



**foster
parents**
British Columbia
BCFFPA

**Board of Directors
April 2-3, 2020
Conference Calls
(in lieu of Richmond meeting)**

In Attendance

Marcy Perron, President
Julie Holmlund, Treasurer
Kevin Daniel, Secretary
Jeanette Dyer, Coast Fraser Delegate
Raquel Lesieur, Interior Delegate
Jayne Wilson, Executive Director
Ronda Sweeney, Office Manager
Michelle Relevante, Communications Coord.

Guests

Cory Heavener, Provincial Director of Child Welfare

Rena Bacy, Director of Adoption/ED of Adoption and Permanency Branch

Karen Blackman, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Delivery

A quorum being present, the meeting commenced at 6:32 p.m.

***M/S/C (Moved/Seconded/Carried)**

ACTION	DETAIL	MOTION or ACTION
1. Minutes of Last Meeting	Review of Minutes of February 25, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting	MOTION to accept the Minutes of February 25 th , 2020 meeting. M/S/C Jeanette/Julie
2. Agenda	Added additional topics to the agenda.	
3. President's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meetings arranged at this time • Requests for interviews from CBC and The Tyee • Minister called the office – wasn't able to attend but Minister spoke to ED • Attended call with new foster parents through PRIDE • MCFD is not changing contracts for the time being (COVID-19 considerations) 	
4. Staff Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are all adapting to working remotely and it's going well • Submitting a grant application for cell phones. With office 365, we can use our cell phones for work purposes and most of us only have our own cells. • Staffing for 2020-2021: Tanya is assisting with Solutions month-to-month; there will be no additional administrative assistance; no fundraising or outreach function. Will discuss the administrative assistance needs further after the social distancing/pandemic situation lifts. • 2020-2021 contract: a request for additional funding has been submitted. 3 new video topics have been requested. 	
5. Treasurer's Report	Everything is in order. Question regarding the BC Foster Basics video producer connection. One more invoice to pay for the project.	MOTION to approve the financial statements as presented. M/S/C Kevin/Raquel
6. Ongoing Business	The transition to cloud services and storage was quick and fairly efficient. In the future we will plan for a migration of all BCFPPA archives to cloud storage as well. This will be an	

