

CASA Meeting

Meeting Minutes

**May 13, 2008, 8:30 a.m.
Room 464, SD Capitol Building**

Attendance: Judge Kathleen Trandahl, Kimberly Max, Lisa Thompson, Jaime Rieff, Kristie Fiegen, SCAO Advisory: Sara Kelly. Recording Secretary: Gloria Guericke.

Guests: Brenda Schulte, First Judicial Circuit; Amy Benda, Second Judicial Circuit; Julie Wermers, Third Judicial Circuit; Gypsy Petz, Fourth Judicial Circuit; Shirley Schwab, Fifth Judicial Circuit; Kent Huckins, Sixth Judicial Circuit; Sheila Troxel Snyder, Seventh Judicial Circuit; Jessie Kuechenmeister, representing Oglala Sioux CASA. Absent: Arlana Bettleyoun.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Judge Trandahl called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following committee members introduced themselves: Kristie Fiegen, Jaime Rieff, Lisa Thompson, Kimberly Max, and Judge Kathleen Trandahl. Judge Trandahl introduced State Court Administrator's Office staff members Sara Kelly and Gloria Guericke. Sara explained that Jill Gusso would not be able to join us today. Judge Trandahl thanked all who do the work all year long for CASA. She explained that their work is very important, and then told a story about 2 little boys' whose case would not have gone forward without help from CASA. Because of CASA's work, these little boys' lives have gone forward for the better.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Judge Trandahl asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. Kristie moved and Kim seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

PRESENTATIONS

1st Circuit

Brenda Schulte, Director of the 1st circuit CASA based out of Mitchell, presented information on their program. Their program covers 5 counties. This year they have

basically been trying to retain their volunteers. Most of their volunteers are elderly women whose spouses are ill. Their program is diligently trying to recruit new volunteers. One of the main goals for this year is to get their volunteer base adequately staffed. Funding is their other concern.

Last year they hired Mike Crandall as their fund raising coordinator. He gave them a favorable rate and he taught Brenda how to carry on the process. They reached last year's goal of \$30,000. In addition, last year they received a one-time gift of \$10,000. She explained that they aren't sure they'll be as lucky this year due to the economy.

This past year they met with communities and helped teach how to keep children safe, especially in child abuse situations. In the towns, they had the CASA kids trace their hands and then posted the hand drawings in the courthouses. Brenda stated that you could tell the kids were hurting by the way they colored their hands.

Two years ago they became members of the SD Network Against Family Violence & Sexual Assault. One benefit of their membership is that their volunteers can attend the free and highly instructive trainings. Another benefit from the membership was the free development of a strategic plan for them. Every year, the plan developer will come back and update the plan for them.

Brenda explained that Brule and Buffalo counties are 2 areas they've been trying to work into, but has been hampered due to their small number of volunteers. They hope to get a small grant so they can hire someone to expand the program into these counties.

From their O.J.J.D.P. grant several years ago, they received a lump sum (\$39,000) due to a mix-up. This money is being used to carry them over.

Judge Trandahl questioned their current number of volunteers. Brenda explained that, in February, 5 volunteers were sworn in; including 2 men. Total number of volunteers is 9. They have a couple people lined up to take the training and, rather than making them wait for the next group training, she may send them to Sioux Falls for the training.

Kristie stated that she really liked their strategic plan and how they are focusing on the future. She had several questions regarding their financial statements. Page 9 of the application has actual total expenses and revenue, then the actual financial statement (page 1) shows \$52,000. Kristie was confused by the conflicting numbers. She would expect them to be the same. \$82,000, 52,000, \$67,000 are

the numbers she is seeing. Brenda replied that this might be because of the carryover.

Kristie noted that their fund balance was \$92,000. Brenda explained that the O.J.J.D.P. money went into some of the Savings and CDs. Brenda couldn't answer the discrepancy on the 3 different sheets. Kristie pointed out that there were 0 new volunteers in 2007. Brenda stated that we started gathering a group in 2007, but didn't have them finished until February 2008. She explained that it takes awhile to do the training, so they try to limit it to when they have a group.

Kristie pointed out that their national report indicates 60 cases were served in 2007. Brenda replied that this should be 60 children, not cases. Kristie questioned how many cases and Brenda replied that she didn't have a number off-hand. She explained that they go to court and monitor cases and can then update a new volunteer when they come on board. Kristie questioned if Brenda thought that it was 30 monitored by staff? Brenda said she would need to go back and check on the numbers. Kristie noted that there appears to be a 1 to 8 ratio on staff to volunteers.

