

**2019 SOUTH DAKOTA CASA COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 27, 2019  
CAPITOL BUILDING, RM 412**

**Attending:** Commissioners - Kim Max, Kristie Fiegen, Judge Patrick Smith, Karen Jeffries, JoLynn Bostrom. UJS Staff – Sara Kelly and Isabelle Hayes. CASA Directors – Jackie Horton, Sherri Rodgers-Conti, Stacey Tieszen, Julie Wermers, Kate Kelley, and Kehala Two Bulls. CASA program board members – Michael Weiss (First Circuit) and Tasha Frisinger (Seventh Circuit).

**Meeting called to order:** Commission Chair Kim Max called the meeting to order at 8:02 am.

**2018 Meeting Minutes:** Karen Jeffries moved to approve the 2018 meeting minutes as written, JoLynn Bostrom second, motion carried.

**Presentations:** Kim Max stated there is no order for presentations, just come table when ready.

**State Organization** – Sara Kelly reported to the commission the state administered state organization moved from a provisional membership to a full membership at the end of 2018. The state development plan was completed and the state organization is considered and established, advancing and highly effective organization in five levels of development. Sara stated she will use her experience with the review process to support the local programs when they will go through the review process. Sara reported she attended the National CASA state director's meeting in 2018 and 2019. The annual meeting is held in conjunction with the annual conference. Sara noted this is a good time for her to network with the other state directors and connect with the state directors that have state administered programs. Sara highlighted the topics of discussion at the meeting were National CASA's state organization review process, the on-site reviews will begin late 2019 and into 2020. State organizations are to upload documents as per National CASA's request and meet with them to review documents as needed. National CASA is finalizing the local program standards and local site reviews will begin at a date to be determined. Also discussed was the CASA/GAL branding campaign that kicked off in May 2019. Sara commented on the interest of local community members in starting a CASA program in the Sixth Judicial Circuit. She will continue to meet with them and update the commission as planning and development progresses. Sara stated her request for funds is primarily for travel to the annual state director meeting and for maintaining the [sdcasa.org](http://sdcasa.org) website.

Kristie Feigen commented she felt it was a good move to have a state administered CASA organization and thanked Sara for her support of the local CASA programs.

### **Seventh Circuit CASA – Kehala Two Bulls**

Kehala Two Bulls thanked the Commissioners for their past support and stated 2018 was a year CASA was put into the public more. Kehala stated she realized the public didn't know much about CASA and the need for CASAs. The program completed a video that is on the program website as well as a 30 second video for cable channels. This has created statewide exposure. The program is collecting data on how the public encounters CASA and the media efforts have proven successful. The program is the 2019-2020 recipient of "organization of the year" from the Rapid City Rush, with media attention and fundraising opportunities. Kehala reported they are collecting feedback on how the public encounters CASA and the media efforts are proving to be successful.

Kehala stated they are making collaborative efforts with youth serving organizations in the community for trainings such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Enough Abuse. The program held their annual meeting with the local department of social services staff and management, they discussed the challenges and accomplishments over the year and gave the staff an appreciation mug.

Kehala reported they conducted new volunteer training in Hot Springs for three individuals. They have 35 new volunteers in 2018 and 24 to date in 2019. The program was invited to have a recruitment booth at Wakpa Sica, in Red Shirt, and they plan to attend in the future to help bridge relationships.

The board is scheduled to work on a new strategic plan and a logic model, July 12.

Jolynn Bostrom commented on the increase of new volunteers and recognized the program for reaching out to the other communities the program serves.

Kristie Feigen stated she is happy to see the increase in volunteers, public relations attention and excited to see the \$75,000 grant award. Kristie asked what the goals are for the grant. Kehala reported they are for recruitment and retention of volunteers. Kristie asked why the award amount from the United Way decreased. Kehala reported the United Way didn't meet their goal for the year so there was less to distribute.

Kristie asked if the board is doing a market analysis on staff salary. Kehala stated that is an element of the upcoming strategic plan to set salary ranges and expectations of salaries. Kristie asked about the executive session for maternity leave, the meeting minutes are vague. Kehala reported that the vote was on a leave plan due to two staff being out at about the same time. Kristie stated the minutes should reflect the changes so it is understood what was decided and if ever needed to defend the decision it is captured in the minutes.

