

District IV Citizen Review Panel
707 N. Armstrong Pl, Boise, ID 83704
Tuesday, January 5th, 2021
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

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Meeting Minutes

In attendance

Members: Allison Berkson, Brian McCauley, Nicole Noltensmeyer, Kym Nilsen, Shannon McCarthy, Britney Journee. Darcie Bobrowski is absent.

Staff: Misty Myatt (IDHW) Laura Smith and Courtney Boyce (CDH)

Guests: Officer David Gomez (Boise County), Melissa Mezo (TRHS, previous CRP member), Darci Anderson (Family Advocates), Janet Lawler (Ada County Sheriff's Office)

Call Meeting to Order

At 4:00 Brian McCauley, the District IV Citizen Review Panel Chair called the meeting to order. Attendance reviewed and quorum established.

Motion: Kym motioned to approve the December 1, 2020 meeting minutes. Brian seconded. None opposed. The motion passes.

Motion: Brian motioned to approve the December 30, 2020 meeting minutes. Britney seconded. None opposed. The motion passes.

Motion: Brian motioned to amend the agenda to remove the 'CRP Vacancy Applicant Vote' agenda item, replace with 'Case Lists' item, and approve the agenda with amendments. Shannon seconded. None opposed. The motion passes. The agenda was amended as an item was addressed in the previous meeting, with recent e-mail communications from IDHW indicating the need to address case review lists in the meeting.

Discussion with Officer Gomez

At 4:07, Brian transitioned into this portion of the agenda and encouraged Officer Gomez to introduce himself and share his history. Officer Gomez shared that he is a school resource officer, and has been for many years in different places. He discussed that he is a part of the Boise Basin School District, and covers Garden Valley and Horseshoe Bend, in addition to Boise County. Officer Gomez shares that he runs a Facebook SRO page, which has assisted him in providing raw, transparent information and resources to parents, which includes information on such topics like technology predation to children and youth and parenting best practices. Officer Gomez discussed his role as a key support to the community, through his

relationship building with parents and their families. He shared that he and his wife take in high-risk children, and assist foster parents with problems and issues that may arise.

Officer Gomez shared that he was previously a SRO in Meridian, and transitioned to Boise County about a year and a half ago. He said that during that time he found that what he has been doing in Boise County is vastly different, in "what works and what doesn't work." He provided the example that there were a lot of healthcare resources in Meriden, versus Idaho City which has a clinic every Wednesday, and limited counseling services. He shared that a greater portion of the population is poor, with no or limited technology or internet access, in addition to other resources such as gas, transportation, water, electricity, or comprehensive housing. He shares strategies that the community has done to accommodate the needs of its individuals in need, such as having showers available for students on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the week. This is done to make sure people can shower, because in the winter time the water supply to places can freeze, because in the summertime or spring they can utilize other water supplies such as lakes and streams. They also have food boxes that get dispensed on Fridays. Officer Gomez discussed the standards of housing that are different in Boise County in comparison to other places. He shared that some families will have pallet shacks, motorhomes, RVs, with large congregations in small spaces. He shared that pallet shacks are 200 sq ft sheds from Home Depot that are often used, as it does not require a permit to build. He said that they have an endless supply of heat, through wood, as most people will chop their own wood and then use a potbelly wood burning stove. He said that the conditions that people are living in are rough circumstances and that for students it can be difficult to learn as they are in survival mode.

Officer Gomez shared that of 300 students, that 40 of them have some type of kinship placement, with family members, friends, or informal placement arrangements. He also shared that half of them are at the poverty level or below. He shared more about the unique circumstances that residents in rural communities face, where there is lots of substance use, limited to no accountability, and that being rural makes it difficult to keep track of kids. He states he is using community connections to track those placements as they are not official. He also shared that there are limited role models, lacking in diversity, and lack of mental health services. He shared that the community has limited service contracts for behavioral health that are nearly always full with providers that are not able to establish long term relationships. He shared that there are limitations with this form of service delivery as well, as a lot of parents need support as well. He shared that some places do have telehealth, but it is not widely available due to no internet, they may not be trusting of the computer given privacy concerns, and they need increased accessibility through weekend and after school hours. They have chronic issues with childcare and transportation in the community, and provided the example that during the winter kids can be snowed in for weeks, and may only be accessible by four-wheeler. He also shared that they don't have services in some essential areas, such as a place to get mail, they can't afford to get PO boxes and those lack of resources minimize their ability to get welfare checks and other services, such as disability.