Kim questioned there being only 6 board members. Brenda replied that they were working on this as they had 2 that left the board.

Judge Trandahl clarified with Brenda that they were requesting the funds to cover the executive director position and the rural outreach position, and noted that this is what you requested last year. Brenda replied affirmatively and explained that the rural outreach person brings a lot to our training, in addition to her other duties.

2nd Circuit

Amy Benda thanked the committee for their past support. She explained that on page 4 of the grant application we are working on retaining volunteers. They lost 35 in 2007, and trained 36, so barely broke even. The volunteers they lost had good reasons such as job change, illnesses, etc. Amy noted that it's cheaper for their program to retain volunteers than to train new ones.

Amy explained that they had a strategic planning session with board of directors in 2007, with 4 main areas of focus. Recognizing & encouraging volunteers; increasing awareness in community – with a strong public relations campaign. She noted that they had some unfortunate incidents in the community - deaths of children, problems in daycare - so they've been getting contacted about what can be done. This indirectly is additional public relations for them. They are working on expanding fundraising opportunities. They did away with Kid Stock because the time and expense was not worth what they reaped. They are now working on

smaller, more intimate activities such as parties in board members homes, selling tickets and giving away cash prizes, brunches in homes, etc. They also want to enhance their working together with other agencies in the community.

Amy elaborated on their Fundraising and Support in the community. Their current mail appeals have been very successful, but they are feeling the effects of the economy, so the results have been lower this year. Last year they were asking for support for their program manager and part of Amy's salary.

They trained and swore in 10 new volunteers this year. 210 kids were served by a volunteer in 2008, so far. 48 kids are on their waiting list. Volunteers served 13 hours in cases and over 3000 hours to the children.

Judge Trandahl commented that she found Amy's grant application easy to read. She liked knowing the number of hours devoted to advocacy services and the numbers donated to public speaking. She really liked the grant application's format because it was easy to find the numbers she needed.

Kristie thanked Amy for the strategic planning that had been done and explained that this process is very important.

Kristie referenced the National report, section 4, number 1, and asked if 406 had been served? Amy explained that the report is very boilerplate; we don't provide advocacy services, we just monitor. That's why the numbers you are comparing are very different.

Kristie asked what percentage of retention is good for volunteers - 50%? Amy explained that they'd like to avoid what they had last year. Historically, in 2006, they training 33 and only had 19 resign. They want to do better than break even. She explained that their average longevity is 29 months, which national CASA sees as good, but they would like to do better than this average. She noted that CASA is a time and emotional commitment, and is a solo event. Volunteers don't get camaraderie with other volunteers. They would like their volunteers to have support when they are feeling frustrated. Amy explained that volunteers go through 30 hours of training in the classroom. This training is done three times a year. Prior to training, the volunteers go through a background check. After the volunteers have been sworn in, they need 12 hours of inservice training a year.

Judge Trandahl asked about the term "cause related marketing," as it was a new term to her. Amy explained that a business links themselves to a product or cause. For example, CASA would get a cut from a business that links themselves to them. Judge Trandahl requested a listing of these businesses so the committee and

others could help support the CASA program. Sara will send the committee's email addresses to Amy.

Jaime asked about the A&N petitions and noted the positive update that the number of kids on the waiting list has gone down from last year. Amy replied that this is true, but the family size has gone up.

Amy thanked the committee for all they do and for how accountable they keep the CASA organizations because it makes us better stewards of our time and money.

3rd Circuit

Julie Wermers informed the committee that the opening of a satellite office in Flandreau was one of their biggest accomplishments this year. This fiscal presence has been very successful for them in this area, and that more community awareness and participation should evolve.

Julie noted that no new volunteers trained this year. They had a group started but it fell through. They were stable with volunteers last year, so didn't feel recruitment was overly necessary. Instead, they focused on fundraising.

Julie explained that fifty-two kids were advocated this year, even though the application lists 43. The additional 9 kids are ones that didn't fit the usual criteria.

Julie stated that they recently became members of the Violence and Domestic Abuse group mentioned by 1st Circuit. They will work on a strategic plan, starting this fall.

A Fire and Ice event fundraiser was held this year and raised substantial amount of money for them. They are now working on a Golf Outing and will add a Wine and Beer Tasting to this, but they won't advertise this as much as a fundraiser as they did with the Fire and Ice event.