Kristie asked why the 2017 financial statement shows a surplus of \$127,000, but the application show it as \$56,000. Kehala stated she will need to go back and look at the bookkeeping for an answer. Kristie asked for Kehala to report the finding to Sara Kelly and Sara will report to the Commissioners.

Kristie state she likes the list of board members and the committees. Kristie stated the strategic plan needs to be in line with what the program is doing and the board meeting minutes need to have more detail, as it was hard to tell what was approved and voted on.

Kim Max asked what are the expectations of staff when they monitor a case. Kehala stated they attend hearings and keep brief notes on the case so when a volunteer is appointed they will know what has been happening with the case. Kim commented (this applies to all programs) a possible use of a trained volunteer or intern could be used for the monitoring to free up staff time.

#### **Northern Hills CASA – Kate Kelley**

Kate Kelley thanked the Commissioners for their past support. Kate reported the program served 89 children in 2018 and has served 90 as of June 1, 2019. Kate stated the Butte County Sheriff's Office has completed several large drug busts which have brought in several children. The program trained six new volunteers at the spring 2019 training. Staff and volunteers attend several community trainings throughout the year to meet the ongoing training requirement.

Kate reported the program has done recruitment efforts to school personnel and attended the Energize Conference in Lemmon, SD. Kate was able to present on CASA at the conference and received several inquiries to become a volunteer. The plan is to have a new volunteer training in Lemmon this fall.

Kate stated the program has had cyber security issues this year with a malware attack. They were able to retrieve their documents and have added another level of security to their system.

Kate reported they have held successful fundraising events in 2018 and plan to replace one event with a new Mountain Bike race. Kate stated they have a contingency event in place if the new event falls short of the projected funds.

Kim Max commented the cross training with social services and other service agencies is a good idea and a good way for others to understand each other's job duties and processes. Kim commented (to all the programs) to consider training on addiction, especially meth, to understand the length of time it takes for rehab and recovery.

Judge Smith commented on the rotation of judges in the northern counties the program serves are every three months. He asked if this gets frustrating to have judges rotating on cases that often. Kate commented that it is frustrating, however some judges are keeping the cases to maintain consistency.

Judge Smith praised Kate for reaching out to the outlying counties and pleased to see new board members from the other counties.

Kristie Feigen stated the program goals of the strategic plan are vague and not SMART goals. Kate stated the board has a strategic planning retreat in 2019 to work on a new plan and will have SMART goals. Kristie commented the SMART goals need to be part of the day to day operation and laser focused.

Kristie Feigen praised Kate for the program accomplishments, loved seeing the Job Corps involved in building the program a shed, and their fundraising efforts. Kristie also praised Kate for recruiting in the northern counties and is interested in hearing how the new volunteer training turns out for that area.

Kristie Feigen asked for clarification on paid time off (PTO) for office closing. Kate stated this was to close the office the day after a holiday, such as Thanksgiving. The board needed to approve the office closure since it wasn't a traditional paid holiday. Kristie asked for clarification on the 2017 and 2018 profit/loss statement for actual versus budget. Kate said she will send the final statement to Sara Kelly for distribution to the Commissioners.

JoLynn Bostrom stated she appreciated all the children the program serves, especially the northern counties. JoLynn recommended (to all the programs) a former parent to speak at a training for a better understanding of what it is like for them and the challenges they faced. JoLynn praised Kate for the new mountain bike event.

Karen Jeffries asked if the program serves any children in Ziebach or Dewey Counties. Kate stated they don't at this time, most of the cases are in tribal court and they don't have a service agreement with the tribe.

### **Sioux Falls Area CASA – Stacey Tieszen**

Stacey Tieszen thanked to Commissioners for their past support. Stacey stated she completed her first year with the Sioux Falls CASA on June 18. Stacey gave an overview of her education and employment experience. She stated the program had many changes in 2018 with four new staff and an office relocation. Stacey stated she was mindful this past year to keep the mission of CASA intact and maintain the positive image of CASA in the community.

Stacey reported the programs has 115 active cases, 41 new volunteers, with a total of 83 active volunteers. The program is evaluating how often they hold trainings; they are currently held quarterly. The program has seen an increase in cases and children served from last year and they are actively recruiting new volunteers.