Janet Lawler shared that most of the kids he is talking about would be considered homeless under the McKinney Vento Act. There are some possible resources there including access funding through the McKinney Vento Act for lunch.

Officer Gomez shared an example of what works, in that a parenting class provided free vouchers for childcare as an incentive to participate. He said that this was useful for families and communities and this would also be helpful for counseling. He shared that they had an employee that was essential to the connections of community, in that they loved the kids and their families, coordinated clothing/food/school supplies, and their essential function was to be the kid's advocate and advocate for the family. He shared that this process built trust in families and connecting them to trusted resources and individuals. He discussed that their Community School Model is part-time, and would be great to be full-time and have that point of ongoing, trusted connections and advocacy. Officer Gomez shared there is a local Christian church that provides services and meals to families on Wednesday, with the meeting targeting children and families. Kym asked if Young Life was in the community, as they help with being mentors, going where the

kids are and reducing barriers to accessing support. Officer Gomez shared that Young Life is not present in the community.

Officer Gomez shared another success as they started an activity bus that goes to Boise County rural areas in the evening, around 3+ a week. Officer Gomez said that this was helpful for after school homework programs and sports. He also stated that funding is a known issue that includes gas, bus driver, and maintenance. Placerville/Centerville, and Clear Creek are three covered areas. A Panel member asked about schooling and what arrangement their school district was in. Officer Gomez discussed they are on site 4-days a week, with 1 day a week remote learning.

Brian discussed that some of the conditions that Officer Gomez described may warrant a safety referral to the department based on housing conditions. Brian asked about what happens in abuse, serious neglect, safety concerns and how does the community handle that and does Officer Gomez get involved? Officer Gomez reported that he gets involved in everything. Officer Gomez said that we don't have neighbors to watch out for them as they are geographically distanced, but that most people know someone who knows someone. They have different standards for housing there as well (ex. No electricity or running water, but a roof). Some of the kids have unique skills that help them fend for themselves, including driving four-wheels, hunting etc.

A Panel member asked if there are any needs for kids that the Department could help support better, if there was better infrastructure, or does the community not want intrusion or oversight? Officer Gomez responded that some are happy the way things are for themselves, but will take a different approach when it comes to children as they are happy with their children receiving services. Officer Gomez also discussed different resources including increased busing/transportation systems, to connect individuals to their community through games, food, and practical steps like taking families into town for groceries.

Officer Gomez shared there are two foster parent homes in Boise County, with one family that takes in high-risk children. He shared that he is involved as he coordinates visits, hospital visits, and will work with foster parents especially regarding problematic kids. The IDHW will communicate with him to work with the Boise County audience to translate and address the regional needs. He said that he knows the safety plans, the parents, and can interact with the kids directly.

Allison said the Panel was learning how the criminal court/child protection court work with the different roles with the different players. She respectfully said the work Officer Gomez was doing feels more social work than it is traditional law enforcement, when compared to the ways the Panel has heard from other law enforcement agencies. She asked if these are normal practices for SROs. Officer Gomez responded that as an SRO, 90% of his job is social work, as his job is to be on the team of the children. He said that this is particularly relevant for troubled youth; as the more trouble they are in the more they need us, they may be coming from a broken home and it is the responsibility of teachers, SROs, neighbors and the community to fill in. Officer Gomez said that he works well with IDHW, the Prosecutor's Office, families, teachers, probation officers, as it is all part of building up a community. Law enforcement has many social work elements, because if they do not employ those techniques they will be engaging with the same folks repetitively and they need to utilize the skills of their available workforce to address the needs of youth and adults. Officer Gomez said that he works to provide resources to parents and children, to reinforce and support the families' needs.

