

INDIAN POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OB-2, 4th floor, Lookout Conf. Rm.
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2005

Welcoming and Introductions – Liz Mueller, IPAC Chair
Invocation – Jim Sijohn
Roll call – Nancy Dufraine

Rachel Langen, Director, Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCEL): Brief announcement provided by Rachel Langen. She reported on early learning information that had been distributed for comment, and she encouraged tribal input and recommendation. They referenced the “Blue Book” developed at the meeting in Bow, Washington.

Kathy Letch, Assistant Secretary, Aging and Disabilities Administration (ADSA): Discussed various changes in federal and state funding. The Medicare Part “B” drug coverage will be changing and it will go into effect January 2006. The Washington State Insurance Commissioner is helping get the word out to the public. We need to get the word out to all Tribes and American Indian Organizations.

There are changes in Medicaid coverage as CMS attempts to control budget costs. There will be reductions in coverage for home & community based services and long term care.

Elder abuse is under reported and the federal Elder Justice Act did not pass. There is an opportunity to seek support for another try for passage of this legislation. Currently, the Adult Protective Services are a “State” only funded service.

The Whitehouse Conference on Aging is scheduled for December, 2005 and it is required to be held under the provisions of the Older Americans Act. The Governor will appoint 4 delegates to attend from the State of Washington and this includes the appointment of 2 Tribal delegates. Kathy will provide the name of the contact person to IPAC.

The tribes indicated the Indian Health Service is helping the Tribes prepare their position papers for the Whitehouse Conference on Aging.

The tribes requested a copy of the failed Elders Justice Act so that IPAC could review it. Kathy agreed to provide the information.

Kathy reported that there were no big cuts during the last session of the Legislature.

The Adult Protective Services Program is looking for tribal participation. They have sent out copies of sample agreements and related information.

Tribes asked who would have DSHS authority to sign the agreements. Kathy indicated that each region will be signing the agreements. Some tribes reported they are working on agreements. Other tribes reminded APS that they must give notice to Tribes with or without an agreement because APS lacks jurisdiction in Indian Country.

Tribes urged Kathy to assure that State funding Area Agency on Aging Programs with Counties are required to consult with Tribes.

Infant, Toddler Early Intervention has one tribal contract in place. It is important to have early assessments for the children.

Tribes are concerned that HQ promises at IPAC meetings are not implemented by the Regional Administrators. The good old boy system is a barrier to the implementation of agreed upon policy when it is unilaterally changed at the regional level.

Tribes asked about changes to asset transfers for elders trying to access long term care. Medicaid allows elders to keep some assets for calculating eligibility for long term care. The federal government does not want to impoverish the elders. There was discussion about a 36 month transfer allowed before determining eligibility. There was discussion about a 60 month transfer allowed for Medicare eligibility determination. Elders have used trust accounts to shield their assets and this shifts the majority of the costs the State.

Tribes have heard that their tribal members have been denied medical services if their tribe owns a casino. The Shriners mad such a statement to a tribal member when they applied for medical services. This is not acceptable.

Tribes asked about the status of Estate Recovery. Kathy reported that there was no change.

Tribes wee concerned the State does not make the long term care reductions worse by further tightening eligibility requirements.

Tribes asked if the seizure and sale of Indian lands been resolved. Kathy indicated that there was no change in this area.

Tribes shared information about NICOA's efforts to help tribal elders with the changes in Medicare Part "B". They are doing this work with grant funds but they are about to run out. The State was encouraged to help keep the effort financed. Kathy thanked IPAC for the information.

Tribes wanted teeth put into the contracts with the State Area Agency on Aging in order to assure "consultation" with the Tribes. Aaron is aware of the concern and agrees there should be tribal contact and there is still time to make the contact.

Tribes are also concerned with Regional Support Networks and their failure to seek consultation with Tribes. There needs to be a financial hammer in the RSN contracts to assure consultation with Tribes. The State must withhold funds if the RSN does not comply.

Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration (CA): Introduced herself to the IPAC delegates. There was discussion about the new organizational chart for the Children's Administration. The recent budget deficit had a great effect on the reorganization effort. There were 46 positions reduced in headquarters

Tribes were concerned about the preservation of the position formally occupied by Charlene Ramirez. This position is a critical position and is an important resource to the tribes. Laverne was asked to provide copies of the job description and recruitment notice to the tribes. Tribes want input on the hiring for the position.

Cheryl shared that Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) issues are important to her and need to have high level contact in her administration.

Tribes asked about the title of the position held by Charlene. Laverne indicated that it is the same and Cheryl is willing to consider a change if the tribes recommend one. Tribes also asked about the titles and functions of other positions such as Betsy Tulee from Seattle and Kateri Bishop from the Spokane area.