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	<p>investment of time as it may take several months of document scanning.</p> <p>The Board has voted to change the AGM format this year to online with the possibility of meeting together in Richmond for the AGM meeting and maybe a low-key reception afterward.</p> <p>Will need to set up a conference call for AGM planning with this new format and online learning topics. Michael Blatchford has offered to provide assistance if necessary.</p>	
7. New Business	<p><i>Gap in Services Between MCFD and CLBC</i> CLBC doesn't get involved with youth until they turn 19 and MCFD's services stop at 19. Pre-planning for this transition is often non-existent. Some young people receive zero service and end up somewhere that isn't in their best interests. Social workers should be involved in this process when the youth is as young as 16.</p> <p>Youth that are burdened with developmental issues aren't able to navigate the process on their own. BCFFPA can advocate for CLBC to become involved earlier and MCFD could plan transition out rather than just ceasing services at 19. Perhaps seek a CLBC transition liaison for foster parents of special needs youth who are aging out.</p> <p>The process should be less complicated to find the services young people need. Discussion.</p> <p><i>In Camera Topic:</i> gifts for former Vice President and Vancouver Island Delegate in response to texts received.</p> <p>Outstanding mileage and other expenses need to be submitted for year end accounting.</p> <p><i>Tricities Branch Closed</i> J. Chapman submitted the final Motion to close the Branch (it has been inactive in our files for a few years). A cheque for the remaining membership funds was delivered to BCFFPA with a Motion that the funds be added to the Camps for Kids bursary fund. Discussion regarding the use of the funds.</p>	<p>MOTION to apply returned membership funds to general revenue after consideration and discussion by Board of Directors. M/S/C Marcy/Jeanette</p>
8. Communications Plan	<p><i>Communications Plan – Michelle Relevante</i> Michelle provided a draft of the communications plan for critique. Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan should be Board directed; communications should be in foster parent language • 7 Strategies 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Branding ○ Building resource toolkit ○ Implement grassroots engagement ○ Richer digital presence ○ Good news platforms ○ Maintain partnership approach ○ Issues management ● Seeking feedback from Board members <p>Discussion about how to get attention of those who foster in isolation. Discussion regarding mentorship and partnering with other organizations.</p> <p>Secure a Zoom licence.</p> <p>Discussion about crisis management. We need to be the calm presence in the room so that people know their concerns are valid.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 8:30 pm.</p>	<p>ACTION Secure a Zoom licence.</p>
<p>9. Solutions Program Update</p>	<p>Meeting began 9:30 am. <i>(Guests: Cory Heavener, Rena Bacy, Karen Blackman)</i></p> <p>Since September 2018 we have had 162 support cases. Some files are open for long periods of time due to length of investigations and communications.</p> <p>Some files are referred to agencies and some are just brief service interactions. Keeping up on all cases with current staff numbers is challenging. Lots of emotional support required due to the COVID crisis. Foster parents are needing to talk to other adults.</p> <p>Issues are being resolved in partnership with regional MCFD staff. Community meetings are in the planning stages though are now delayed due to the COVID-19 situation.</p> <p>Have expanded the contractors group to meet quarterly. MCFD and DAA representatives are included as well and are using a collaborative approach.</p> <p>Questions for MCFD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adoption of non-Indigenous children – has anything changed in the process? Some foster parents are being told that they aren't considered for permanency. ● Indigenous adoptions – plans were all in place but more than a year later there is still no permanency. ● Quality Assurance and Adoption Branch – not responding to foster parents about their requests or following up on case questions. 	<p>ACTION Send specifics of the cases to Rena.</p> <p>ACTION Cory will follow up on the Quality Assurance response.</p>

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	<p>Policy/Rights working group is going really well. Looking at how to strengthen policy wording in terms of the foster parent rights. Currently looking at clauses in the Guardianship Policy (Chapter 5).</p> <p>Cory requested more statistical breakdowns by SDA/DAA; what were the outcomes. Identify where the systemic issues are right now? Why have calls increased? Is it familiarity with the program or are there more calls from certain areas?</p> <p>Rena said there have been no changes in the adoption process for non-Indigenous children but the focus is to work with family connections. This could be impacting these foster placements who has plans to adopt. The Federal Legislation changed the process of permanency planning with Indigenous children – even those who were far along in the adoption process already.</p> <p>All acknowledged that it would be very helpful if the regional agencies would send their support numbers and statistics to BCFFPA to get a thorough picture of the whole province’s needs for support. We’ve asked the agencies but they have never sent the information. Cory mentioned that Provincial Office may be able to provide their numbers for protocols and investigations as well.</p> <p>Discussed the contractors/partnership meetings. Draft Terms of Reference has been sent out to all.</p> <p>MCFD Provincial Office Update: Pandemic is 24/7 focus. Emergency Ministry Operations Centre (MOC) is managing all response and planning including stakeholder engagement. All processes being put in place. Practice planning in process to ensure children and families are receiving the services they need.</p> <p>Ongoing daily meetings. The recent practice bulletin is an example of the type of work they’re doing. Have made changes to ensure that youth who were about to age out during this pandemic are staying in their placements. Other structures put in place to ensure youth on AYA program are secure.</p> <p>A number of MCFD staff have moved over to the MOC during the pandemic.</p> <p>Note from the President – foster parents are now expected to homeschool. They are stressed and don’t necessarily have computers available for online learning.</p>	<p>ACTION Send Rena draft Terms of Reference.</p>

