

Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 7, 2022 12:00pm

Members Present	Members Absent
Susan Bynum	Premadonna Braddick
Susan Crenshaw	Mary Quinn Cooper
Dr. Nadia Khan Janjua	Ashleigh Frohrip
Betsy Jackson	Carmella Hill
Deidra Kirtley	
Janet Levit	
Tina Patel	
Amy Mariska	
Dr. Meg Myers Morgan	
Tina Patel	
Martha Zapata	

- I. Call to Order and Introductions**
 - a. Meeting called to order at 12:04 pm by Chairwoman Myers Morgan
- II. Approval of September Meeting Minutes**
 - a. Chairwoman Myers Morgan requests a motion to approve the September meeting minutes
 - i. Commissioner Kirtley motions to approve
 - ii. Commissioner Mariska seconds
 - iii. All in unanimous approval
- III. Guest Speakers: Dr. Laura Latta, Executive Director of the Tulsa Higher Education Consortium, and Darek Latta, Managing Director of Crosstown Learning Center**
 - a. Commissioner Jackson introduces Dr. Laura & Derek Latta, who assisted the parent perspective committee with creating a video illustrating real-life stories of women's experiences with childcare and its impact on their careers. The women in the video feature:
 - i. Commissioner Carmella Hill: Carmella is the owner and manager of her own entertainment LLC and became the legal guardian of her three grandchildren after her daughter passed away. She's currently in the process of formally adopting all three children. She discusses her desire to see workplaces become more flexible and offer more freedom for professionals to flex their hours or work from home to accommodate childcare.
 - ii. Judith Barbara Perez: Judith is a stay-at-home parent with a 3-year-old daughter named Leah. Judith prefaces that she used to work full time but

stopped and has been home since February to raise Leah due to the lack of affordable childcare, which has become extremely limited due to COVID. While employed full-time, she and her husband did not qualify for daycare programs due to their dual income. She discusses facing racism in her search since she and her husband are not native English speakers and her worry for her daughter to enter childcare without trauma-informed, bilingual, and international staff members representation.

- iii. Kassey Steele Gibbs: Kassey serves as the Director of tutoring services at Tulsa Community College and has been a foster parent with ten kids in the last five years. She discusses her desire to see more after-hours programs or extended childcare hours options. Because of her experience with foster children, she also discusses the need to see childcare centers that include sensory rooms and more trauma-informed approaches. She finishes by adding that because of a lack of accessible options, there are weeks and days when she must choose to pursue her calling of taking care of kids in foster care or maintaining her career
 - iv. Dr. Sarah Wyatt. Dr. Wyatt has three children (11 months, 3, and 4) and works full-time. She shares that her most significant challenge in childcare is how one factor can alter the family's entire day. For example, if a child is sick, she or her husband must stay home and utilize vacation time to care for them. There are no remote options. She also discusses how expensive childcare is by sharing that the cost of having all 3 of her children in childcare would be triple the family's mortgage payment. She expresses her desire to see Human Resources be more involved in finding accessible childcare. For example, informing employees of when spots become available, doing cost breakdowns, offering onsite childcare options, or partnering with existing childcare centers to facilitate discounted rates for employees.
- b. Commissioner Myers Morgan thanks all participating families, Commissioner Jackson, Dr. Latta, and Derek Latta, for their efforts and asks commissioners for any outstanding thoughts.
- i. Commissioner Bynum remarks that the school schedule never fundamentally matched the work schedule. She asks commissioners if they see any opportunities to bridge that gap.
 1. Commissioners comment that there are daycare services that do afterschool shuttling – but not many.
 - ii. Commissioner Levit notes that Carmella's point about links between work flexibility is practical. Physically being in the office space has assumed a higher level of importance than it needs to be to get the work done – and

the pandemic proved it. Incentivizing remote components would be a significant suggestion.

- iii. Commissioner Mariska asks Kassey her perspective on how Tulsa/TCC is working on getting students into the higher education/early childhood education workforce.
 1. Kasey remarks that there currently are none.
 2. Janae Bradford, the Financial Empowerment Center Fellow for MORE and Director of Project Management/Strategic Strategies for CAP Tulsa, discusses how CAP Tulsa works with Union Public Schools to offer courses and pathways to childcare careers.
- c. Commissioner Levit asks about the incoming subsidies from DHS that Derek mentioned in his presentation. She states that it feels clear that government subsidies are a lucrative incentive for childcare to expand.
 - i. Commissioner Bynum asks if the DHS subsidy is going to make any significant impact on qualifying childcare centers.
 - ii. Derek informs the commission that DHS is undergoing an overhaul, and they're discussing it – but everyone will have to wait to see what happens.
 - iii. Janae doesn't believe so. The DHS subsidy is one-time funding.

IV. Old Business

- a. None

V. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Chairwoman Myers Morgan announces:
 - i. Planning for the Pinnacle Awards is gearing up
 - ii. Commissioners Levit and McGowan have resigned from the commission
 - iii. Commissioner Patel has joined the commission

VI. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Myers Morgan makes a motion to adjourn
- b. Commissioner Kirtley seconds
- c. Meeting adjourned at 1:08