Stacey reported the program will celebrate 25 years in 2020 and they are increasing program awareness and marketing for the celebration. The program continues to meet with department of social services staff and management to keep communication open and address challenges as they develop.

Stacey reported they have two major fundraisers, the golf tournament and the Red Cape event. The Red Cape event was successful, raising close to \$50,000 in 2019. The gold tournament is being held over the Fourth of July weekend and Stacey commented she is a little concerned about the timing and turnout. The program will continue with two mail appeals and will focus on volunteer recruitment during the United Way black out period.

Stacey stated the program moved to a different office. The new location is larger and more visible to the public. The program signed a five-year lease.

Kim Max welcomed Stacey and appreciated her background and what she can bring to the program. Kim commented on the possibly untapped resource of funders and volunteers in the Lincoln County area.

JoLynn Bostrom stated she is excited to see what 2019 brings for the program and ideas Stacey brings.

Kristie Feigen asked for SMART goals when listing program goals. Kristie commented she like the 75% retention rate of volunteers. Kristie commented on the 2018 surplus of funds (\$27,000) but the 2019 budget had a deficit of \$76,000. Kristie expressed her concern of a negative budget. Stacey stated the board set the budget about as a goal and agreed to raise the funds; she commented they have hit their markers so far, this year. Stacey added that with the staff restructuring they will not have a negative budget at year-end. Stacey expressed her confidence in herself to raise the necessary funds needed to maintain and grow the program.

Kristie Feigen commented she likes the board bulletin and dashboards, she was happy to see the executive committee report back to the board meeting and in the minutes. She is glad to see an active board that takes ownership of committees.

10:18 am – Break

10:41 am – Resumed meeting

## **Southeast CASA – Sherri Rodgers-Conti**

Sherri Rodgers-Conti thanked the Commissioners for their past support. Sherri stated the program serves 100 percent of the children in their service area. The program has seen a significant increase in children in the cases, 2017 they served 54, 2018 they served 85, and as to date in 2019 they are serving 57 children. Sherri noted the majority reason for the removal is drug related.

Sherri stated the program has trained seven new volunteers so far in 2017 and only lost two volunteers in 2018, due to moving out of the area. Sherri reported the program continues to offer “lunch and learn” monthly trainings and all new board members get an orientation to CASA and roles, responsibilities and expectations of the board. The board has two new board members start in 2019.

Sherri reported the annual fundraisers are doing well and great visibility for the program. The third-party fundraisers are a great benefit as well to the program. The Theta sorority hold several fundraisers for the program and the program board has 100 percent giving.

Sherri stated the program meets with the department of social services staff and managers for in-service training on roles and responsibilities of CASA and the participate in the child protection meetings. The program participated in Tours of Impact hosted by the United Way, Sherri met participants in a courtroom and explained the role of CASA. Sherri stated either a volunteer or staff present a mission moment at each board meeting. They set up a pin wheel display in April to represent all the children in foster care for Child Abuse Awareness month. The program hosts “Coffee with CASA” as a recruitment tool and present ACEs training in the community.

Sherri reported she met with Jackie Horton and Sara Kelly to discuss the expansion to Charles Mix County. Sherri stated her board was not comfortable expanding to the county in 2018 and back out so First Circuit CASA could expand to Charles Mix County.

Sherri stated the board identified a need to have the program website updated and a revised website was established in 2018.

Kim Max stated she is happy to see expansion to Union County.

JoLynn Bostrom asked the number of cases in Union County, Sherrie stated two cases.

Karen Jeffries asked if they will expand to Turner County. Sherrie stated the program goal is to serve Turner County by 2020.

Kim Max thanked both Sherrie and Jackie Horton for working together to serve Charles Mix County.

Kristie Feigen stated she likes the executive director reports and the mission moments. Kristie asked about the Lincoln Nebraska training she attended. Sherrie stated it is a nonprofit leadership conference that is offered annually. Kristie asked if she would share that conference information with the other directors.

Kristie Feigen commented she is glad to see an increase in board members. Kristie asked about cases monitored by staff. Sherrie stated if a case looks like it is going to be transferred to tribal court they will hold off on assigning a volunteer and monitor the case.

