human Trafficking Coalition. The Coalition last met in July 2017 and released a public service announcement video. The video is available online at <https://www.hothtc.org/>. The Coalition will meet next in October 2017. Judge Coley reported on a program called The Refuge, which seeks to offer a place in McLennan County for kids who have aged out of foster care.

Hon. Frank Rynd reported that the Board of Child Advocates in Houston had 35 advocates assigned to foster families or children in foster care that were severely affected by hurricane Harvey and is working to find suitable housing for these advocates. Judge Rynd reported the Texas Catholic Conference is working with some diocese in the Catholic Church to begin finding foster care amidst members. Judge Rynd also discussed the Fostering Hope program through the KSBJ radio station, which seeks to educate its listeners on the need for foster parents in the Houston area. Judge Rynd noted that Judge Judy Warne is presiding over the Family Violence and Protective Order docket in Harris County.

Judge Rynd reported on an integration project through the Catholic Charities called the Cabrini Project and the issues facing immigrants in the Houston area since the recent natural disaster. Houston Volunteer Lawyers provided training for over 300 attorneys to help people with filing with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Executive Director Report

Ms. Tina Amberboy reported that although the Court Improvement Program (CIP) was not reauthorized, the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) was able to provide full CIP distribution in fiscal year 2017 – partial funding was received in October 2016 and the remainder in July 2017. Since funding was uncertain for the majority of the fiscal year, the Supreme Court of Texas requested an appropriation from the Legislature to fund the Children’s Commission, which was granted and the Commission was appropriated \$2 million for the biennium. Ms. Amberboy discussed the 2018 projects under Tab 3 of the notebook and directed members to Tab 4 to review the budget.

ACTION: Justice Guzman announced the Commission will vote on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2018 as described under Tab 4. Justice Guzman asked for a motion to adopt the fiscal year 2018 budget. A motion was made to adopt the budget; the motion was seconded. The attending members voted to approve and adopt the fiscal year 2018 budget unanimously.

Ms. Amberboy discussed the anticipated additional spending requests to address in February, including a project with Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS) and Texas CASA regarding youth engagement. Ms. Amberboy announced the Collaborative Council Meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2017 in conjunction with the Child Welfare Judges Conference at the Hyatt Lost Pines in Bastrop, Texas.

Presentation on Post-Secondary Data

Judge Rob Hofmann and Dr. Monica Faulkner gave a presentation on some highlights from the data collected from DFPS and TEA as part of the Foster Care and Education Committee's Post-Secondary Education Workgroup.

Judge Hofmann welcomed special guests JT Jones, a student at Angelo State University; Judge Aurora Martinez Jones, Associate Judge in Travis County; Kristen Krusely, CPS Case Worker; Emily LeBlanc, Chief Program Officer at CASA of Travis County; Joshua Pleasant, Office Coordinator at Angelo State University; Amanda Ritchie, Greek Life and Activities Coordinator at Angelo State University; Hilary Roberts at Foster Angels; Greg Trottie, CASA Volunteer Supervisor; Holly Benningfield, CPS Adoption Program Director; David Chasis, CASA Volunteer; Dr. Javier Flores, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Angelo State University; and Amber Hart, CPS Supervisor for a special presentation on foster care and education.

Judge Hofmann showed a video developed by University of Texas at Austin, available online at: <https://txicfw.socialwork.utexas.edu/texas-higher-education-foster-care-liaisons-information-reference-guide-video/>. The video accompanies a guide for higher education foster care liaisons to assist youth and young adults formerly in care in meeting their postsecondary goals. The *Texas Higher Education Information and Resource Guide for Foster Care Liaisons* is available online at: <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/2075/he-liaisons-guide-final-updated-76.pdf>.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES, continued

Hon. Carlos Villalon reported he currently hears cases for about 750 kids in Hidalgo and Starr counties. Judge Villalon reported on the trauma assessment of his court his the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) as part of the participation and implementation site project. Judge Villalon announced the newly-formed Coalition for Empowering Children and Families held a meeting during the summer of 2017. The Coalition is comprised of the court, the attorneys, service providers, CPAs, health professionals, and other stakeholders. The Coalition works to find solutions and resources in an area that has few options for services. Judge Villalon reported on a presentation from Darren Jones at the Texas Christian University (TCU) Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) program. Judge Villalon also noted the assistance offered by Dr. Cynthia Jones at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV).

Judge Villalon reported an emergency shelter will open in the Valley on September 30, 2017. The nearest emergency shelter previously available to the area is a three hour drive. Judge Villalon remarked on the work of the crossover project and efforts for collaboration with the district court judge of the juvenile court. Judge Villalon announced the 15th annual Multidisciplinary Advocacy Training Conference on Child Abuse hosted by Angels of Love on October 5 – 6, 2017 in Edinburg, Texas. Judge Villalon will also participate in a panel discussion at the UTRGV's Coalition Against Violence and Exploitation (CAVE) Conference regarding underserved and marginalized populations with specific emphasis on child welfare. Judge Villalon also reported on the progress the Child Protection Court has made in Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) cases, noting that there are currently under 200 children in PMC in comparison to the 615 children in PMC in November 2012.