Last year they sent 5 people to National CASA. Two of the 5 were volunteers attending in regard to fundraising. All the attendees felt it was a beneficial conference for them

Kim noted that there we no A&N petitions reported. Julie noted that they served 43 kids. Judge Trandahl stated there isn't a report of the number of A&N petitions filed.

Judge Trandahl questioned how often newsletters were sent out and Julie replied they were quarterly. Jennifer does the monthly one to the volunteers. Judge

Trandahl questioned if this helps in promotions and retaining volunteers? Julie stated that it is good at keeping the CASA name and intent out there. They have found them to be very helpful.

Kristie asked Julie to help her understand why the board decided not to focus on volunteer recruitment. Julie explained that they didn't decide not to focus on volunteers this year. There were some people who were interested in being volunteers, but they weren't good candidates, they weren't in it for the right reason. She explained that she wants quality volunteers.

Kristie asked if they have an annual plan. Julie stated that they had a couple people who started with training, but it didn't work out wisely.

Kristie questioned several different totals on page 6. Julie explained that they are looking for a new accountant. Julie had asked her to put the totals into the proper categories, but this isn't happening. Kristie explained that she was not concerned about the categories. She noted that Surplus shows \$7,000, and \$17,000; your numbers are different. She questioned where the numbers come from that were used on the application. Julie stated that they went through every receipt they had and aren't sure where the \$10,000 discrepancy came from. Both Julie and the accountant do the check reconciliation.

Kristie asked where is the \$10,000 you say you have but your financial record doesn't show it.

Judge Trandahl stated that it seems that everyone is in the same boat – different reporting requirements for the grant, for the reporting requirement, it can be confusing. She questioned if it has to do with the timing of grants, when the money goes out. Julie stated that this is what my accountant is trying to lead me to understand.

Jaime commented that it is great that there have been no children on the waiting list for the past 2 years.

4th Circuit

Gypsy Petz stated that their organization serves 8 counties. She explained that this year has been difficult because the economy is not good. Their last fundraiser netted \$10,000. They do 3 fundraisers a year. She thanked the committee because the money they provide helps fund their rural communities. So far, they've been able to serve all the kids who need the services.

Their goals are education and volunteer retention. She explained that their volunteer retention is 29 months, which is above the national average. They want

to keep their local volunteers because this is so important in the smaller communities.

They keep some money in CDs so that it is available when they need it. So far, they haven't needed it, but this may change with the economy the way it is at present.

Gypsy explained that they get "nickel and dime" donations, rather than big donations, because of their rural location, but these small donations help support the program. They are searching to find rural grants for their area.

Kristi questioned the total of 138 kids being served by volunteers. Gypsy explained that this number was possible because of our retention of volunteers.

Kristie questioned if they do cash or accrual accounting. Gypsy replied they do cash, that their fiscal year is calendar. Kristi noted that on page 6, your accounting is listed as accrual. Gypsy explained that if they receive a \$30.00 check for one month, it is listed as \$30; and if they receive nothing the next month, they show that month as \$0. She wasn't sure why it was listed as accrual on page 6.

Gypsy stated that the categories of Administrative, Training, and Office Expenses are how she broke down her financial report.

Kim asked if the 29 A&N petitions are long term. Gypsy wasn't sure where this number came from as they had more than that number of cases come through. They are longer-term cases. Judge Trandahl noted that the state's numbers are done differently – July through June - so this shows different numbers, which can be confusing.

Kristie noted that the Foundation grant numbers are confusing. Gypsy explained that they received a one-time grant opportunity. Kristie questioned if this money is restricted or unrestricted? Gypsy replied it is not restricted, but we have to use it the way we said we'd use it. Kristie asked what is the board's goal and Gypsy stated that they want to get up to their budget. They have approximately \$75,000. She explained that their audit won't reflect this but she could send the financials. Kristie noted that they have had several substantial excess amounts the past couple years.

Kristie stated that she couldn't understand why the CASAs don't have budgets on an accrual basis. Gypsy stated that the cash basis seems more comfortable to them. She went with the way the professionals had suggested. Kristi said she realized this is easier; it just doesn't portray an exact basis of your financial

situation. Kristie noted that she liked her strategic plan and the easy-to-read format of the application.