Kristie Feigen stated the 2018 profit/loss statement shows a surplus of funds but the year-end statement shows negative balance. The board meeting minutes need to reflect the adjustments to the profit/loss statement. Sherri stated that was from the adjustment made due to the tax payout mistake. Sherri reported the adjustments was made and the reporting corrected.

Kristie Feigen stated she is glad to see the expansion to Union County and asked if they are looking for board members from the area. Sherrie stated she and the board are actively recruiting board members from all counties served. Sherrie stated the program and board are looking to hire a staff person from the Vermillion (Clay and Union County) area as well. Kristie stated she appreciates the board addressing board members not attending meetings and removing them if not attending regularly. Kristie also commented she really appreciates the board doing a self-evaluation in June.

#### **East Central CASA – Julie Wermers**

Julie Wermers thanked the Commissioners for their past support. Julie handed out a strategic plan at a glance paper. It is a one-page overview of the completed strategic plan that was completed in February 2019.

Julie stated the program expansion to Codington County is growing. The program hired a case manager part-time and have moved the position to full-time. The program served 86 children in 2018 and as of June 2019, the program has served 89 children in 46 cases. The program trained seven new volunteers in 2018 and nine so far in 2019.

Julie reported they are using social media for a stronger presence and are mindful of the stakeholders in outlying counties, especially Codington County. The program is giving presentations in Watertown and have booths at local vendor fairs.

Julie stated the program continues with strong fundraising events, the Fire and Ice raised \$67,000 in 2018 and raised over \$75,000 in 2019. The event also helped recruit eight potential new volunteers and six potential new board members. The SD Day of Giving raised over \$18,000.

Julie stated the challenges they are facing with the expansion is getting volunteers recruited and trained to cover all the cases and moving staff from part-time to full-time.

Julie stated they continue to collaborate and communicate with the department of social services staff, court staff and community stakeholders.

JoLynn Bostrom asked what the total number of volunteers is. Julie stated 40 and they are hoping for 20 new volunteers in Codington County. JoLynn expressed a concern for the wait list. Julie stated those are Codington County cases and once new volunteers are trained they will be assigned to the waiting cases.

Kim Max congratulated Julie on the expansion to Codington County and getting staff hired and moving towards full-time.

Kristie Feigen stated she loved the handout and assumed the number of cases monitored and waiting will come down. Kristie encouraged the board to grow and ask how many board members they currently have. Julie report they have six members, two former board members are still active with the program but no longer voting board members. Kriste stated she was nervous about board members terming out and no new members identified. Julie stated they have new members identified and they plan is to have a nine-member board.

Kristie Feigen asked for a different format for the financial information. Julie stated they have already changed the format. Kristie stated she liked the SMART goals of the strategic plan and asked about the skills gap of the board. Julie stated that is a matrix of professional background the board uses to focus on areas needed to represent on the board. Julie said the board is looking for representation from the Watertown area, SDSU, and the medical field. Kriste commented the meeting minutes are very vague and asked for more detail in the meeting minutes.

Kristie Feigen stated she was impressed with the program's strong social media presence, likes the Watertown staff involvement in the community, appreciates the use of college interns and is happy with the strong financials of \$17,000 surplus in 2018 and not a deficit budget.

Kim Max commented on the board not meeting monthly. Julie stated the board meets formally bi-monthly and the off month they meet as committees for planning events.



Judge Smith expressed his appreciation of the feedback from the last meeting was taken to heart and praised her for the program improvements and expansion to Codrington County.

#### **First Circuit CASA – Jackie Horton**

Jackie Horton thanked the Commissioners for their past support. Jackie stated the program is serving 73 children in 43 cases as of June 2019. The program average for case assignment of a volunteer is 11 days. The program expanded to Charles Mix County with the plan to slowly assign a few cases and serve a few children in 2018. The program ended up serving 11 children and are now serving 17 children. They have made several presentations in Charles Mix County and will continue to present and recruit as well as seek funds from the community.

Jackie reported they moved to a new and larger location in 2018. The space will allow the program to grow and gives more visibility to the public. The program also hires an additional case manager.

The program offers in-service training monthly and is open to community stakeholders. They plan to hold a cultural awareness training to better serve the Native American children and families.

