

VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

Tuesday, September 18, 2007

10:00 a.m.

Blue Ridge Board Room
The Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center
110 Shenandoah Avenue
Roanoke, Virginia

Attending: Delegates John S. Reid, Mamye E. BaCote, Robert H. Brink, William H. Fralin, Jr.; Senator Harry B. Blevins; and citizen member Marvin Wagner

Absent: Delegates Mark L. Cole and Robert Tata; Senators R. Edward Houck and Yvonne B. Miller; and citizen members Vanessa Cardenas and Glen Francis

Staff Attending: Amy M. Atkinson, Joyce Garner, Leah Hamaker, and Cordell Hairston

AGENDA

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Delegate John S. Reid, Chair

After calling the meeting to order at 10:05, Delegate Reid extended the Commission's appreciation to staff for its leadership and organization of a successful three-day conference.

The Commission will meet two more times before the 2008 General Assembly Session: November 20 and December 5. Delegate Reid asked whether the Commission was going to have legislation for the 2008 General Assembly Session.

In response, Ms. Atkinson indicated that primary legislative action pending is for the Office of a Children's Services Ombudsman study. The Commission will hear a staff presentation of findings and recommendations at the November 20 and December 5 meetings and, following discussion, approve recommendations for the study. The pre-filing deadline for legislation is 5 p.m. December 5 and any actions resulting in legislation will require Commission staff to meet with the Division of Legislative Services staff that afternoon. In addition, it is likely that the Commission will elect its new chairman at either the November or December meeting.

II. Systems of Care & Evidence-Based Practices Conference Remarks

Amy M. Atkinson, Executive Director

The Commission on Youth has a history of attention to child mental health issues since 2000. The Systems of Care & Evidence-based Treatments Conference is indicative of the growing demand throughout Virginia localities for information. The conference sold out in July. In addition to the 550 registrants, there was still – as of the start of the conference – a waiting list of interested persons. The Tuesday edition of the ROANOKE TIMES featured an op-ed piece written by First Lady Anne Holton promoting FACES and the conference. Members cited the partnership of the First Lady and the executive and legislative branches as important to insuring that Virginia's children are well-served.

Ms. Atkinson thanked the Commission members for their support of this venture, as well as exhibitors and sponsors which had lent financial support.

Senator Blevins asked what feedback Commission staff was getting from vendors. Ms. Atkinson expressed her pleasure at the very positive comments she was getting from vendors, many of whom were also attending conference sessions.

Delegate Brink thanked Marvin Wagner for his very active participation as a citizen member of the Commission and commended him for his presentations at the conference.

III. Other Business & Adjournment

Members opted to reopen the discussion of the Office of an Ombudsman study and what aspects of the issue were most relevant to any legislative proposals. Members discussed in particular whether it would be appropriate to attempt to secure funding for an initiative for a budget year when lower revenues were forecast. The consensus was that the Commission should, on principle, move forward with recommendations, regardless of the present financial forecast.

There are numerous details to be addressed within the concept of an Ombudsman Office, including which services might receive oversight and what form the child advocacy might take. Staff was asked to consider using the Joint Commission on Health Care's model for presenting options within recommendations and to provide corresponding dollar estimates.

Commission staff has looked at the myriad of issues surrounding an Office and Commission members expressed their intention to entertain recommendations and hone these as part of their deliberation at the November and December meetings. Members recommended that there not be public comment at these meetings, rather persons having comments make these in Session committee meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

9/25/07