
Colorado Office of Public Guardianship

Director, Sophia M. Alvarez

Board Members

Stephanie Garcia, Chair
Brandon Fields, Vice-Chair
Patrick Thiessen
Jeffrey Bird
Chandra Matthews
Aisha Young



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PUBLIC MEETING **September 27, 2023** **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

CONVENE

The meeting of the Colorado Office of Public Guardianship Board was convened by video conference via Zoom at 10:00 AM by Commission Chair Garcia.

A quorum of the Board was present.

Board Members Present

Chair Stephanie Garcia
Vice-Chair Brandon Fields
Patrick Thiessen
Jeffrey Bird
Chandra Matthews
Aisha Young

OPG Director

Sophia M. Alvarez

Others Present

Janelle Cantu, Deputy Director, Office of Public Guardianship
Angela Bullard, Office of Public Guardianship
Angelina Gonzales, Office of Public Guardianship
Erin McGavin, Office of Public Guardianship
Teresa Esquibel, Office of Public Guardianship
Mary Olguin, Office of Public Guardianship
Veronica Goujon, Office of Public Guardianship
America Paz Pastrana, Office of Public Guardianship
Robert Finke, First Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
Kirsten Brown, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

Public Attendance

Hani Raley, Executive Director, The ARC of Aurora

Participation was by video conference.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order. The meeting was recorded.

Chair Garcia introduced new board members and new office staff; they provided a brief background about themselves.

II. Approval of the August 23, 2023 Meeting minutes

Chair Garcia asked for comments or amendments to the August 23, 2023 Commission meeting minutes.

Board Member Thiessen **moved** to approve the August 23, 2023 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Board member Matthews **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

I. Director Report (Sophia M. Alvarez)

- a. **Introduction of new Board members: Jeffrey Bird, Chandra Matthews, Aisha Young**
- b. **Introduction of new COPG staff: Veronica Goujon, Ginger Geissinger, Mary Olguin**
- c. **FY24-25 Budget Request**

Director Alvarez's Director Report was distributed electronically along with other materials and discussed. Additional items discussed included, but were not limited to:

Director Alvarez provided the following updates:

- Director Alvarez has not received the finalized Budget Request for FY 24-25 and if received will provide it for review at next month's meeting.

- Case Management system update: There was a new medical consent category case note added based on the feedback from guardians and providers. This will track treatment approvals to indicate that consent was given for treatment.
- Regarding the MOU renegotiations with Judicial department, Director Alvarez met with Judicial Department attorneys and AG Janna Fischer. AG Janna Fischer assisted in drafting the MOU language based on the meeting. Director Alvarez asked AG Finke to provide an update.
 - i. AG Finke informed that AG Janna Fischer is out of the office, so he was unable to speak with her. AG Finke believes that the MOU was submitted before SCAO's legal department, however, he was not able to confirm. AG Finke will send an update as soon as he can possibly get it from AG Fischer.
- On 8.21.2023, Director Alvarez met with the Office of Administrative Services for Independent Agencies, (ASIA), the next Board meeting is scheduled for 10.04.2023 to discuss administrative items. Director Alvarez indicated that the job posting for the Executive Director of ASIA was included in the meeting materials which has a possible starting date of November 1st. To her knowledge, they have not received any applications yet.
- Human Resources updates:
 - i. Erin McGavin, Guardian, submitted her resignation and Director Alvarez thanked her for her service.
 - ii. Ginger Geissinger, Guardian, who just joined the office on September 18th determined that this was not a good fit for her and took a different position effective September 25th.
 - iii. An offer was made to another individual for 2nd Judicial District public guardian, but this person did not accept, and she took another job offer.
 - iv. There are three to four vacant 2nd Judicial District guardian positions to fill. Two of these were place holders for potential partnerships with area hospitals and for the Denver District Court. Funds were requested for these two positions at the beginning of the year in the event other funds were not available. It was determined to temporarily use the funding for these positions to fund the Staff Attorney position until the end of the year.
 - v. On 9.26.2023, we interviewed a strong candidate for a guardian position and is in the process of checking references. We are in the process of scheduling three more interviews.
 - vi. For the staff attorney position we received two applications, and we are in the process of scheduling interviews.
- A. Board Member Thiessen inquired about how many guardians are currently employed. Director Alvarez stated that there are 3 public guardians in the 2nd Judicial District and 2 guardians serving the other districts.

- B. Chair Garcia inquired about how many clients of the 84 clients are out of other counties. Director Alvarez informed that all are in Denver County except for one pending appointment from a different judicial district.
- C. Chair Garcia asked how many clients each of the guardians has in their caseload. Director Alvarez informed that about 20 clients each guardian and the Deputy director and Director each have 9.
- D. Director Alvarez invited AG Brown to introduce herself. AG Brown recently joined the AG's office. AG Brown provided a brief background about herself. Board Member Thiessen asked AG Brown which section she belonged. AG Brown indicated she is part of the Business and Licensing, Financial and Health Services same unit as AG Finke.
- Updates: The Attorney General's Office has been assisting our office with several matters:
 - i. Director Alvarez addressed Chair Garcia's question from last month's meeting regarding the board makeup and the 4th non-Attorney member that must be an individual who has not served directly in an advocacy role. Director Alvarez reached out to Pam Teaster regarding this issue. Pam Teaster responded saying that her understanding was that the board member was meant to be a regular member of the community that the board can educate about guardianship.
 - ii. It was determined that AG Finke and Director Alvarez will do an analysis about it and will come back to the board with some advice on that issue.
 - iii. Director Alvarez further informed that AG Alison Kyles assisted with updating the personnel policies. The policies were forwarded to Chair Garcia, and they are being reviewed. Director Alvarez asked AG Finke to include those policies for the Board to review at the November Board Orientation.
- A. Chair Garcia inquired about the budget request possibly not being ready by the next meeting and if the Board would have to approve the budget request. Director Alvarez informed that the Board usually does not approve the budget request. Director Alvarez informed that she will send the information out via email or, if necessary, will call for a special meeting.

III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Discussion of Critical Incident Reporting

- a. Specifically, the matters referred to Executive Session and Discussion of Critical Incident Reporting.**

Chair Garcia asked for motion to enter Executive Session to discuss the remaining items.

Board Member Thiessen **moved** to initiate Executive Session. Board Member Bird **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously with at least two-thirds of the membership present.

Chair Garcia informed that there is no other business to discuss after the Executive Session.

The Board exited open session and entered executive session on a separate line at 10:32 a.m.


At 10:57 a.m., the Board returned to Open Session.

V. Adjourn

Board Member Thiessen **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Bird **seconded** the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

ATTESTATION

As Board Chair attest that these minutes of the open public meeting of the Colorado Office of Public Guardianship Board substantially reflect the substance of the discussion and action taken related to the matters under the authority of the Board.



Stephanie Garcia, Chair

10.25.2023

Date



Brandon Fields, Vice-Chair

10.25.2023