JoLynn Bostrom congratulated Jackie on no 100 percent appointment of cases. JoLynn stated she appreciated the outreach to Joe Ashley for cultural awareness training.

Judge Smith thanked Jackie for taking on Charles Mix County. Jackie stated they are excited to meet with the Charles Mix County Commissioners and will meet with local community foundations for awareness, recruitment and hopefully donations.

Kim Max commented on the longevity of the volunteers and the mentoring of new volunteers. Kim also commented on the collaboration of in-service trainings.

Kristie Feigen congratulated Jackie on the city/county funding, thanked her for the bulleted points on program goals and accomplishments and using SMART goals. Kristie stated the strategic planning for the expansion to Charles Mix was fabulous, she liked reading about the board training on elevator speeches, really liked the August board training on evaluating the executive director, and all the other board trainings.

Kristie Feigen asked if the program has accrual for PTO. Jackie stated the policy is use it or lose it. Jackie stated this changed when the former director had accrued many hours and when she left it almost bankrupt the program. Kristie suggested the board revisit the policy so the staff don't burn out.

12:17 pm - Presentations concluded – Break

12:37 pm – Meeting resumes

**Commissioner Dialog:**

Kristie Feigen commented the funds to distribute this year are \$210,000. This is slightly up since the original meeting was postponed due to weather, however the funds may be lower next year as the plan is to meet again in April/May.

Kim Max commented the original Commission had a matrix they used when awarding funds, they Commissioners moved away from that several years ago and now look at program performance and take into consideration many factors when making grant awards.

Kristie Feigen stated the Commissioners take their job seriously and letters do go to the boards highlighting strengths and issues. The Commissioners are appointed by the Governor and the Chief Justice and we are accountable to them. This process has caught a few programs in deception and if mistakes are found be open about it. Kristie stated they look at SMART goals of the program plans and if the board is an active, strong board. Kristie also commented for next year’s application to explain if there are United Way limitations, show active recruitment, show strong financials, if expanding is it thoughtful and not a shotgun approach, bullet the program goals and accomplishments.

Kristie Feigen made a motion to award:

	Basic Operation	Expansion	Total
First Circuit	\$28,000	\$2,500	\$30,500
Southeast	\$22,000	\$2,000	\$24,000
Sioux Falls Area	\$59,000	\$1,000	\$60,000
East Central	\$14,000	\$2,500	\$16,500
Northern Hills	\$25,400	\$1,600	\$27,000
Seventh Circuit	\$47,000	\$1,000	\$48,000
State Organization	\$4,000		\$4,000

Total award of: \$210,000

Judge Smith commented this year is by far the strongest applications and presentations to date that he has served on the Commission. He congratulated all the programs for their strong leadership and staff, and believed everyone is doing a great job. He also stated unfortunately there is only so much money in the fund. He stated his recommendations is close to Kristie Feigen's with:

First Circuit	\$31,000
Southeast	\$25,000
Sioux Falls	\$60,000
East Central	\$15,000
Northern Hills	\$28,000
Seventh Circuit	\$47,000
State Organization	\$4,000

Total award of: \$210,000

Kristie Feigen stated her awards are based off the 2018 activity of the program and acknowledged East Central took a hit last year and they rose to the challenge and she wanted the award to reflect that. Kristie commented every year is different and we need to be mindful of that.

Kim Max commented she liked separating the basic operations and expansion award.

JoLynn Bostrom commented her award numbers are very similar and wanted to give First Circuit CASA for taking on Charles Mix County.

Karen Jeffries seconded Kristie Feigen's motion of award amounts. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Commissioner dialog on 2020 application:**

Kristie Feigen asked for the application to state "Briefly describe SMART goal and accomplishments (bulleted) and add a comment section after the financial section to explain anything.

Judge Smith stated he prefers the meetings held in April or May. Tentative dates for 2020 are April 23, April 24, April 30 or May 1.

Sara Kelly will send a calendar invite to the Commissioners and Directors.

Kristie Feigen commented on asking legislators to consider an increase in the CASA Commission grant fund to cover the increase in general operations. Judge Smith commented if any new programs start that would be less to share and award.

Kristie Feigen moved to adjourn  
JoLynn seconded  
1:12 pm - Meeting adjourned.

DRAFT