A Panel member asked if there were any active child protection cases based out of Boise County, where children were removed from the home, and still located in Boise County. Officer Gomez said that one foster family can take up to twelve, but has 6 to 7 current children housed with them. He stated that he removed three more children the other day, and wished he had better circumstances for those children. Officer Gomez said that by the time that it gets to that point, he typically will know the family so well, where they have stayed before temporarily, and previous solutions, that they will work to fix whatever issue is going on and work towards reunification sometimes without the formal processes of IDHW becoming involved. Officer Gomez said sometimes that IDHW and judges let children back in the home as soon as possible

and sometimes 'home' is not the best place for them, sometimes they are better off in a different home, and even the weekly visits can be difficult on the child. He continued saying that sometimes that parents do not show up, or worse they do and it causes more damage. He said that working towards reunification so actively is not going to be in the best place for them, as they need more discretion to determine what is the best for the child and this reinforces the rights of the child and not the rights of the parents. He said that he doesn't want the children to be re-victimized by the system and causing more trauma. A Panel member asked if this prevented him from coordinating with IDHW, knowing that he can coordinate safety concerns informally. Officer Gomez said he will do his best to preserve the relationship with the family as once coordination with IDHW is started it can strain their relationship, and sometimes they can make more progress together than without having that level of intervention.

Officer Gomez was thanked for his time. Individuals interested in learning more about Officer Gomez's work as a school resource officer in Boise County, can find him on Facebook @DeputyGomez .

Listening Session Update

The Panel transitioned to discuss the Listening Session that District IV Citizen Review Panel members were invited to attend. Darcie attended the Listening Session as a CRP-approved a representative, however is absent and cannot share their experience. Allison attended one for adoptive parents. It was her understanding that there was a Listening Session for CRP panel members and another regarding adoptive parents training. From what Darcie said in previous communications, it was many Panel members stating where they see a lack of training. Allison said that she was concerned as it was her and two other pre-adoptive homes, and that the marketing for this Listening Session did not make it out to adoptive homes. They are going to do more Listening Sessions in January for a broader discussion, and bring the results back whenever they complete their work. Allison discussed the history behind the invite in that the Department felt that it was helpful to have a third party review their curriculum and analyze these results. Contract is to study training and make recommendations to present back to the Department. This will include feedback on their quality of work, which they hope to utilize and implement recommendations.

Citizen Review Panel Document Review

Under the District IV CRP Bylaws - Section 6: The Panel shall hold one business meeting each year where the agenda is to review the CRP bylaws, code of conduct, and conflict of interest forms and open meeting law. This is a synopsis of the presentation that was provided to the Panel by the PHD Liaison, Courtney Boyce.

The Panel is authorized to provide recommendations for the improvement of the child protection system and the foster child experience within its respective health district. Conduct case reviews under child protective act longer than 120 days, based on Idaho Code 16-1647. For the District IV Citizen Review Panel, their jurisdiction is Ada, Boise, Valley and Elmore Counties. The Panel will only have seven members with staggered terms. If there is a replacement from a resignation or termination, the term of the replacement within the same term as predecessor. Annually elect three (3) officers for a one-year term: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary; Individuals can be re-elected to the same office. The Panel has a quorum of 5, with a majority of 2/3 for the Panel of 7 people. If members are unable to attend meetings shall notify the Secretary, Chair, or staff as three absences 'without good cause' may be deemed reason for termination at the next meeting. All amendments must be provided in writing 48 hours to the Panel for review.

The Panel reviewed the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Forms from the Bylaws. The Panel will receive the forms electronically to sign for this year's renewal. The Panel reviewed Open Meeting Law, as outlined in Idaho Code §§ 74-201 through 74-208. Open Meeting Law defines "meeting" to mean "the convening of a governing body of a public agency to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter." This requires two types of notice: (1) meeting notice and (2) agenda notice, which are posted in the Meeting Rooms hallway of CDH for public viewing. For "regular meetings," requires no less than a

five calendar-day meeting notice and a forty-eight (48) hour agenda notice. With Executive Session meetings, 24 hours' notice is required to post agenda. The format of meeting minutes must include all members of governing body, motions, and result of all votes. These points were taken from Question 8, 13-17, from the Office of the Attorney General's Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual.