10:00 – 10:10 am. Break

5th Circuit

Shirley Schwab explained that they are asking \$29,000 this year, same as last year. She said she wants to create a realistic budget; she wants it to be as viable a budget as possible for when she makes her exit from the program. Shirley has been reading and using the *Model for Social Justice* booklet in helping reach her goal. They have a number of \$2,500 commitments for this year. In 2007, for the first time ever they were listed as an endowment. They are also listed through a financial planner for bequests.

Shirley noted that Judge Von Wald's letter was written in 2008, not 2007 as listed on the letter.

Shirley noted that the judge wants them to use the DDN for A&N case training. She explained that several foster parents have aged out. There are 29 new children and 13 new cases. Last year they went 7 months without a petition filed, which is unusual. This year has been her most difficult time with CASA as she had to deal with situations outside of her agency. She has 3 new child protection workers to deal with, plus they've had to step up to the plate to take care of some checks & balances (per judge's request) that weren't getting done. These are things that don't usually involve her area, but they are an established organization and could step in. In addition, she's had to deal with the worst case ever.

Shirley explained that without our judges, we wouldn't be able to carry on as well as we've done. The average turnover of a Child Protection Services worker is one year.

Shirley noted that are dealing with more cultural diversity in their community as an influx of Spanish-speaking individuals have moved into their area. Because of this, a conversational Spanish class will start in June. She explained that we want to be able to facilitate and help wherever we can.

Shirley explained that another situation they have is that judges ask that they be on the case as soon as a petition is filed. Sometimes the case is closed within a month or it becomes a kinship case. You have to look at the petitions, decide where it will go, and when you need to put a volunteer on it.

They serve 10 counties. Some counties do not have A&Ns filed.

Kim asked about their program working with Sanford and Shirley replied that this is going well. They need to send their kids to Pierre, Sioux Falls, or Rapid City, so have lost many cases along the way. She said that they are looking at developing a satellite as many times the cases are tainted before they are sent out. Kim noted that this would be a child forensic opportunity. Shirley stated that this would allow us to be available in Aberdeen as needed. We would be available for the tougher child abuse cases, not just the sexually abused cases.

Jaime noted to Shirley that you have lost no volunteers. Shirley replied that some have been with the program since it started and participate on some level if they aren't actively involved in a case.

Judge Trandahl referenced a case she had last week involving 2 little boys. She commented that turf issues can develop and the best interest of the kids gets lost. This can be frustrating to get things back on track for the kids.

Kristie thanked Shirley for the detailed goals for this year and noted that she had one financial question. Kristie asked that, next year, please be more specific on pg. 2, #2, your program accomplishments for the past year. Provide more numbers (# of people served, 10% increase, etc. as samples). Kristie's financial question to Shirley was the 18 vs. 26 cases. Shirley replied that they had 18 cases. Kristi congratulated Shirley on recruiting 6 volunteers. Shirley noted that so many of our kids are in school. The volunteers were formerly in the school field, so know how to write reports, etc., that are needed. In addition, they are also excited about the seasoned Foster Parents coming on board.

Kristie questioned that last year you had 58 kids served by volunteers, this year you reported 25. Shirley explained that they were transitioning cases last year. They've had 29 since January, and have 25 new ones. Kristie noted the 58 last year, the 25 this year, and asked if this is a comparison of apples to apples? Shirley replied affirmatively.

Kristie asked the number of cases last year and Shirley replied that it was 15. They had 25 new children served (pg 15). Kristie asked about dips in salary and Shirley noted that she took a cut in pay.

6th Circuit

Kent Huckins, the Executive Director, thanked the commission for the funds provided. He explained that most of grants they apply for have stipulations for new services, or new staff, which stretch them further financially. The CASA funds help them with existing services.

Their program covers 14 counties. Jones, Stanley, Hughes and Tripp were where they mainly provided services the past year. There are 2.5 people on his staff. They have good relationship with DSS here in Pierre. One of his goals is to build these relationships in Winner, but he has had trouble recruiting volunteers in Winner. They held a fundraiser and did PR in that area, but haven't been very successful. He noted that Judy (part time) has made a huge impact on the case with the 2 boys mentioned by Judge Trandahl.

Kent explained that the volunteers get frustrated when they go through the 30 hour training and then don't have a case to work on. There haven't been that many cases available. They lost a couple volunteers at the end of 2007 due to marriage, retirement, and relocation. They have 6 people scheduled for training in Pierre area at end of May and early June.

Their biggest program accomplishment is the CASABLANCA fundraiser (3rd annual one). It takes huge block of time (3 months) in its planning. Approximately 300 attended. It brought in \$1500 to \$2000 less than last year, but they followed the hospital's huge fundraiser, so this may have been part of the problem.

