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**Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Council**  
Meeting Minutes  
September 21, 2023  
11:00 A.M.  
Meeting Held via Zoom

<b>Council Members Present</b>	<b>Council Members Absent</b>
Patricia (PJ) West – Iowa HHS - <b>Chairperson</b>	Jeremy Ritchie – Iowa Workforce Development
Stephanie Stebens -Citizen Representative – <b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Eudora Beckley- Citizen Representative
Monica Garner – Department of Education	Dr. Michael Fleming – University of Northern IA
Billie Marchik – University of Iowa	
Zebulon Beilke-McCallum – Domestic Violence Representative	
Nicole Berensmann-Maddox – Citizen Representative	
Dr. Kere Belding - Iowa State University	
Lorie Easter – Iowa HHS – Community Action Agencies, Director	
<b>Ex-Officio Members Present</b>	<b>Ex-Officio Members Absent</b>
Senator Claire Celsi	Senator Sandy Salmon
	Representative Anne Osmundson
<b>FaDSS Council Staff Present</b>	<b>FaDSS Council Staff Absent</b>
Page Humphrey – Iowa HHS – Community Action Agencies	Angela Madison – Department of Health and Human Services
Elizabeth Patten – Iowa HHS – Community Action Agencies	
Melanie Ruffalo – Iowa HHS – Community Action Agencies	
<b>Others Present</b>	
Mindy Williamson – West Central Community Action	Laura Benson – Mid-Sioux Opportunity
Wendy Mueller - West Central Community Action	Karli Schmelzer – NEICAC
Amber Mercil – Four Oaks	Brenda Fry – SCICAP
Doug Stodgel- Polk County FEC	Ranae Banicky – Sieda Community Action
Nichole Griese - NEICAC	Jody Trimble- Polk County FEC

Jessi Bergin - Community Action Agency of Siouxland	Katie Vis-Mid-Sioux Opportunity
Christy Anthofer – New Opportunities	

**Introductions** – PJ West, Chairperson

PJ West, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. Quorum was established.

**Approval of Agenda** – PJ West, Chairperson

Zebulon Beilke-McCallum moved that the agenda be approved. Stephanie Stebens seconded the motion. All council members voted aye. The agenda was approved.

**Approval of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Council Minutes** – PJ West, Chairperson

Stephanie Stebens moved that the May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 minutes be approved. Kere Hughes-Belding seconded the motion. All council members voted aye. The minutes of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 were approved.

**Council Representative’s Update** – All Council Members

There were no updates from Council Members during this meeting.

**IFDA Update** – Laura Benson, IFDA

The annual FaDSS retreat was September 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> in Des Moines. Close to 100 staff attended. The IFDA Coordinators are planning for FaDSS day on the Hill on January 25, 2024.

**Training Committee Report**

The comprehensive outline of FaDSS training and the draft outline for the New Worker training were provided to the committee members prior to the council meeting. Dr. Kere Hughes-Belding reported it was helpful in learning more about the FaDSS program goals. The committee members felt the training topics aligned well with the knowledge and skills that would be needed for new staff. Monica Garner reported on potential areas of collaboration within the existing systems of professional development across ECI and the Iowa Head Start Association.

**Outcomes Committee Report**

This committee is responsible for updating the language for the Self-Sufficient Matrix. This committee is composed of only two council members, Dr. Michael Fleming and Bill Brand who is now retired. State Program Managers sent proposed SSM wording for review to Lorie Easter and Dr. Michael Fleming. Both are supportive of the changes in the matrix and provided suggestions. Proposed language was drafted by a work group of Specialists focused on making the language more concise for consistent scoring. The next steps will be to make the changes in Iowa FaDSS.

## **Nominations Committee Report**

Mary Whisenand would like to join the FaDSS Council as a business representative. The Nominations Committee will make a recommendation for the Council to vote on at the next Council meeting.

## **FaDSS Family Success Video**

Katie Vis with Mid-Sioux Opportunity was the Specialist that worked with the family featured in the video. This video is from a new round of success stories filmed this summer. Katie is still working with the family. Senator Celsi and Lorie Easter asked if the family could come to FaDSS Day on The Hill.

## **Staff Updates**

### **Capacity Chart-Page**

Page reviewed the capacity chart that was sent to council members. Page explained that the grantees that have fallen below capacity have experienced staff turnover. Zeb asked the last time Operation Threshold was to capacity. Page found that it was fiscal year 2022.

### **FaDSS Program Manual-Page**

Page showed the program manual. There will be an electronic version coming soon with interactive tabs links to easily navigate to policies and forms. Printed copies of the manual were given to FaDSS Coordinators and Specialists at the FaDSS retreat. There was a lot of good feedback from staff who like having all the information in one place. The final electronic version will be sent out to council members by Page when it is available.

### **Iowa FaDSS Program Updates-Elizabeth**

This summer new features such as Family Level Reminders, Eligibility Review Tab have been implemented which eliminates the need for forms. Developers are currently working on a Pre-Enrollment feature and new reports.

Zeb commented as a reminder to keep confidentiality in mind when developing reports in regards to domestic violence.. Iowa FaDSS has security features in place such as multi-factor authentication. State Staff will pay close attention to reporting out in safe ways, especially in smaller areas.

### **Grantee Annual Reports-Elizabeth**

All annual reports have gone out to the grantees in September. The Statewide report will be available by November 1st.

### **Administrator's Report-Lorie**

It was Officially on July 1<sup>st</sup> that FaDSS joined Iowa HHS. FaDSS is now within the Community Access Division and is part of the Community Action Agencies Unit (CSBG, FaDSS, LIHEAP, Weatherization). Community Action Agencies joins Child Support Services, Economic Assistance Programs and Wellness and Prevention Health within the Community Access Division. The division Director is Erin Drinnin.

With the potential government shut down on October 1<sup>st</sup>, being within a bigger division, we will be able to rely on the state funds within HHS if the shut down does occur.

Iowa HHS is working on a service delivery alignment project. This will lead to recommendations regarding system alignments. This can include service delivery maps, proposed funding models, identifying Iowa code and rules, currently HHS reading sources and supports. FaDSS is one of the nineteen areas included in this assessment. There have been town hall meetings, surveys and in-person interviews with the vendor contracted by Iowa HHS. Recommendations are going to be coming out in October.

As part of the realignment bill, a committee was formed to study the efficiency and effectiveness of each board and commission that is established in Iowa Code. Information was provided to this committee about the FaDSS Council. Recommendations have been released and the recommendation about the FaDSS Council is that it should be merged with another committee or council. Also, there was a recommendation for our Community Action Commission to be eliminated. Senator Celsi noted that there are no other public comment periods for the recommendations for the Committee and Councils.

Page notified the council that Lorie Easter is officially the new Unit Director for Community Action Agencies.

**Other Business-** no other business.

**Adjournment** – Stephanie Stebens motioned for the meeting to adjourn and Monica Garner seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.