



**STATUS ON THE COUNCIL OF GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN  
MINUTES  
June 11, 2021**

**Members in Attendance:**

Talya Bergeron  
Heidi Bourgeois  
Kathy Coleman  
Rose Doolittle  
Angelic Keller  
Tewabetch Negatu  
Mary Norris  
Kathleen Richey  
Lakeisha Robertson  
Amanda Skinner  
Joni Smith  
Danna Spayde  
Michael Stewart  
Brenda Swanigan  
Joanna Tonguis

**Guests in Attendance**

Andrea Couch  
Jarwanda Harris

**Call to Order:**

Tewabetch Negatu called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

A motion was made approve the February 11, 2020 minutes, members approved.

**Workgroup updates**

- ***Nutrition:*** Ms. Kathy Coleman stated that her work group had become to collect data and that she would have additional updates in the coming weeks.
- ***Education:*** Ms. Robertson expressed that her workgroup was working on collecting data and shared that COX was working on providing internet access to community members with low income. Additionally, she noted how more grandparents are actually younger in age and she's looking at ways to connect them with resources.

- **Legal:** Talya mentioned how curator fees continue to be a barrier. Talya stated that she would like to reach out to different Bar Associations to determine if they would be willing to volunteer curators. She proposed that instead of the normal \$550 required to curators they would provide this service at a reduced rate.

### **Discussion**

Members discussed different ways to help grandparents receive services from a curator. Ms. Kathy stated CLEs could be offered in exchange for probono services. Judge Richey stated that the council could submit an article to the Bar Journal that highlights challenges faced by grandparents and kinship providers. The Bar journal is read in large part by most licensed attorneys in the state and would spotlight the importance of supporting these caretakers as well and demonstrate the amount of money that is saved by not allowing these children to become custody of the state. Talya stated that she would work on a journal article submission and Tewabecth agreed to write a letter to the judges to encourage attorneys to reduce their curator rates.

Heidi stated that DCFS has additional assistance for those who attended school virtually or did hybrid classes from August 2020 to the end of the year.

### **Closing Remarks**

Talya made a motion to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Kathy Coleman. The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.