Kent discussed their Agency and Staff Accomplishments. By pushing DSS a bit they were able to push adoptions through for 10 children. Another accomplishment was the return of 11 kids to custody with their biological parents.

They have a strategic plan but it needs updated. The plan was written prior to his arrival. It is on the agenda for discussion at the May meeting. They have 5 vacancies on their board, which they plan to fill at May meeting.

One accomplishment from CASABLANCA was that they finally got the confusion straightened out between CASA vs. the CASA Soccer program. People now realize CASA does more than just A&N cases. For example, one father who is involved in a custody program, who hadn't seen his daughter in awhile, stopped by to see how he could get some assistance. The father and daughter stopped by later on to thank him.

Kent stated that the CASA staff and volunteers are very compassionate. It's made an impact on him how you can work to make things better for a child and/or their family so that the child doesn't have to keep going through the same situation.

Lisa questioned Kent's report to National CASA about never serving any Native Americans, since it's been more than past in the half. Kent replied that this is an error. It shouldn't be Native Americans. As of yet we haven't yet served any Hispanics.

Lisa asked how they select board members. Kent replied that we have a board recruitment committee. He stays out of the selection process since the board is his boss. He may suggest some names to the committee.

Kristie noted that Kent had already discussed their strategic plan. There are 0 new volunteers this year and 0 on the waiting list. Kent stated that he monitors all cases after the volunteers drop out after they enter the adoption phase. Kim asked if these numbers could include the Winner office and Kent replied affirmatively. They were able to assign a volunteer to the new cases in 2007. He is handling a family of 9 case because none of the volunteers wanted this case. Kristi asked if this is the first year you contracted labor for your fundraiser. Kent replied that they contracted this year and last. They were short staffed, so opted to contract out. He noted that phone coverage, etc., increases during the fundraiser preparation. The fundraiser is a profit of approximately \$16,000 for them.

Kent stated that one of the people they want on their board has a financial background, so we'll visit with them regarding accrual vs. monthly. Their accounting is done in-house.

7th Circuit

Sheila Troxel Snyder shared a story about a mom in one of their cases who thought that someone from the Citizens Against Strippers Association was in the audience when the judge mentioned that a representative from CASA was present.

Sheila is leaving the CASA program July 1, after 18 years with the program. She went in for a temporary guardianship and the judge gave them permanent.

In December, her chief of finance left after 15 years. This was difficult for them, especially since they only got 2 weeks notice. They've been outsourcing their accounting and the person comes in once a week. They are advertising for an accountant. Accounting is her weak area, so this loss has been difficult. They are struggling financially. They've finished 2 grants. They did the painted horses fundraiser in the Rapid City – Custer area. She commented that this is a great way to get your name out there, but the fundraiser didn't bring in much money. Their Fire and Ice fundraiser didn't bring in as much money as in the past. She's finding that many small grant requests are getting rejected; so she followed up to see why. She was told that in the community there's a misconception that their program is doing well and getting big donations from big businesses, etc. Their program has a good reputation in their community. She's taken this to the board so they can work on his misconception. They have a major story coming out this month through the Rapid City Journal.

Their recruiter has done a phenomenal job in recruiting volunteers. With the Vucurevich grant ending, they can't afford to hire another part-time recruiter.

Sheila discussed their Actual numbers. There are 372 being served. 114 have a volunteer on the case. They have a waiting list. After adjudication, the kids go on the waiting list.

Training has been stepped up. Their retention rate is 51 months for a volunteer. They just finished their Volunteer Recognition, which was held at the National Guard camp.

Sheila explained that they have someone on board to take her place, but this still needs to be approved by the board.

Their recruiter has done a lot of outreach into the Native American population, but haven't seen an increase yet.

They will not do the car show this year. They were approached by the Associated Contractors as their selected charity for this year for the Poker Run. Sheila visited with Ruth at Crazy Horse regarding the money and food the bikers will drop off when entering Crazy Horse. This event will give them extra publicity.

Judge Trandahl thanked Sheila for her 18 years with CASA. Lisa thanked Sheila and noted that she has seen improvement over the years in her program, especially in the recruitment work with Native Americans.

Sheila noted that the painted horses fundraiser was first started to commemorate CASA's 20 year presence in Rapid City.