Executive Session may be held for the reasons listed in § 74-206(1). The presiding officer must identify the specific authorization under the Open Meeting Law for the holding of an executive session. They must have two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote in favor of the executive session must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting by individual vote, by roll call. Again, they must meet agenda requirements prior to the meeting. Failure to do so will invalidate any action taken as a result of the executive session. These points were taken from Question 27, 28, and 32, Office of the Attorney General's Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual.

"Advisory committees, boards and commissions are subject to Open Meeting Law if the body is created by or pursuant to statute, ordinance, or legislative act and if the body has authority to make recommendations to a public agency." This was taken from Question 4, of the Office of the Attorney General's Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual. The Citizen Review Panels fall under these definitions as they were created in law and make recommendations to a public agency.

"Open Meeting Law applies to the deliberations and discussions between two or more members of the board [...] on some matter which foreseeably will come before that board [...] for action." This applies to phone calls, e-mails, letters; "e-mail or text communications are public records and must be maintained by the records custodian for public inspection and copying." This was taken from Question 26, from the Office of the Attorney General's Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual.

Failure to comply with Open Meeting Law, has consequences including that the CRP fined could be fined \leq \$250, with any subsequent violation at \leq \$2,500. Additionally, any member 'who knowingly violates a provision of Open Meeting Law' is subject to a civil penalty \leq \$1,500. This was taken from Question 32, from the Office of the Attorney General's Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual.

The District IV Citizen Review Panel is in compliance with their bylaws under Section 6, as they have reviewed the bylaws, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Open Meeting Law.

Case Lists

The Panel discussed with Misty, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Liaison to the Panels about the process for requesting case reviews over December and previous months. Misty utilized administrative support to complete this task. The reviews did not separate into sibling sets, but worked into 21 clients and not 21 cases. Misty discussed that the Panel has requested a higher level of degree of detail, and stated that it is taking more time to collect that information in addition to the complexity of finding it. Misty apologized for the frustration and process. Misty said that moving forward with administrative support in place, she is back to a better position to receive and deliver this information in a timelier manner. By the February meeting, case reviews will be sent to Darcie prior to the meeting for distribution.

Nicole discussed a case file of a foster child in Provo Canyon Center that has not been released for her review, although she requested this information several months ago. Allison also put in a specific case request in December and was still waiting to receive that case. Allison spoke with Misty about a second case. Allison said that one piece of documentation was connected with two separate cases, one being her assigned case to review. She asked to see the tangential case as well and was informed that case is no longer open, but Misty is working on interpreting what files can and cannot be released. Misty discussed that the way the data is being pulled, it was capturing all cases that were open 120 days or longer for case management, so that did not include that case that went to permanency. Brian discussed that the legislation is clear that any document requested by the CRP, can be reviewed. To reference the code: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title16/T16CH16/SECT16-1647/>

(4) Each citizen review panel shall review all cases brought under the child protective act that have been open in the corresponding district court, or other appropriate local jurisdiction, longer than one hundred twenty (120) days.

(5) Citizen review panel members shall be granted access to copies of all records in the department's custody related to the child and case under review including all information pertaining to prior referrals, prior safety assessments, all court filings and any police reports. The department shall give citizen review panel members access to copies of any additional records within the department's custody upon request. The department shall develop a memorandum of understanding addressing delivery, maintenance and destruction of all records, which must be signed by the panel member before accessing department records.

Brian said that he wants to make sure that those statutes are upheld. Any actively open case that is requested, is able to be reviewed. The Panel discussed the last round of case review lists that were submitted to the Panel, and 8 already led to adoption. In August they requested cases with children currently placed in group homes and residential treatment centers, which was specific criteria taking longer to pull than randomized cases. Misty said that the filter of pulling information is not accurate from the previous caseload, and apologized that the Panel had been waiting so long for a case. It was asked if it was a fair expectation that over the next month that could be resolved. Misty is taking accountability for her work load and timeline, but doesn't want to make promises regarding the technical issues when pulling information from Espy into Tableau, and will continue to communicate with the Panel.

