

**South Dakota Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)  
Commission Meeting (Conference Call)  
Thursday, April 30, 2020  
9:00 am – 2:00 pm (Central Time)**

**Attending:** Commissioners: Kim Max, Kristie Fiegen, Judge Patrick Smith, JoLynn Bostrom. Excused: Judge Karen Jeffries.

CASA Executive Directors: Kehala Two Bulls, Kate Kelley, Julie Wermers, Stacey Tieszen, Sherri Conti-Rodgers, and Jackie Horton.

CASA Board Members: Tasha Frisinger, Seventh Circuit CASA Chair, Staci Perry, East Central CASA, Keli Books, East Central CASA Chair, Dan Bienhorn, East Central CASA, Paul Lewis, East Central CASA, Michael Weiss, First Circuit CASA Chair, and Steve Laufman, and First Circuit CASA Vice Chair.

CIP Committee Members: Judge Scott Myren and Carrie Mees

UJS Staff: Sara Kelly

**Meeting Called to Order:** Kim Max called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Roll call was taken to confirm attendance.

**Approve meeting minutes from June 2019 and December 2019 meetings:**  
No corrections noted. JoLynn Bostrom motioned to approve both sets of meeting minutes, Judge Smith second the motion. Motion approved by all Commissioners.

**Announcements:** Kim Max stated the amount available to award is \$167,500. Commissioners discussed awarding funds for May and June at the end of the state fiscal year. Kristie Fiegen motioned to award the funds available and distribute additional funds by the percentage of fund award. Judge Smith second the motion. No opposed, motion carried.  
Sara Kelly will confirm with the UJS Budget and Finance Director when the funds need to be allocated for FY20 and will notify the Commissioners accordingly.

**Presentations:**

State Organization – Sara Kelly presented activities of the state organization, plans for the National CASA site review which is planned for the fall of 2020. Sara Kelly stated she may contact the Commissioners if NCASA wants to meet with them as part of the review process. Sara Kelly stated she is not going to attend any out of state meetings on behalf of the state organization (Due to COVID 19) and will not need those funds. The only CASA Commission funds needed for the state organization are for the organizations website.

Seventh Circuit CASA – Kehala Two Bulls presented updates on the programs activities, staff changes, adjustments to program practices and funding adjustments because of COVID 19. JoLynn Bostrom commended Kehala for assigning CASA volunteers to older cases and not just newly appointed cases. Kristie Fiegen asked about the Paycheck Protection Program they applied for. Kehala stated it starts as a loan and if the program meets the requirements of the loan it rolls over into a grant.

Northern Hills CASA – Kate Kelley presented updates and challenges with the program as it relates to the COVID 19 pandemic and how visits with children are handled remotely. Kristie Fiegen praised Kate for getting county funding and support.

East Central CASA – Julie Wermers presented updates on statistics of children served, cases assigned, and volunteers trained. Julie reported new cases are down significantly since January 1, 2020. Julie highlighted the adjusted practices and creative contacts volunteers are practicing. Julie reported the plan to expand services to Clark, Hamlin and Deuel Counties this year. Kim Max thanked Julie for her efforts on expanding. Judge Smith thanked Julie for the proactive judicial system approach to address perceived issues. Kristie Fiegen commented that leaders lead in crisis management and express appreciation for Julie's efforts. Kristie asked if the board met April – October 2019 as board meeting minutes were missing in the packet. Julie stated the board did meet, however the minutes were missed in the submission of the grant. Kristie Fiegen also commented the minutes are vague in general and also don't reflect specific dates of approved minutes and financials.

Break 10:22 am – 10:30 am

Call to order: 10:30 am

Sioux Falls Area CASA – Stacey Tieszen presented updates on the program's activities and reported they are embracing online volunteer training and hope to have an in-person training in July. Stacey reported staff were prepared prior to the COVID 19 pandemic to work remotely, staff have laptops and they were recently upgraded in IT security software. Stacey stated she is proud of the staff for their overall efforts to market, recruit, train and serve volunteers, children and families. Kristie Fiegen asked for information on the Red Cape event changing to a virtual event. Stacey explained how the event is rolled out and the online no-go event. Judge Smith asked how is minority recruitment is addressed and met. Stacey reported they reach out as much as possible to make connections to minority groups.

Southeast CASA – Sherri Rodgers-Conti presented updates on statistics of children served, number of volunteers and counties served and the overall program growth over the past eight years. Sherri stated the program hasn't had any new appointments the onset of COVID 19 and anticipate a surge in cases after the pandemic subsides. Sherri the CASA Diaper Depot efforts. Sherri reported the program will complete a five-year strategic plan in 2020 for 2021 through 2025. Kim Max praised Sherri for the expansion of the program and questioned the diaper depot efforts and expressed concern the program doesn't lose focus on the CASA mission. Sherri stated they are very mindful the diaper depot doesn't take away from the CASA mission. Kristie Fiegen appreciated the complete meeting minutes and the expansion into Turner County.

First Circuit CASA – Jackie Horton presented updates and statistics on the program activities, children served, how volunteers are meeting with children remotely. Jackie reported the program is implementing flex training for new volunteer training and they hope to have an in-person training in August. Jackie report a major gifts planning training is set for September for the board. Jackie gave a brief overview of the senate bill that was introduced and then pulled for increasing CASA Commission fund. Kim Max commented on the increase in cases in Brule County. Jackie stated Brule County has a new State's Attorney and pursues cases. JoLynn Bostrom and Judge Smith both thanked Jackie for the hard work and expansion of services. Kristie Fiegen acknowledged the income increase, challenges in Charles Mix and the board training and engagement.

**Discussion-Commissioners:** Commissioners discussed attachments for the 2021 grant application. The Commissioners agreed they don't need to have a copy of the 990, Internal Controls, Conflict of Interest, Bylaws, and MOUs unless there is a change to them. The application needs to have brief explanation with a word limit of 200. The year-end statement needs to be a complete year January – December income statement and balance sheet. Site visit could be done virtually for 2020. Financial statements should not have shading because scanned copies result in unreadable black columns. Question if board members could attend future in-person meetings via conference call. Sara Kelly will follow up with the Legislative Research Council for conference call options.

**Awards:** Kristie Fiegen proposed:

First Circuit CASA \$23,380  
Southeast CASA \$18,788  
Sioux Falls CASA \$46,593  
East Central CASA \$18,788  
Northern Hills CASA \$20,040  
Seventh Circuit CASA \$37,074  
State Association \$2,338

Judge Smith proposed:

Sioux Falls CASA \$39,000

Seventh Circuit CASA \$39,000

State Association \$2000

Remaining funds divided equally among the other programs.

Discussion among Commissioners. Kim Max asked for a motion on either proposal – hearing none – Kim Max moved to accept Kristie Fiegen’s proposed award amounts. Kristie Fiegen second the motion. No further comment from JoLynn Bostrom, Judge Smith wanted to recognize East Central CASA’s strides made. Kristie Fiegen commented East Central CASA’s increased funding award this year as a result of strong efforts and demonstration of leadership in time of crisis. Kristie Fiegen stated hopefully there will be more funds in June to disburse. Vote on motion: Judge Smith – aye, JoLynn Bostrom – aye, Kristie Fiegen – aye, Kim Max – aye, Judge Jeffries – excused. Motion carried.

**Public Comments:** No public comments

**Set meeting dates for 2021:** April 22, May 6 and May 20 were set as tentative dates. Final date will be confirmed in October 2020.