Sheila informed the committee that they tried to be very realistic on their budget for 2009. Kristie noted that the shortfall was \$61,000 last year, and the audit shows -\$27,000 and -\$33,000. Sheila explained it's \$61,000 because part of it is from shortfall from the horses fundraiser. Sheila noted that we're short approximately \$30,000/month. She's never let anyone go after a grant let out, but may have to consider this in the future.

Kristie noted that we don't request a 990, so you don't need to do this form. It is a lot of extra work for you. Sheila replied that we recently got a notice from the IRS that one wasn't submitted in 1998. Luckily, Jill had this information on file for us.

Oglala Sioux Tribe

Jessie Kuechenmeister (presented for Arlana Bettelyoun on behalf of Oglala Lakota CASA)

Jessie explained that this program is unique as it is 100% a tribal program. 101 kids in 2007 received advocacy services provided by staff. The program has 5 volunteers. They trained 8 volunteers in 2007, but they haven't been screened and sworn in yet. It's in the works to get the volunteers on board.

Mileage is an issue for them. One volunteer is a teacher, but can't leave class when the case comes to court. They are working on how to utilize their volunteers.

Gypsy and Arlana have been working together on a fundraiser idea during the Rally. Both CASAs would benefit. Arlana doesn't have many areas where she can go in her area to get donations. They are considering a motorcycle run to the reservation.

Jessie lunched with Richard Iron Cloud (board President) while on reservation recently and they discussed this fundraising opportunity. She noted they may also end up with a couple extra volunteers from this kind of event.

Arlana is requesting \$51,000 from CASA. 684 cases not been assigned because the program cannot staff them.

Kristie stated that she had several comments. Comment 1) in the application, Actual Revenue and Expenses is not filled out. Last year Kristie requested a separate budget for CASA and will ask this again for next year. In one area Arlana has Received and Expended and Kristie isn't sure this is what she was trying to do, but the numbers aren't matching. In addition, the document is not signed by the Chairman or Director.

Comment 2) The In Good Standing form has been signed only by State, but not by National.

Shirley explained that National no longer gives a copy of compliance. Others indicated that the recognition is now done by email. Kristie noted that we want to make sure all CASAs are in good standing, so please include this information for us.

Kim asked if there was any verification they are in good compliance. Jessie replied that this is noted on the website.

Amy noted that the National CASA has gone to electronic communication and recognized that Arlana struggles with technology in her area, so may not have received the in-compliance notification.

Kristie noted that there were no new volunteers in 2007 and there is a huge caseload, but then you (Jessie) mentioned the pending volunteers. Kristie asked if screening and training usually take this long. Jessie replied that this isn't the norm and that Arlana is aware this needs done.

Judge Trandahl stated that she understands the tribe requires a difference in what CASA provides to the program. She commented that she found Judge Wilson's letter disturbing and thought that possibly the judge doesn't understand CASA's role. She read the roles listed in the letter that are DSS's roles, not CASA's. She then read where CASA used to do psychologicals on the kids. She has problems if these are the services being provided by CASA. She was concerned that there was no funding money, no signature from the director, and noted that we have nothing to show what CASA is doing with their money.

Jessie explained that National CASA will come out to do an audit.

Judge Trandahl commented that she didn't feel this application had really been submitted because it didn't comply. This application should have been sent back. None of the safeguards were included. She stated that down the road we'll need to discuss the timeliness and completeness.

Jaime pointed out that the Local Program survey wasn't completed either.

Jessie noted that you need to be accountable if you are receiving money.

Lisa stated that she remembered when Arlana was presenting a couple years ago, and she mentioned money received from the National Children's Alliance. Lisa wondered if she was still receiving this money. At the time, some people asked Arlana if interviews were being done, and she replied that this was something that they would have to do. Lisa wondered if maybe Arlana meshed the grants and they should be separated.

Judge Trandahl noted that when you have "doers" in a community, you end up doing everything. When rewriting the Juvenile Code, we don't know what "hat" Arlana was wearing at the time.

Sheila noted that when the Advocacy Center started, they had a psychologist who came in. The CASA and Advocacy program need to be separated. The Tribal Advisory Committee, African and Latino are all being redone at the national level.

Judge Trandahl commented that the difference in roles are not easy to be seen in Arlana's area.

Sheila stated that 8-9 tribal CASAs have been shut down due to lack of funds. Judge Trandahl noted that she has to deal with lack of funding in Winner area. She wants the services available, but accountability is also necessary.

