
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 **October 25, 2023** **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

CONVENE

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

A quorum of the Board was present.

Board Members Present

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

OPG Director

Sophia M. Alvarez

Others Present

Janelle Cantu, Deputy Director, Office of Public Guardianship
Angelina Gonzales, 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
Kirsten Brown, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
Brianna Tancher, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

Public Attendance

Participation was by video conference.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Call to Order

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

II. Approval of the September 27, 2023 Meeting minutes

Chair Garcia asked for comments or amendments to the September 27, 2023 Board meeting minutes.

Board member Thiessen **moved** to approve the September 27, 2023 Board meeting minutes as presented. Board member Young **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

III. Chair Report (Chair Stephanie Garcia)

The Chair Report was distributed electronically and discussed. Additional items discussed included, but were not limited to:

- Chair Garcia informed that some of the board members have been contacted or are aware of the efforts to expand the Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship, and other Protective Arrangements Act (UGCOPAA) in Colorado. Chair Garcia informed that Director Alvarez has been invited to participate in the stakeholders' meetings.
- Chair Garcia stated that the Colorado Commission on Uniform State Laws is asking for stakeholder opinion to have the bill drafted. Chair Garcia stated that the way last year's bill was drafted and worded violated a person's confidentiality, and in her opinion, people were exposed to exploitation and abuse by allowing people to intervene without court approval.
- Board Member Thiessen informed that the Uniform Law Commission is a national organization that promotes uniform laws so that each state does not have to come up with its own set of laws. Board Member Thiessen further indicated that Colorado has had a guardianship law for quite some time and would be adapting a pretty extensive change into the current laws. Board Member Thiessen stated that this is not a bad thing for Colorado but will potentially come with growing pains.

- Chair Garcia informed that starting Monday she will be meeting with ARC of Colorado regarding this legislation. Chair Garcia is pleased Director Alvarez was invited to the table and hoping the ARC can have more than one seat at the table as well.

IV. Director Report (Sophia M. Alvarez)

a. FY24-25 Budget Request Update

b. COPG Board Orientation November 2, 2023, 10 AM to Noon

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 checked with the Budget Manager for a more finalized formal FY24-25 budget request, however, has not received an update.
 - i. Director Alvarez informed that often Judicial Budget Manager provides the Finalized Budget Request to her after it has been submitted to JBC and without her input.
 - ii. Director Alvarez further indicated that this is the reason ASIA was created by the legislature, because Independent Agencies are not receiving services from the Judicial Department in an appropriate manner.
 - iii. For the same reason, it was recommended to split OPG's budget request into two, one for the November 1, 2023, request and January 2024 request.
 - iv. Director Alvarez met with the JBC legislative staff, Alfredo Kemm, so he was aware that OPG's budget requests will be in two due to the lack of resources provided by the Judicial Department.
 - v. Director Alvarez and Alfredo Kemm discussed OPG's budget request and reviewed the fiscal note. Director Alvarez is requesting funding for training directors, staff attorney, and employee wellness program which were included in the fiscal note and approved; however, the money was pushed to OPG's expansion in 2025. Director Alvarez is simply requesting an acceleration on these requests, and Alfredo Kemm suggested that OPG should indicate to the legislature that these requests are critical and current needs which will help OPG's expansion.
- Director Alvarez informed that there weren't any updates on the last nominee for the Board.
- Director Alvarez will be meeting with the State Auditor on December 7th.

- Director Alvarez informed that Ms. Winegar is still waiting for final approval of the Compliance Training Courses for staff.
- On October 20th Director Alvarez attended and testified at a hearing where the UGCOPAA was presented. Director Alvarez has a standing invitation to the weekly meetings.
- On October 23rd Director Alvarez had a pre-briefing regarding the New York Delegation meeting.
 - i. The goal is to learn strategies that the New York City Mayor's Office has been putting together at the intersection of mental health and homelessness and the criminal justice system. The New York City Mayor's Office has been conducting Involuntary removals, M1 Holds, based on hygiene.
 - ii. Director Alvarez will be attending the New York delegation meeting with the New York City Mayor's Office, the New York University School of Law, New York State Hospital Mental Health team, New York Police Department, Manhattan District Attorney's Office, and New York Mental Health Court.
- A. Chair Garcia asked for any updates on the MOU with the Judicial department. Director Alvarez informed that there are no updates on the MOU renegotiations.
- B. Chair Garcia inquired about how soon ASIA will be up and running. Director Alvarez stated that by statute ASIA will be up and running by July 1, 2024.
- C. Director Alvarez informed that Alfredo Kemm suggested hiring a human resources coordinator and adding it to the supplemental Budget request in January.
- D. Vice-Chair Fields asked Director Alvarez to provide an overview of how OPG gets introduced as a potential guardian for homeless people. Director Alvarez informed that the referrals for homeless individuals primarily come from hospitals and some from the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless.
- E. Vice-Chair Fields inquired about how the hospital referrals are screened. Director Alvarez informed that the referrals are screened based on the information the hospitals provide, what steps have been taken, and depending on the situation the guardian will meet with the potential client to get more information. The OPG also requests additional information to screen referrals.

COPG Board Orientation Update

- Chair Garcia informed that the Board Orientation will be in person or via zoom.
- Director Alvarez provided the following updates:
 - i. Staff Assistant America Paz-Pastrana will send the formal notice and agenda by Friday, October 27th.

- ii. Director Alvarez is working with the Attorney General's office to prepare the Board Orientation Materials and they will be sent a day in advance.
- iii. The Board will be asked to RSVP if they will be attending in-person or via zoom.
- iv. Notice of the Board Orientation will be posted for the public also Friday, October 27th.

V. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VI. 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 Young **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously with at least two-thirds of the membership present.

The Board exited open session and entered executive session on a separate line at 10:33 a.m.

At 11:11 a.m., the Board returned to Open Session.

VII. Discussion of November and December Board meeting dates

The Board discussed various dates and agreed to move the November Board meeting to November 29, 2023 and the December Board meeting to December 20, 2023.

VIII. Adjourn

Board Member Thiessen **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Young **seconded** the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

ATTESTATION

As the 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

Date

Brandon Fields, Vice-Chair

Date

DRAFT