

**South Dakota CASA Commission - Virtual
Additional Funding Grant Meeting
January 25, 2024
2:30 PM – 4:00 PM Central Time
Virtual Meeting**

Attending: *Commissioners:* Kristie Fiegen, JoLynn Bostrom, Crystal Aman, Judge Patrick Smith.
CASA program executive directors: Kehala Two Bulls and Stacy Starzl-Hansen.
CASA program board members: Michael Weiss and Sandi Floyd.
UJS Staff: Sara Kelly

Call to Order: Commissioner Fiegen called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Overview: Commissioner Fiegen gave an overview of the additional funds awarded to the CASA Commission fund for the development of new programs, expansion of volunteers and coverage area, and marketing.

Presentations:

- a. **First Circuit CASA:** Board chair, Mike Weiss and board member, Sandi Floyd presented the marketing plan to recruit and train volunteers primarily focusing on Aurora, Brule, Douglas, and McCook Counties. The efforts will also raise awareness and raise funds through community education and digital outreach. The goal is to train volunteers in the targeted counties with the outcome of zero children on a waiting list.
Commissioners thanked the board members for presenting today in the absence of the executive director and commented on the quality of the grant and plan.
- b. **Southeast CASA:** Stacy Starzl-Hansen presented the marketing plan to assist in the community outreach and education. The goal is to create new program brochures for recruitment and awareness, giving and donations, and legacy gift giving. The program board plans to grow the board and diversify to the outlying counties and raise awareness of CASA in the outlying counties.
Commissioners thanked Stacy for the presentation and for her efforts to grow the board and raise awareness of CASA in all the counties they serve.
- c. **Seventh Circuit CASA:** Kehala Two Bulls presented the growth plan for expansion of services to youth transitioning out of foster care. Kehala stated the goal is to have CASA volunteers advocate for the older youth to ensure they are receiving services and connect them with agencies for life skills, experience, and knowledge.
Commissioners thanked Kehala for the presentation. Commissioner Bostrom commented that the department of social services has Independent Life Skills for any child 16 years and older to receive community resources and life skills. Bostrom also stated her concern for the 300 plus children on the waiting list and feels that needs to be the focus and not an initiative for a new independent living service. Commissioner Fiegen asked for clarification on the financial deficit of \$125,000. Kehala explained the program budget year ended before the Vucurevich grant application is awarded in January 2024. Commissioner Fiegen asked if she applied for other grant applications for this project. Kehala stated not yet but plans to do so. The commissioners all expressed the concern that the

project isn't a good fit for the growth and expansion the legislators want to see with the additional funds.

Discussion and Awards:

First circuit, no further discussion, award of \$15,835. Southeast CASA, no further discussion, award of \$8,400. Seventh Circuit CASA, commissioners liked the idea but not the best idea for the additional funds. Commissioners commented that the focus needs to be on growing the volunteer base and serving more children on the waiting list.

Motion to approve First Circuit and Southeast CASA grant applications, Judge Smith second, all approved.

Other Business: Commissioner Fiegen reminded all the annual meeting coming up May 9, will be virtual.