South Dakota CASA

Jessie Kuechenmeister has been with the CASA association for over a year. She feels she had a successful year by visiting and meeting with all the programs and providing assistance. They provided 3 trainings for volunteers, one in Rapid City, one in Sioux Falls and one over the Dakota Digital Network (DDN). The DDN sites were in Selby, Chamberlain, Sioux Falls and Rapid City. They did a board training in Deadwood. Paige Baird came in from National to provide the training.

Jessie stated that they have begun working with the Yankton Sioux Tribe regarding a CASA program. They are laying plans now and plan to apply for funding next year.

CASA had a booth at the State Fair and they had a Christmas tree at the Capitol. CASA was also a sponsor for Children's Day at the Capitol.

Jessie stated that they changed office locations this year. They had been renting rooms in Pierre and the rooms became unavailable. It was decided that an office was not really necessary, so she is working at home and channeling funds into training, education, etc.

Their goals for this year include public relations, advertising, and trainings. Jessie stated that Kent expressed it correctly when he said that CASA folks are compassionate folks.

Kristie stated she was impressed at Jessie's participation in trainings and in using technology for trainings. She asked if the DDN would provide sites on weekends for trainings Jessie replied that we'd have to pay because training is not considered open to the general public, but we could consider training done this way. She commented that 30 hours is a big commitment and is a lot of work for just 2 volunteers. Shirley noted that we do have the option for independent study for a volunteer that wants to come on board.

Jessie noted that the CASA programs are unique to each area. This is one of the things she learned on her statewide travels this past year. Sheila noted that she

has a psychologist and couple teachers who will be providing training this year since you can burn your staff out by having them do the training.

Kristie questioned a discrepancy in totals. Jessie explained that our Bush grant runs out this year; that explains the change in numbers you are seeing. Jessie noted that National CASA did an audit when she first came on board.

Kristie requested that State Court Administrator's staff send out information earlier than was done this year. They received it on Friday and the meeting was a couple days later. Kristie explained that she usually has couple weekends in which to look over the applications. Sara explained she was out of the office for 2 weeks, and then reviewed the applications for completion. She realized she couldn't wait for the missing information and needed to get the information in the mail to the committee.

Amy commented that they are professionals and felt that they should be able to read the instructions as to what is needed. Sara noted that this was her first year with the program. And she would like to see some specific timelines. In the past, the deadlines were rather loose. Kristie commented that this was our fault and we need to be firmer on timelines and what's required.

Judge Trandahl informed the CASA representatives that last year's minutes reflect that you were uncomfortable as to how the funding is determined. You are not mandated to stay. As a public group, we need to handle this publicly. Kim noted that the CASA groups may find some of our comments a learning opportunity.

Recess 12:10-1:00 pm

Fund Dispersement

Kim stated that she is feeling uncomfortable based on application process, and what Sara stated is entitled to be eligible. Kristie asked if Oglala is eligible to be considered since they provided no background information. Kristie felt that they were not eligible this year, and hoped they are next year because this area really needs the CASA services. Jaime agreed they are not eligible even though they need the money.

Kim explained that we have streamlined the application process to make it easier. She realized some grant applications can be exhaustive and feels ours is easy to complete. The CASA groups earlier today mentioned that we hold them accountable and felt we didn't ask a lot of them in the reporting. Lisa noted that we don't ask for a whole lot. She questioned that if we make an exception today, how will we make exceptions in the future. She agreed with the rest of the

commission. She then thanked the CASA groups because their work is hard and emotional. She recognized that they need to jump through hoops since they are non profit.

Judge Trandahl stated that there are 3 reasons why the Oglala application shouldn't be accepted: 1) it was not timely submitted, 2) it does not contain the required attachments, and 3) it is not signed. She explained that having worked for 13 years in that part of the world, she is aware of how important the resources are there. Unfortunately, we have to draw a line in the sand in order to be fair to everyone else who did what was asked.

Kim moved that Oglala application not be accepted due to the reasons stated, and not be considered for funding this year. Jaime seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Kristie stated that she looks at the applications regarding the number of kids served by volunteers, the number of new volunteers, financial information and strategic plan. She recommended the following distribution of funds:

Mitchell: \$20,000
Sioux Falls: \$63,000
Brookings: \$18,000
Spearfish: \$36,000
Aberdeen: \$28,500
Pierre: \$22,500
Rapid City: \$63,000
State: \$15,000

Kristie commented that 3 areas grew a lot. These areas are Sioux Falls, Spearfish and Aberdeen. Mitchell has the opportunity to recruit more volunteers and understand their finances next year. Sioux Falls has grown a lot with 42 additional kids being served this year, plus they have a strategic plan. Kristie encouraged Bookings to recruit new volunteers. She noted that Aberdeen took a large dip in serving children this year, but that may be because there are more children there to serve. Pierre has the opportunity to recruit more volunteers this year, and that the number of kids served went down. In Rapid City, the number of kids served went up.

