

Minutes
Child Day Care Council
November 13, 2003

Members

Gail Johnson, Chairman
Donna Thornton, Vice Chair
Lisa Shelburne, Secretary
Jane Craig
Sondra Freeman
Carol Steele
Deborah White
Susan Ballard
Judith Beattie
Deborah Gardner
Norman Crumpton
Bethany Geldmaker
Susan Hackney
Dona Huang
Adam Thiel
Margaret Collins
Anita Simpkins
Charles Finley
William Bayne Harvey
Terry Davis
Novella Ruffin

Jay DeBoer-absent

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gail Johnson at 11:00 a.m. Due to the department moving from this building, an informal setting of chairs in a circle was used.

Ms. Johnson advised there would be two public hearings today at the General Assembly Building (2 and 6 p.m.).

Welcome and Introductions

Carolynne Stevens, director of Licensing Programs welcomed the Council and introduced Dr. Amiee Payne as licensing staff now working with the department and council (Arlene Kasper replacement).

Chairman Johnson advised there were five new members appointed to the Council and orientation would be held prior to the next scheduled meeting. Members include Dr. Rosemary Burton, Kim Hulcher, Nancy Smith, Kristi Snyder, and Jeff Walton.

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Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Jones joined the meeting via telephone from Atlanta. He commended the Council on their dedication and good work. He advised there had been a lot of discussion and comments received about quality child care and the Governor was delighted with the comments thus far.

He clarified the question “why fix the system if it isn’t broken”. Commissioner Jones advised that one-third of parents with children in day care wanted to move them (28.3%). He further stated that 1 out of 5 parents moved their children due to health and safety concerns. He reported that 1 out of 3 parents surveyed advised they would pay more if their children were in a class that had been reduced by at least one child—parents want better quality and child care arrangements.

He advised there had been many comments on the proposed change from 25 square feet to 35 square feet and would be further reviewed. The National Health Performance standards say a minimum of 35 square feet of useable floor space, but 50 square feet should be what is used, citing prevention of injury, etc.

As of November 13, 42 of the 50 states already use the standard of 35 square feet per child. Virginia is moving in the right direction.

Commissioner Jones mentioned that the Council will hear comments that these proposed regulations will put children out of day care. He reminded everyone that these changes will be phased in over a period of time.

He cautioned that the Council may hear comments that are not true and encouraged them to focus on what is true. The department is willing to work with the Council on these regulations to do what is in the best interest of children in daycare.

Commissioner Jones was asked about the 2000 studies/survey mentioned in some of the public comment. A copy of the survey will be provided to members along with a copy of Senate Document #4 provided in hard copy by Richard Martin.

Regulation Report

Mr. Martin reviewed the status of Council regulations and advised the Council now has its own site on the web. He further advised the council, or any interested party, may review the agenda, proposed regulation, and status reports on regulations. Additional enhancements will be done in December to provide a link to new and past minutes.

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Mr. Martin advised he would like input from the Council on the type of personal information they want listed about themselves. They were encouraged to visit the State Board of Social Services website for guidelines.

Ms. Thornton thanked Mr. Martin and staff for their efforts and goal to have more information made available to the public.

Ms. Steele stated the regulation deadline is January 2 and asked what the anticipated adoption date for the regulations was. Mr. Martin advised October 1 would be the very earliest.

Playground Safety Presentation

Jeanne Sanders provided an informative review on playground safety. According to a 2001 Study, over 2000,000 injuries required a visit to the emergency room with fractures being the most common injury associated with the visit.

She advised that approximately fifteen deaths occur on playgrounds per year.

Ms. Thornton asked if any segmented research had been done for children under the age of twelve in Virginia. Ms. Sanders wasn't able to provide this information today. Ms. Thornton advised this information is helpful to the Council based on their Mission and Vision.

Ms. Steele questioned the difference in resilient surface requirements mentioned in the small blue book and other figures presented. Ms. Sanders advised the recommendation is to put more down than less. The smaller blue book has the most current data.

Public Hearings

Wenda Singer will be serving as MC presiding over the six public hearings that will be held over the next few weeks. Mr. Martin advised that permission has been given to pay for approximately three members to attend the various public hearings.

Three minutes will be given to hear speaker at the hearings. There will also be an opportunity for speakers to provide written remarks for inclusion. Ms. Rengnerth will be assisting Ms. Singer at the public hearings.

Ms. Huang asked if the two regulations (Background check and day center proposed changes) will be split or if public comment will be given at the same time. It was advised that Ms. Singer will identify that comment will be taken on both regulations.

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Ms. White asked if a summary of the comments could be received once they have been entered into the system. Mr. Martin and Ms. Singer verified they could. It was reminded there would be no interaction between members, staff, and the public during the hearings.

Ms. Simpkins asked if they were allowed to ask people to speak up during a hearing, Ms. Singer advised she would handle this.

January Council meeting

Mr. Martin provided Council with a letter requesting that the January meeting be canceled for lack of business and resume in March.

The March meeting could potentially be a two-day meeting to accommodate discussion of comments in open meeting rather than in committee.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Steele) and seconded (Mr. Crumpton) moved to adopt the November 11 letter as presented by Mr. Martin to cancel the January Council meeting and meet in March with the possibility of this being a two-day meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.

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ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Harvey) and seconded (Ms. Freeman) moved to approve the Orientation Minutes from the previous meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. White) and seconded (Ms. Peters) moved to approve the Minutes from the previous business meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.

Other Business

Ms. Geldmaker reminded everyone it was flu season and they should get a flu shot since school-age children are spreading it around.

She will also forward statistics on meningitis cases in Virginia.

Adjourn

Without further business and on MOTION DULY MADE (Ms. Thornton) and seconded, the Council moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:30 p.m. Motion carried with all in favor.

Submitted by Pat Rengnerth