Tribes expressed concern about the lack of adequate Indian Child Welfare training. Where will this fall in the reorganization? Cheryl asked where do tribes want it and she is willing to report back on this issue.

Tribes want regular meetings and to bring Indian staff together for the benefit of serving tribes. Cheryl is a team person and is willing to consider bring Betsy Tulee's position up in the organizational chart.

LaVerne provided a copy of the current draft position for the position held by Charlene Ramirez, and she encouraged tribes to review and make recommendations. They will also look at the other positions held by Betsy and Ateri. Tribes need to send comments by August 12, 2005 and send them to LaVerne, (360) 902-7768.

Liz recommended that the IPAC Children's sub-committee work on the position description today. We need to fill this important position as soon as possible.

Tribes suggested putting the ICW resources in IPSS in order to assure better tribal access and timely response to tribal concerns.

Tribes asked about having a copy of the old job description and the new draft for comparison purposes.

Tribes want to assure the job description gives recognition to applicable tribal law, federal law, and not just state law.

Tribes indicated that ICW compliance and success requires more than one position in CA dedicated to ICWA and responding to tribal issues.

Tribes were concerned about the CA budget cuts eliminating the Diversity Coordinators statewide. Cheryl indicated that the responsibilities have not gone away and Carrol Felton will be responsible for meeting these responsibilities.

Tribes do not want all of the ICW specialists limited to HQ, and there needs to be specialists in each region.

Tribes believe that ICWA training has fallen too far behind. The compliance is going to suffer.

Tribes are concerned about the implementation of evidenced based treatments that have not been proven to meet the needs of tribal members. There need to be consultation on this important topic.

Tribes want the CA definition of off-reservation to be in conformance with the IPAC definition in the By-laws.

Nancy Dufraine stated that Region 6 has the highest number of tribes and the CA budget should reflect this need when budgets are developed. There is an inequity in the current budget.

There was discussion about the Children's Mental Health Initiative. Cheryl gave a detailed summary of the project. The goal is to achieve good outcomes. The data is lacking for tribal members but there have been some successes with CMHI.

Tribes have the experience to treat their tribal members and these needs to be recognized. The CMHI restricts services to 6 visits in some cases. This is not enough time to be successful with tribal members.

Marilyn Scott thanked Cheryl for coming to the IPAC meeting and she shared that tribes know it will not changed overnight. Cheryl is encouraged to visit each region and to learn about the local tribal issues. Tribes want Cheryl to be open and flexible in addressing tribal concerns. Cheryl needs to designate a contact for tribes to address the CMHI.

Tribes feel the meetings need to come to the tribes. Most meetings are too far away and it is difficult for tribes to participate in the many meetings. It is important to health the family. Tribes face increased risk of liability caused by the poor rate of ICWA training being provided to CA social workers. Maybe the tribes need to train the CA social workers.

Sub-committee breakouts:

(See attached sub-committee matrixes' for more information)

Sub-Committee Reports:

Children's Sub-Committee
Kristi Woodard, IPSS Regional Manager

- Kids Come First
- NICWA Report
- CA contracts/consultation meetings with Tribes
- ICW Program Manager position

Health and Rehab Sub-Committee

Trudy Marcellay, IPSS Regional Manager

- 4th Annual DASA Tribal Gathering to be held in October
- MHD – Emergency Preparedness workgroup/committee
- Planning Grants – Tribes would like to be included in the planning process prior to the state submitting their plans.

Economic Services Sub-Committee

Lorraine Van Brunt, IPSS Regional Manager

- Reviewed matrix and Deb Marley letter
- Tribal TANF Disregard
- Rosi Frances appointed to serve on sub-committee
- DCCEL – Child care rates
- Tribal determination of eligibility for child care and Medicaid

Legislative Sub-Committee

Nancy Dufraine, Chehalis Tribe
Phil Ambrose, IPSS Regional Manager

- List of bills for the development of workgroups, need tribal representation
- Send letter for consultation with Tribes
- CA legislative taskforce: one rep. for the Eastside and one rep. from the Westside.
- Elders Justice Act
- DSHS Request Legislation
- Increased communication

Aging and Disability Services Sub-Committee

Jim Sijohn, AICC
Sharri Dempsey for Doug North, IPSS Regional Manager

- AAA to work on relationships with Tribes and include them in 7.01 plans
- Discussions of Elder's conference for Spring of 2006
- ADSA Management Bulletin
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Consultation minutes attached RE: DASA Funding Distribution with Secretary Robin Arnold-Williams and Tribal Representatives.

Other items:

The next IPAC meeting is scheduled for October 13th, 2005 in Olympia, OB-2, 4th floor, Lookout Conference room. Election of Vice-Chair and one At-Large Member set for October's meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