Kristie moved that the committee adopt the numbers (monetary amounts noted above), and Lisa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Kim agreed with Kristie in a lot of the areas such as serving the kids, recruiting the volunteers and maintaining them, even though we realize this can be beyond your control.

Lisa agreed with the numbers and criteria stated by Kristie.

Judge Trandahl felt the growth was important. When she thinks about the Sioux Falls market, she feels they've done well regarding fundraising and sustaining themselves, and doesn't want to punish them on not getting as many of the funds. She noted that we need to be able to provide money to those who can't get funding elsewhere.

Kristie moved that only applications submitted by hard copy by the deadline are viable, and must contain the required attachments or will not be accepted. The motion was seconded by Jaime. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Kristie amended the motion to include that the presentation must be made before the commission in person.

Kim suggested moving up the deadline as she wants sufficient time to review the applications.

Kristie felt that 3 weekends prior to meeting was sufficient time for reviewing the applications.

Judge Trandahl asked the CASA groups if April 1 was okay for the application deadline. Amy replied that they were used to fluctuating due dates.

Sara asked when the National survey was due and Amy replied it was due the end of January.

Kim moved and Lisa seconded the motion to make April 1 the due date for receipt of the applications. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Kristie moved to amend the required attachments. The court approved program coordinator should be sent proof of CASA National membership and MOUs. She will review and notify if there's a problem.

- **#4 – amend to last 2 year-end financial statements,**
- **#8 – amend to copy of financial review or audit report if applicable,**
- **#4 was mis-stated last year; we want the actual income statement and balance sheet,**
- **we don't need 990s and detailed check reconciliations.**

The motion was seconded by Lisa and was passed unanimously by voice vote by the committee.

Lisa stated that she needs to see a copy of Tribal Resolutions attached. The MOUs may change as their tribal council changes.

Kristie asked that the MOUs be removed from her motion (was removed.)

Lisa moved and Jaime seconded the motion that any current MOU or Tribal resolution for any outreach or satellites on the reservations be added to #7. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Lisa noted that with a Tribal resolution, you need to go to the tribal council and get their resolution. A resolution has more power than an MOU. This gives you their permission to operate on the reservation.

Judge Trandahl stated that when the applications are received in the SCAO office, they can be reviewed and, if there's time, sent back for missing information to be added. If it is received too late, it doesn't get sent out with the other applications to the commission for review.

Kristie questioned who handles the program if Sara is absent and Sara replied that Jill Gusso would step in.

Shirley noted that after today, we'll be more conscious to make sure we submit all the information requested.

Judge Trandahl clarified that she didn't mean to imply that it's Sara's job to review the applications. Sara stated that, if time permits, she would check them over. Judge Trandahl asked the organizations to contact Sara if their application will be late due to a family emergency or another serious reason, but noted that we have to have a fair deadline on this end. She stated that if an application isn't signed, it needs sent back.

Julie asked that if the committee makes changes to the application, could the applications be sent out earlier so there is extra time to work on the new criteria.

Judge Trandahl suggested the information be sent out at least by January 15.

Kristie asked if the application forms could be put on website and Sara replied that she would check with Jill about this possibility.

Kristie: moved that the director or person who has the knowledge of the organization must be the one to come and make the presentation to the commission. This motion was seconded by Jaime. Kristie amended her amendment to include: otherwise the application will not be considered by the commission. The amendment was seconded by Kim. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Kristie moved that “must” rather than “should” be included in her motion. This amendment was seconded by Lisa.

Judge Trandahl requested the committee’s consideration of above complete motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Lisa asked if they are disqualified if they don’t attend the meeting. Kristie replied that is the motion. Lisa asked who attends if they are sick. Would they send the board chair? Kristie replied that person would be familiar with the organization.

Next meeting

Lisa suggested the meeting date of May 5, with the alternate date of May 19.

Judge Trandahl suggested the committee go with the meeting date of Tuesday, May 5, 2009.

Kristie moved to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.