

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGING, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, LEGISLATIVE AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
Meeting Jointly
Tuesday, June 21, 2022
1:00 PM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators David Wallace, Chair; Clarke Tucker, Vice-Chair; Cecile Bledsoe; Representatives Charlene Fite, Chair; Mary Bentley, Mark H. Berry, Keith Brooks, Craig Christiansen, Cindy Crawford, Tony Furman, Julie Mayberry, Rick McClure, and Joy Springer

Other members present: Senator Linda Chesterfield; Representatives Stan Berry, Cameron Cooper, Gary Deffenbaugh, Denise Jones Ennett, Fredrick J. Love, and Nelda Speaks

Senator Wallace called the meeting to order.

Approval of the May 16, 2022, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit B]

Representative M. Berry made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Senator Bledsoe, and the motion carried.

Appointment to the Child Maltreatment Investigations Oversight Committee

Senator Bledsoe made a motion to appoint Alex White to the Child Maltreatment Investigations Oversight Committee, seconded by Representative Fite, and the motion carried.

Update from the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) on the New Arkansas Veterans Home [Exhibit D]

Retired Colonel Nate Todd, Department Secretary, ADVA; gave a presentation on the new Arkansas Veterans Home. He discussed funding for the new facility, as well as a new veterans cemetery, and ADVA district officers.

Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) [Exhibits E1-E2]

Mischa Martin, Director, DCFS, DHS; discussed the January 1, 2022 – March 31st, 2022, Quarterly Performance Report. She discussed the total number of child maltreatment reports, statistics of reports, and caseloads. She also discussed the Biannual Overturned Investigations report, covering the statistics of the investigations. Ms. Martin also gave an update on reducing the number of children in foster care. She discussed the DCFS strategy of prevention, permanency, and workforce stabilization, as well as the outcomes being seen from this strategy.

Arkansas State Police, Crimes Against Children Division, Quarterly Oversight Report, January – March, 2022 [Exhibit F]

Major Jeff Drew, Commander, Crimes Against Children Division; discussed the Quarterly Oversight Report. He discussed hotline calls, investigations, charges, and staffing.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.