Paula Bibbs-Samuels announced she became a member of the Birth Parent National Network (BPNN) and traveled to Seattle, Washington to collaborate with parents from across the nation and present on the parent collaboration efforts present in Texas. Ms. Bibbs-Samuels reported on a recent presentation at the ACH Child and Family Services Conference regarding advocacy for parents and the necessity to keep families and parents involved in the lives of children who CPS serves. Ms. Bibbs-Samuels reported on meetings with legislators in early 2017 regarding bills from the legislative session, including House Bill 699. Ms. Bibbs-Samuels discussed the Statewide Parent Collaboration Group meeting held in June 2017 to integrate the parent perspective into the CPS caseworker training. Ms. Bibbs-Samuels announced she will speak on behalf of Parent Collaboration Group to the Texas Childcare Administrators Conferences in Houston on October 16, 2017.

Lt. Col. Travis Walters reported on the response of the Texas National Guard during and following hurricane Harvey. Over 17,000 Guardsmen were active in the impacted areas including Orange, Beaumont, Houston, and the Corpus Christi area. Since the date of impact, local first responders, Texas Task Force One, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), local sheriffs, and local firefighters rescued and evacuated tens of thousands of people in need. Lt. Col. Walters noted the last time the entire Texas National Guard was activated was 100 years ago, during World War I. Lt. Col. Walters discussed the effects of deployment of military personnel on families and children and the possible impact on courtrooms.

Dr. Rosanna Barrett reported on behalf of Sheila Craig. Dr. Barrett announced that the Center for Disproportionality and Disparities was renamed, per Senate Bill 1, rider 216, to the Office of Minority Health Statistics and Engagement (OMHSE). The office still operates under the Office of Minority Health at the Texas Health and Human Services Center (HHSC). Dr. Barrett reported the OMHSE will meet with DFPS staff in September 2017 to discuss efforts around addressing the disproportionality in the child protective system.

COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL REPORT

Mary Christine Reed, Texas Foster Youth Justice Project remarked on a success story of a youth who had aged out of care and struggled to access the documentation necessary to work and apply for college. Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA) helped the youth obtain all of his documentation and heard that he recently graduated from Texas State University. Ms. Reed discussed the importance of emotional support for youth who age out of care.

Kate Murphy, Texans Care for Children announced a three-part discussion series in October, November and December 2017. The series will focus on substance use and how it affects children and families in Texas. The first discussion will provide a broad overview of substance use in Texas; the second will focus on youth substance use, including youths in child welfare, children's mental health, children's health, and juvenile justice; the third will discuss caregiver substance use, and its effect on children.

David Halpern, Texas A&M University remarked on the work of the Foster Care Task Force, the ten year anniversary of the Commission, and the work he has done with the Commission.

Barbara Elias-Perciful, Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) reported on TLC's legislative advocacy effort over this last session. TLC sent out almost 40 email alerts on different bills that were up for consideration.

DFPS UPDATE continued, Associate Commissioner for CPS Kristene Blackstone introduced a new video from the Department of Family & Protective Services. Ms. Blackstone reported on legislative changes at CPS and updates to legal documents after the legislative session. CPS completed training for both our internal staff and county and district attorneys around the state with as well. Ms. Blackstone reported on the kinship payments effective as of September 1, 2017. CPS sent letters to all kinship caregivers in September to notify them about the upcoming payment. The first payments will go out in October 2017. CPS kinship workers assisted kinship caregivers with direct deposit slips. Ms. Blackstone announced that CPS created a Kinship Caregiver Collaboration Group to hear feedback from kinship caregivers on how CPS can improve, much like the Parent Collaboration Group. Ms. Blackstone reported the stakeholder webinars series will resume on October 3, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. with a webinar focused on recent legislation.

Ms. Blackstone announced that CPS has released the next two catchment areas for fiscal year 2018 that will roll out as part of Senate Bill 11, or Community-Based Care (CBC): Region 2 and Region 8. CPS has six foster care recruitment events planned for Houston in October, as part of the Department's response to the areas affected by hurricane Harvey.

JURIST IN RESIDENCE REPORT

Hon. Dean Rucker reported on the House Bill 7 Task Force formed by the Supreme Court to study issues brought by mandate through House Bill 7, including jury submission issues, motion for new trial procedure, and issues about court reporter record filings. The Task Force must issue a report to the Supreme Court by December 1, 2017 and to the Legislature by December 31, 2017.

Judge Rucker noted he will co-present with Commission staff attorney Dylan Moench on a Legislative Update at the upcoming Child Welfare Judges Conference. The Commission's full Legislative Update is available online at: <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/83450/85th-session-legislative-update-july-21-final.pdf>.

Judge Rucker reported on the work of the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) Advisory Commission regarding the application for examination of the newly-created Child Welfare Law Specialization (CWLS). Judge Rucker reported the application has been approved by TBLS and is expected to be available in early 2018. The Advisory Commission will review submitted applications and determine if applicants are qualified under the standards to sit for an exam. Dylan Moench reported on the work of the TBLS Exam Commission for CWLS. The Exam Commission will submit final versions of the exam questions to TBLS for approval on October 16, 2017.

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION UPDATE, Ms. Mena Ramon

Ms. Ramon updated the Commission that the Office of Court Administration's (OCA) legislative appropriation request for implementation and funding of four additional Child Protection Courts was denied in the 85th Legislative Session. Ms. Ramon noted that OCA anticipates a similar request in the 2019 session. Ms. Ramon reported on the Texas Judicial Council (TJC) committees established by Chief Justice Nathan Hecht: Juvenile Justice Committee, Public Trust and Confidence Committee, Guardianship and Mental Health Committee. The Chief Justice has also asked the TCJ to look at the impact of the opioid abuse in the state's courts, to review the need for assistance to the state's specialty courts, and to consider replicating the study of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in Texas. Ms. Ramon also reported on the work of the Data Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Justice Guzman announced the next Commission Meeting dates: February 9, 2018; May 4, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.