Before transitioning to the next topic, Brian requested Janet Lawler introduce herself. Janet Lawler is the Victim's Witness Coordinator for the Ada County Sheriff's Office. She discussed that they work closely between IDHW and law enforcement, and a bulk of her work is child physical and/or sexual abuse cases. She said that she wants to work to improve the system to have the outcomes for children improved.

District IV CRP Direction/Priorities

Brian discussed that the statewide leadership CRP group was coordinating for legislative support for the referral-intake center proposal in Region V. This would be a trauma informed approach to treatment that would increase the availability of counseling at the time of removal, mitigate the trauma effects of removal, and work in tandem with IDHW for housing and support for intake.

CRP Independent Branding

Brian discussed the Panel will explore pro bono projects, and consider referrals from CDH on commissioned branding artwork.

Defined Role of CDH

The Panel discussed the role of the public health district liaison to the CRP. The Panel can determine the roles and responsibilities of this position, for consideration in future placements. This helps with the longevity of the Panel by having a clear understanding of the expectations for this job that is not clearly defined in the statute or with descriptions through other counties. It was discussed that CDH in the origination of this position, placed an individual in this role that could provide their public health expertise and insight to the Panel, and assist with systems change work to move the needle forward. Through this discussion, Courtney will bring observations, ideas/concerns, and proposals for the expansion of her position to be discussed by the CRP and receive authorization to work on those projects. Brian discussed that as Panel members they are not free to act autonomously, with the same expectation for the Liaison. The Panel will receive and review the Proposal and motion to vote regarding any proposal that Courtney brings forth.

Courtney shared that working with the Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator, she submitted an application to receive technical assistance and engage in a pilot project through NAACHO, titled "Overdose, Suicide Prevention, and Adverse Childhood Experiences Capacity Assessment Tool (O-SPACECAT)." Courtney shared that there is not a financial award associated with participating; however, NACCHO will be providing feedback and technical assistance on the assessment results to help local health departments plan next steps and how to use the information collected to strengthen capacity in

these areas. The key components to participation will be completing the capacity assessment tool (mid-January to end of January) and participating in a focus group to provide feedback (early to mid-February). NACCHO will work with LHDs on feedback and TA after reviewing the results and holding the focus group with the four participating health districts. If possible, Courtney would like to share this information back with the Panel.

Prior to the adjournment of the meeting, it was discussed that the Panel reviewed the bylaws but could not vote on the amendments suggested by Panel member Shannon. This will include a larger discussion on membership renewal where individuals need to be reconfirmed by the group. This is an opportunity for the Panel to more clearly define membership positions for the future, as this is the first time these roles have expired by initial terms, since the Panel's origination.

The Panel also discussed the upcoming quarterly report. It was discussed that the Child Protection Oversight Committee might be of assistance in convening a working group or committee to discuss with courts, law enforcement and convening stakeholders for legislative reform. The Panel at this time will continue to conduct investigative interviews with subject matter experts, research, and case reviews to inform their future recommendations.

Allison discussed a recent experience in e-Cabinet where she reviewed the visitation report in addition to other existing documents, and said that she wished there was further documentation from the judge. It was discussed that she would like to learn more about the judge's reasoning behind the court's decision, as there is no formal record as to why they decided in a favor of a decision or to move towards termination. This documentation could indicate the judge's decision, what considerations or factors they had in their final decision. Given the time, it was tabled to be discussed further at the next meeting.

In further conversation with Janet Lawler, there was discussion regarding individuals from the Prosecutor's Office that may be of service to the Panel, and chatting with Elmore County's child protection judge Brett.

Adjourn

Motion: Nicole motioned to adjourn the meeting. Brian seconded. The motion passes.

At 6:05 pm, Brian McCauley the District IV Citizen Review Panel Chair adjourned the meeting.

Potential Items for February Agenda:

Recommendations in Boise County
Vote on Bylaws/Membership Terms
Formal Judges Recommendations
Idaho CRP Leadership Conference Call Update

Meeting minutes prepared by Courtney Boyce.

Per CRP bylaws, the current members of the District IV Citizen Review Panel are:

Brian McCauley - Chair
Darcie Bobrowski - Vice Chair
Nicole Noltensmeyer - Secretary
Kym Nilsen
Shannon McCarthy
Britney Journee
Allison Berkson