

South Dakota CASA Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 29, 2022
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm Central Time
[Virtual](#)

Attending

Commissioners: Kristie Fiegen, Judge Patrick Smith, Lloyd Guy, Crystal Aman, and Jolynn Bostrom

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

UJS Staff: Greg Sattizahn and Sara Kelly

Chairwoman Kristie Fiegen called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm, CT.

1. Discussion on the additional funds transferred to the SD CASA

Commission fund from the general fund. Commissioner Fiegen stated the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the one-time, one-million-dollar transfer of general funds to the SD CASA Commission fund. The letter of inquiry was shared with the Commissioners and CASA EDs. Commissioner Fiegen summarized a conversation she and Greg Sattizahn had with LRC staff person, Jeff Mehlhaff. It was suggested the Commission have an outline of how the funds will support expansion of programs (coverage area and increase in volunteers) and what effect expansion will have on current programs and address sustainability.

Greg Sattizahn stated the extra funds can be used over several years, not require spending the one million in one year.

2. Discuss first steps on the development of a plan for sustainability and expansion of CASA programs.

Commissioner Fiegen suggested each local program board brainstorm on ideas for expanding to cover gaps in services, prioritize ideas or options, what is the most useful and impactful. Sara Kelly stated she will meet with each local program executive director and board in August and September.

CASA executive directors shared their thoughts on ideas for program expansion and struggles on securing volunteers. A strong marketing

campaign for volunteer recruitment and CASA awareness was suggested. Commission Guy recommended expanding the CASA coverage to Fifth and Sixth Circuit and if a marketing campaign is established to address Native Americans and diversity recruitment. Greg Sattizahn suggested a request for proposal option to expand and serve areas not covered and build capacity to increase volunteers. Greg suggested the three-part outline of marketing, new program start-up, and expansion of current programs.

Sherri Rodgers-Conti stated when Southeast CASA was established, they had a small grant from National CASA and then it was the program to develop sustainability. Kate Kelley stated the Presiding Judge in the Fourth Judicial Circuit was the one that established a task force to determine if a CASA program was feasible and did all the necessary paperwork to get non-profit status and other requirements.

3. July 27, 2022 – Joint Appropriations Committee meeting.

Commissioner Fiegen stated the discussion with the Joint Appropriations Committee is scheduled for July 27, 2022. Commissioner Fiegen said she will attend the meeting, Greg Sattizahn state he is not able to attend, but will have Sara Kelly attend with the UJS Director of Budget and Finance, Aaron Olson. Sara Kelly will work on a presentation with the history of CASA, steps need to start a new program, statistical information and financial history of CASA.

Commissioner Smith stated he will work with Greg Sattizahn to engage the Presiding Judges for expansion support.

Jackie Horton reminded the group in 2020 when she worked with legislators on increasing the fund in the SD CASA Commission fund, the reason it was rejected was not all areas of the state have CASA. Once there is statewide coverage, it is possible to ask for the increase.

4. Next Steps: Commissioner Fiegen stated the Commission will meet again this fall to discuss information collected by Sara from program boards, give an overview of the Joint Appropriations Committee, and begin policy and a plan on how to best award the additional funds.