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# Colorado Office of Public Guardianship

**Director,** Sophia M. Alvarez

**Commissioners**

Deb Bennett-Woods, Chair  
Stephanie Garcia, Vice-Chair  
Spencer Crona  
Patrick Thiessen



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## **PUBLIC MEETING** **October 26, 2022** **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

### **CONVENE**

The meeting of the Colorado Office of Public Guardianship Commission was convened by video conference via Zoom at 10:03 AM by Commission Chair Bennett-Woods.

A quorum of the Commission was present.

### **Commission Members Present**

Chair Deb Bennett-Woods  
Vice-Chair Stephanie Garcia  
Spencer Crona  
Patrick Thiessen

### **OPG Director**

Sophia M. Alvarez

### **Others Present**

Janelle Cantu, Deputy Director, Office of Public Guardianship  
Rhonda Sanchez, Office of Public Guardianship  
Cynthia Wells, Office of Public Guardianship  
Camille Price, Office of Public Guardianship  
Loretta Vigil, Office of Public Guardianship  
Nancy Bowden, Office of Public Guardianship  
Teresa Esquibel, Office of Public Guardianship  
America Paz Pastrana, Office of Public Guardianship  
Grant Yoder, Office of Public Guardianship  
Robert Finke, General Counsel, Office of the Attorney General

### **Public Attendance**

No 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 August 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes and September 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Crona **moved** to approve the August 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Garcia **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

Commissioner Crona **moved** to approve the September 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Garcia **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

### **III. Chair Report (Deb Bennett-Woods)**

Chair Bennett-Woods' Chair Report, was distributed electronically and discussed.

- A. Chair Bennet-Woods informed that she participated in a meeting with Director Alvarez, Grant Yoder Research Assistant, and Dr. Myers, the independent researcher that is producing the qualitative study. Dr. Myers will provide a formal report which will be incorporated into the final report.
- B. Chair Bennett-Woods states that she has been reviewing sources related to the final recommendations, working on the draft about board composition and assisting Director Alvarez on outline of the bill that will be provided to the drafter.

### **IV. Director Report (Sophia M. Alvarez)**

Director Alvarez's October 26, 2022, Director Report was distributed electronically along with other materials and discussed. Additional items discussed included, but were not limited to:

- A. Director Alvarez introduced new staff hired for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District, Loretta Vigil, Public Guardian; Nancy Bowden, Public Guardian and Teresa

Esquibel, Case Management Aid. Each of them provided a brief background about themselves.

- B. Director Alvarez updated the commission regarding the new open records request related to client deaths. Director Alvarez consulted with AG Finke and is completing the request.
- C. Director Alvarez informed that she attended the Annual National Guardianship Association Conference and learn about new resources related to State Court Data and National Data information that will be beneficial for the report to the General Assembly.
- D. Director Alvarez learned about a study pertaining to the Department of Justice by Dr. Pamela Teaster, a public guardianship researcher, which states that most states do not track much data when it comes to guardianship.
- E. Director Alvarez informed that Doctor Myers will provide her final report by the end of the week.
- F. Vice-Chair Garcia asked for clarification on the total number of referrals, since Pueblo County was not included in this month's numbers. Director Alvarez informed that the total numbers of referral are for the entire year, and they should include Pueblo County and she will make corrections for the next report.
- G. Chair Bennett-Woods inquired about ongoing challenges in the recruitment process for the additional districts, 7<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Director Alvarez informed that the job announcement for Public Guardian in the 16<sup>th</sup> district was distributed throughout additional sources and that is too early to tell if this is going to be an ongoing challenge.
- H. Chair Bennett-Woods informed that Chief Justice's office is still recruiting for the additional commissioner. Director Alvarez further informed that the potential candidates' concern is the time commitment to the commission at this point in time.
- I. Chair Bennett-Woods stated that is necessary to schedule a Commission Working session to discuss the vision piece that will address other opportunities, barriers and challenges moving forward for the office roll out.
- J. Commissioner Crona asked if the recommendations need to be completed before appearing in front the JBC. Chair Bennett-Woods stated that the recommendations will appear in a fiscal note attached to the bill.
- K. Vice- Chair Garcia inquired if the bill will include rules overseeing the board. AG Finke informed that it would depend on the statutory language that is in the final ACT.

- V. **Final Report Status (Grant Yoder, Deb Bennett-Woods, and Sophia M. Alvarez)**  
a. **Specifically, the matters referred to Executive Session from Open Session, and Discussion of Confidential Sections of the Final Report**

**Commission moved into Executive Session**

Chair Bennett-Woods asked for a motion to enter into executive session for Discussion of Confidential Sections of the Final Report.

Commissioner Crona **moved** to initiate executive session. Vice-Chair Garcia **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously with at least two-thirds of the membership present. The Commission exited open session and entered executive session on a separate line at 10:40 a.m.

At 11:57 a.m., the Commission returned to open session.

- VI. **Discussion of November and December Commission Meeting Schedule**

The Commission agreed to move the November 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting to November 16<sup>th</sup>, and to move the December 28<sup>th</sup> to December 21<sup>st</sup>.

Chair Bennett-Woods informed that a Commission Special Meeting needs to be scheduled for discussion of final report in late November/early December and asked the commissioners to provide the availability when prompted.

Chair Bennett-Woods informed the Commissioners that if they have any comments and feedback related to the Final Report to share the information with Director Alvarez.

- VII. **Public Comment**

No public Comment.

- VIII. **Adjourn**

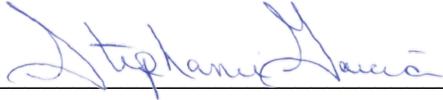
Vice-Chair Garcia **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Crona **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

**ATTESTATION**

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

  
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Deb Bennett-Woods, Chair

11.16.2022  
Date

  
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Stephanie Garcia, Vice-Chair

11.16.2022  
Date