
Colorado Office of Public Guardianship

Director, Sophia M. Alvarez

Board Members

Brandon Fields, Chair
Aisha Young, Vice-Chair
Stephanie Garcia
Patrick Thiessen
Chandra Matthew
Roseanne Collison



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PUBLIC MEETING September 25, 2024 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 Board Chair Fields.

A quorum of the Board was present.

Board Members Present

Chair Brandon Fields
Stephanie Garcia
Patrick Thiessen
Chandra Matthews
Aisha Young
Roseanne Collison

OPG Director

Sophia M. Alvarez

Others Present

Janelle Cantu, Deputy Director, Office of Public Guardianship
Josh Murphy, Staff Attorney, Office of Public Guardianship
Mary Olguin, Office of Public Guardianship
Shelly DeLisi, Office of Public Guardianship
Lara Center, Office of Public Guardianship
America Paz-Pastrana, Office of Public Guardianship
Kirsten Grooms, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

Public Attendance

Jim Tatten

Participation was by video conference.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am. The meeting was recorded.

II. Approval of the July 24, 2024 Meeting minutes

Chair Fields asked for comments or amendments to the August 28, 2024 Board meeting minutes. Board Member Collison asked to correct spelling of her last name from Collision to Collison.

Board member Thiessen **moved** to approve the August 28, 2024 Board meeting minutes with amended. Board Member Young **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

III. Chair Report (Chair Brandon Fields)

Chair Fields informed that he and Director Alvarez had a regular meeting. Chair Fields stated that someone has applied for the Board Member vacancy through the Chief Justice Office.

IV. Director Report (Sophia M. Alvarez)

Director Alvarez's Director Report was distributed electronically along with other materials and discussed.

Director Alvarez provided the following updates:

- A. Director Alvarez informed that the budget is due on September 30th. Director Alvarez has been trying to meet with the JBC analyst Alfredo Kemm, but he has been out of town. Director Alvarez learned as of last Tuesday that there is a new JBC budget analyst, Scott Thompson, and is trying to schedule a meeting with Mr. Thompson before September 30th.
- B. Director Alvarez informed that if the budget analyst suggests moving forward with the \$1.2 million ask in the fiscal note and annualized it from there, then that probably that is the way they will go. Furthermore, the Legislative Liaison is trying to reach out to Representative Shannon Bird, the Chair of the JBC to get her take on it.
 - a. Board Member Garcia asked if the budget request includes expansion of hiring staff.
 - b. Director Alvarez answered yes and further explained that they are asking for staff based on what the office needs, what services that has not been given and services that are not going to get because ASIA is not up and running, yet. The 1.2 million budget request includes 10 FTE positions not including guardians, and part of the funding for the 10 FTE has already been appropriated. As for

- the budget request for the next year Director Alvarez is looking for five FTE positions and one contract position for the following: Community Engagement Coordinator on contract basis, Data Scientist, Grant Specialist, Human Resources Specialist, and a Billing and Accounting Specialist. The rest of the FTE positions will be coming later in addition to guardians.
- c. Chair Fields asked for a review of where the office is in the number of Guardians and where it may go in the next year. Director Alvarez answered by giving the following HR update.
- C. Director Alvarez informed that as of now the office has one Denver Guardian, she is making an offer to a second Denver Guardian and will still need another Denver guardian. Currently, the office has one Colorado Mental Health Institutes guardian and on 9.24.2024 Director Alvarez made an offer to a second Colorado Mental Health Institutes Guardian. In addition, there is one guardian for the 7th Judicial District and another for the 16th Judicial District and Case management aid. The office has appropriated funds for one to two guardians and a third that could be used for case management aid.
- a. Chair Fields expressed concern in terms of the mission and the public that the office not only be adding administrative positions and not guardians.
 - b. Director Alvarez answered by saying that the office still in compliance with its bill and statute. The bill does not specify adding guardians at a certain point in time and when to expand to specific judicial districts. The bill states that the office needs to begin expansion by 2025 and be in all judicial districts by 2030. From what the legislative liaison has heard from the Legislature she does not see getting push back for the office being administration heavy.
 - c. Chair Fields asked if when all the administrative positions are filled, would the office be adding more guardians and start taking more clients.
 - d. Director Alvarez informed that this year alone the office will need a Workforce Development Manager to revamp training, work on recruitment and retention. In addition, the office needs all the guardian positions filled, so Director Alvarez and Deputy Director Cantu can stop covering cases in Denver and start focusing on their own duties. Once this occurs, the Director will start focusing on expanding the office.
 - e. Chair Fields asked to keep the Board informed in terms of the expansion of guardians.
 - f. Board Member Collison stated that she understands the Chair's concern about the ability to continue to honor the office mission, but she agrees that there must be a foundation to effectively serve the public and clientele.
- D. Regarding ASIA, the executive director started on September 16th, her name is Melissa Jamieson. Director Alvarez has a meeting scheduled for October 8th with the Executive Director to discuss OPG's needs.
- E. There is a meeting scheduled with Chief Justice Monica Marquez on October 2nd. Director Alvarez, Chair Fields, Attorney General's office, and Judicial Department will be participating in the meeting.
- F. Director Alvarez will be presenting at the Colorado Elder Justice Summit on November 6th at the CU Anschutz medial campus.
- a. Vice-Chair Young asked for more information about the presentation.
- G. Board Member Garcia asked for an update on the alternative guardianship legislation that was discussed last month.

- a. Director Alvarez informed that the Colorado Guardianship Association had a meeting on September 13th and the following was discussed:
 - i. The ARC is no longer going to run the legislation and Disability Law Colorado will be running the legislation.
 - ii. Director Alvarez asked the legislative liaison to reach out to Disability Law Colorado's legislative liaison, and she has a meeting with him next week.
 - iii. She needs to figure out if they are going to run an alternative legislation or oppose UGCOPPA.
 - iv. Also need to find out if Disability Law Colorado is going to introduce the last amended version or what they are planning to propose the original.
 - v. The Colorado Bar Association is going to take a neutral position and not try to do anything further.
 - b. Board Member Garcia informed that the ARC chapters met and determined that UGCOPPA was not the right vehicle to get changes they wanted in guardianship.
- H. Board Member Collison acknowledged Guardian Mary Olguin's one year anniversary and thanked her for her work.

V. Public Comment

Chair Fields asked for public comment and there was none.

VI. Discussion of Public Statements by Board Members

- a. **Specifically, the matters referred to Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding public responses to be made by the Board and Office.**

VII. Discussion of Director Performance Evaluation

- a. **Specifically, the matters referred to Executive Session from Open Session in consideration of an employee matter, which the employee has requested to be discussed in Executive Session.**

VIII. Discussion of Critical Incident Reporting

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

IX. Discussion of Memo from Attorney General's Office

- a. **Specifically, the matters referred to Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding the Office's duty to protect a client's privacy at their residency.**

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

Board Member Young **moved** to initiate Executive Session. Board Member Garcia **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 10:29 a.m.

At 12:04 p.m., the Board returned to Open Session.

X. Adjourn

Chair Fields **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Garcia **seconded** the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.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.

Brandon Fields, Chair

Date

Aisha Young, Vice-Chair

Date