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10. Regional Reports	<p><i>Coast Fraser Region</i> Mission MCFD has been reaching out to families to discuss school equipment needs for homeschooling during the pandemic. Foster parents have filled out emergency response plans. Will be taking care of children as they ordinarily would. Expired criminal checks have been processed.</p> <p>Questions to MCFD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What financial assistance is available to foster parents to supplement income that's been lost? • What is in place to protect foster parents from new placements who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19? • If foster parents are considered essential service, why aren't they eligible for EI or other financial assistance? <p><i>Interior Regional</i> DAA is providing additional funding for computer for homeschooling. Foster parents are experiencing problems attending appointments without relief available. Currently there are no respite options but breaks are still needed. Foster parents in the region are upset about BCFFPA's AGM and conference being hosted online as they use the event for self-care.</p> <p>MCFD will check into the use of the \$300 boost for the federal child benefit.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 11:30 a.m.</p>	
11. Ongoing Business	<p><i>Honorary Award Presentation This Year</i> Give the recipient the option to attend or to push the presentation to next year.</p> <p><i>Honorary Awards Wording for Policy</i> As advised by legal counsel through the Bylaws review and rewrite process, the presentations of honorary awards belong in policy documents rather than bylaws. Policy wording has been presented to the Board for discussion and adoption.</p> <p><i>Snow Day and Public Health Required Office Closures</i> Policy wording regarding closing the office for snow days and to follow public health office recommendations has been presented to the Board for discussion and adoption.</p> <p>Secretary suggested that we create a list of policies and procedures for staff and Board to sign for that they've read annually.</p>	<p>ACTION ask the award recipient if he'd like to receive the award this year or in 2021 in Kamloops.</p> <p>MOTION to place wording regarding BCFFPA's honorary awards in the Policies and Procedures document. M/S/C Julie/Kevin</p> <p>MOTION to place wording regarding office closures for snow days and to follow public health office recommendations in the Policies and Procedures document. M/S/C Jeanette/Raquel (snow days) M/S/C Julie/Jeanette (mandated closures)</p>

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	<p><i>Vice President Role as “Director of Personnel”</i> ED provided a brief history of the VP role and how the function as “Director of Personnel” has worked past and present; successfully and with some significant challenges.</p> <p>Treasurer suggested that a “liaison” title is more appropriate to the function of the role. Discussion about: individual Board roles, a go-to on the Board who can assist with staffing challenges when necessary, and who has ultimate authority over the staff team. The VP is a team member but does not have authority over the staff. Will maintain consistent contact with staff team with weekly or biweekly check-ins.</p> <p><i>Board Position Elections 2020</i> The President and Secretary roles will be posted for election for this year’s AGM. Discussion about eligibility for each position. Board executive roles should be filled by current Board members if at all possible. The call will go out for nominations in June.</p> <p><i>Non-AGM Elections – Regional Delegates</i> The call went out to all members (current as of January 31st, 2020) for nominations for the Island and North delegate roles in February. Only one nomination from the Island was received. The Treasurer had a discussion with the nominee to assess suitability for the position. The individual had no current knowledge of BCFFPA’s activities, goals or communications and the Board chose not to pursue the nomination. No nomination was received from the North.</p>	<p>MOTION to use the wording “Staff Liaison” for the Vice President’s staff connection in policy moving forward. M/S/C Jeanette/Julie</p>
12. New Business	<p><i>Foster Parent Emotional Support During COVID-19</i> The Solutions program staff are receiving calls for emotional support due to pressure on foster parents during the pandemic. This is a burden on staff who are trying to help those with investigations and other concerns.</p> <p>BCFFPA Board members will be available to assist with the peer support for other foster parents if required.</p> <p>Perhaps host a recruitment Zoom meeting with current members on the Island and in the North.</p>	<p>ACTION the Solutions staff team can forward emotional support calls through to Board members.</p> <p>ACTION coordinate a Zoom meeting for current members on the Island and in the North for the purpose of Board recruitment.</p>
13. Next Meeting	Next meeting May 19 th , 2020 via conference call.	
	Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.	