
Colorado Office of Public Guardianship

Director, Sophia M. Alvarez

Commissioners

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



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PUBLIC MEETING **August 23, 2023** **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

CONVENE

The meeting of the Colorado Office of Public Guardianship Commission was convened by video conference via Zoom at 10:02 AM by Commission Chair Garcia.

A quorum of the Commission was present.

Commission Members Present

Chair Stephanie Garcia
Deb Bennett-Woods
Spencer Crona
Patrick Thiessen

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
America Paz Pastrana, Office of Public Guardianship
Robert Finke, First Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
Chandra Matthews, Future Board Member

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.

II. Approval of the July 23, 2023 Meeting minutes

Chair Garcia asked for comments or amendments to the July 26, 2023 Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Crona **moved** to approve the July 26, 2023 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Thissen **seconded** the motion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

III. Director Report (Sophia M. Alvarez)

A. Recognition of Deb Bennett Woods and Spencer Crona

Chair Garcia thanked Commissioner Crona and Commissioner Bennett-Woods for their service to the Office of Public Guardianship.

B. Introduction of Jeffrey Bird, Chandra Matthews, Aisha Young

Chair Garcia officially welcomed Chandra Matthews as soon to be Board member.

Director Report update

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:

- Human Resources updates:
 - i. Cynthia Wells, Denver Guardian will return from medical leave on Monday 8.28.2023.
 - ii. Offers were made to a 2nd Judicial District Guardian and a 16th Judicial District Guardian. Each has three days to accept the offer.
 - iii. We have scheduled interviews with two more candidates.
 - iv. The Staff Assistant is in the process of obtaining more information from additional applicants.

- The website has been updated with information about the office being permanent and with suggestions made by Vice-Chair Fields.
- A. Chair Garcia stated that she was pleased to see that there was a workforce position development which is going to be of value to the office and create more professional opportunities for the guardians.
 - B. Commissioner Bennett-Woods inquired about the referrals that are currently on the hold status list and if the list will clear once the new hires start taking cases. Director Alvarez informed that we should be able to clear the hold list while ensuring that we do not go over caseload capacity.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Updates from the Attorney General's Office

a. Orientation of new Board members

- A. The Commission discussed orientation of Board members being part of a retreat or something independent.
- B. AG Finke informed that the orientation can be done whenever and that he also has materials prepared but they need to be updated with new statutory references. AG Finke further explained that the orientation can be done during the retreat process, during open or closed session at the first meeting, or whenever.
- C. Chair Garcia stated that all Commissioners should participate in the retreat because everyone needs to get up to date with the new policies and procedures.
- D. AG Finke stated that the orientation can be one of the first items of discussion during the retreat along with the role of the Board, the powers of the Board, issues relating to open meetings law, CORA and things applicable to the new Board. However, the Bylaws should not be discussed until the new Board enacts them.
- E. Chair Garcia stated that somewhat of a pathway to the expansion, the steps that need to follow, what the staffing levels are going to look like, and policies need to be reviewed and revised.
- F. Director Alvarez suggested having an introductory orientation session and then scheduling a more in depth longer working session.
- G. It was decided that a Doodle poll would be sent out to schedule a shorter Board orientation session.

b. Review and Discussion of Board Polices and Records, Maintenance, and Retention

- A. Chair Garcia asked AG Finke if they got any further on the draft of the board policies and records, maintenance, and retention.
- B. AG Finke stated that the Commission has a number of policies that were enacted but need to be re-enacted by the new Board.
- C. Chair Garcia asked if is going to be part of the working session agenda.
- D. AG Finke suggested having three components to that initial session the training, the bylaws, and the policies.
- E. Commissioner Bennett-Woods asked about further clarification of the records retention policy and what is required of the outgoing chair to transfer to the incoming chair.
- F. AG Finke stated that Director Alvarez is the custodian of records for the agency except for the Director's personnel file which is maintained by the Attorney General's office.
- G. Commissioner Crona inquired about the policy regarding meeting notes from commissioners and research documents.
- H. AG Finke stated that the notes and records can be turned over to the agency and maintained by Director Alvarez.
- I. Commissioner Bennett-Woods stated that the policy does not specify what records need to be transferred.
- J. AG Finke informed if Director Alvarez has a copy of the records they don't need to be turned in, but anything else needs to be transferred to Director Alvarez.

c. Review and Discussion of Draft of Board Bylaws

- A. Chair Garcia asked for clarification and whether there is a typo on the definition of the non-attorney members where states that "one member who has not served directly in an advocacy role for at-risk adults," because most people in this field have background in the advocacy of at-risk adults.
- B. Director Alvarez informed that Chair Garcia brought it to her attention at their last meeting. Director Alvarez checked the statute, does not know if it is a typo and has reached out to the Legislative Liaison to help her review the legislative history on this, but has not heard back.
- C. Commissioner Bennett-Woods believes that this was part of one of the amendments and suggested looking into the legislative history which would be listed on the bill's webpage.
- D. Chair Garcia asked Director Alvarez to also inquire about the intent of that amendment.

d. Specifically, the matters referred to Executive Session and Discussion of Memorandum Regarding a Staff Attorney

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.

Commissioner Bennett-Woods **moved** to initiate Executive Session. Commissioner Thiessen **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 Executive Session.

The Commission exited open session and entered executive session on a separate line at 10:40 a.m.

At 11:10 a.m., the Commission returned to open session.

VI. Adjourn

Commissioner Bennett-Woods **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Crona **seconded** the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

ATTESTATION

As Commission Chair 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.

Stephanie Garcia, Chair

Date

Brandon Fields, Vice-Chair

Date