

Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders

August 12, 2015 summary minutes

Attending:

Kate Toomey, Chair
Nan Mendenhall
Shannon Alvey
Rob Denton
Wendy Fayles
Lisa Thornton (via phone)
Carol Fletcher (via phone)
Sally Hurme (via phone)

Staff

Karolina Abuzyarova
Nancy Sylvester
Holly Kees

Excused

Nels Holmgren
Ellen Silver
David Connors
Daniel Brewster
Daniel Musto
Gonzalo Palza

Welcome, minutes, announcements

The minutes were approved. Judge Kate Toomey announced that the National Center for State Courts had issued an assessment report about WINGS groups nationwide. The assessment report was based on a final grant report, a general survey, and a phone interview. The Executive Committee will decide how to circulate the report to the general WINGS committee.

Judge Toomey announced that her one year term as a chair is coming to a close in fall 2015 and that Judge David Connors will be taking over the position in October 2015.

WINGS bylaws

The WINGS bylaws were approved. The only change made was in the membership list, which was to change the Ute Tribe or the Ute Family Center to "Tribal Groups." Carleep Kurip from the Ute Tribe has resigned from the Committee and an outreach effort will be made to get representatives of other tribes to participate in WINGS (e.g. the Paiute Indian tribe). Other changes discussed but not incorporated included changing "individuals with decisional impairments" to "persons with restricted capacity" in the section on "Constraints of the Judiciary." Sally Hurme commented that the group should use the language with which it is most comfortable. Rob Denton suggested changing "support policy" to "initiate policy" in the "Objectives" section. Nancy Sylvester responded that due to the judiciary's neutrality constraints, it is not possible to phrase it that way.

Feedback from members

Shannon Alvey reported that the Office of Public Guardian has extensively utilized the Court Visitor Volunteer Program and is now utilizing the Signature Program. In addition, the Office of Public Guardian has started referring the public to the Online Court Assistance Program (OCAP).

WINGS

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Nan Mendenhall reiterated that they receive a lot of calls on guardianship and now refer the public to the Court webpages on guardianship and conservatorship. Starting in September, Nan is planning to resume meetings of the Guardianship Alliance to staff complex guardianship cases.

Wendy Fayles stated that while NAMI does not receive many calls on guardianship, she has made many connections and is aware of community resources that NAMI now refers their clients to, e.g. discounted elder counseling provided by the Jewish Family Service.

Rob Denton mentioned that WINGS's work is different from the focus of the Disability Law Center, but it hasn't limited their work in any way. It has been an educational experience.

Carol Fletcher was interested in promoting education efforts in the 5th District and the St. George area in particular. She referenced possibly reaching out to the National Association of Social Workers and the Southern Utah estate planning section of the Bar.

Lisa Thornton provided feedback on OCAP forms, but members noted that a different court committee handles OCAP concerns.

Holly Kees provided an update on the Court Visitor Program. The program received a lot of requests for court visitor assignments and now had a backlog. The Court Visitor Program is also in the process of revising the audit report.

Adult Protective Service (APS) and WINGS conference call

Karolina Abuzyarova and Nan Mendenhall provided information on the national conference call that focused on the role of APS in WINGS. There is a need to engage APS in educating judges and court clerks. WINGS staff members will follow up with the Courts' Education Department on the ways to engage APS in the District Court Judges Conference in spring 2016. Karolina raised an issue on how APS can utilize WINGS to the fuller extent.

Membership

Karolina Abuzyarova reported that several members had left WINGS, e.g. Carleen Kurip of the Ute Tribe Elder Advocate, the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) representative, and the Salt Lake City police representative. Karolina is planning to reach out to the Latino Community to engage them in a subcommittee on developing free public training in Spanish. Judge Toomey asked Karolina to provide a full list of active and non-active members at the next Executive Committee meeting. According to the bylaws, WINGS should have 15 active participants.

Public education classes

None of the Education Subcommittee members were present. Karolina developed a flyer advertising the classes and it was approved with minor changes, such as removing the Judicial Council stamp. The flyer will be distributed among senior centers, public libraries, and also forwarded to the Caregiver Support Program to be included in their newsletter.

Signature Program

Nancy Sylvester reported that the Signature Program has placed 15 attorneys with respondents in guardianship proceedings. About one request per week comes in to the courts.

The meeting concluded at 1:00 p.m.