

State of New Mexico

OFFICE OF FAMILY REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR



BETH GILLIA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FARRA FONG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR PROGRAMS

LISA FITTING
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

June 23, 2025 MEETING MINUTES
APPROVED August 25, 2025

Members in Attendance

Chair Monica Zamora, Retired Judge, Court of Appeals
Vice-Chair John Davis, Retired Judge, 13th Judicial District
Cristen Conley, Director, Corinne Wolfe Center for Child and Family Justice
Tim Flynn-O'Brien, Retired Civil Rights and Tort Attorney
Beth Gillia, OFRA Executive Director
Bernie Lopez, Parent Advocate
Linda Lopez, NM State Senator, District 11
Mary Nienow, Director and Associate Professor, School of Social Work, NMSU
Alison Pauk, CCIC Director, NM Administrative Office of the Courts
Pamela Pierce, CEO Silver Bullet Productions

Members Absent

Monica R. Corica, Civil Legal Services Attorney
Pamelya Herndon, NM House of Representatives, District 28
Elena Giacci, Trainer and Advocate
Abbigale Martinez, Youth Member
Joanna DeLaney, Youth Member

I. Call to Order/Welcome. Chair Zamora called the meeting to order at 3:06pm.

II. Announcements.

Director Gillia introduced new staff, Marcie Battle Access Coordinator; Ugo Machuca, Family Peer Support Navigator; Alex Sanchez, Financial Specialist; Lara Sunderman, Attorney; Carmen Cortez, Paralegal; Jenessa Garay, Attorney; and Heidi Clawson, Law Clerk.

III. Adoption of Agenda. Commissioner Flynn-O'Brien moved to approve the agenda, and Commissioner Pierce seconded. The agenda was approved without opposition.

IV. Approval of April 28, 2025, Minutes. Commissioner Davis moved, and Commissioner Pierce seconded. The April 28, 2025, minutes were approved without revision or opposition.

V. Public Input. No public input was offered.

VI. OFRA Spotlight

Director Gillia thanked OFRA Chair Monica Zamora for her longtime commitment to children and families, recognizing that she served OFRA and the larger community through her entire legal career, from her beginning as an adoption lawyer, as a Children's Court Judge, and as an Appellate Judge. Judge Zamora has always been committed to a high-quality collaborative practice. She sought to bring parties from all disciplines and fields together to ensure that children in state custody, whether in foster care or in the juvenile justice system, to get the services and resources they needed to grow into fully functioning and exceptional adults. She has spent long hours and extra time bringing together juvenile detention, law enforcement, CYFD, attorneys, educators, and service providers to eliminate the school to prison pipeline.

As a judge, Chair Zamora always set high expectations for attorneys in all cases and made sure that each party's due process rights were honored in her courtroom. She had a gentle touch, and you would never hear a harsh word from her. She always focused on the interest of justice.

She has been a huge supporter of OFRA since the beginning, all while trying to streamline our efforts and increase our efficiency and effectiveness. She has been a persuasive voice for OFRA at the legislature, telling powerful stories about the importance of our work and the strengths of our families. She has been a terrific partner to Director Gillia and asserts oversight in the most collaborative, inquisitive and positive way possible.

VII. Committee Resolution.

Chair Zamora, Commissioner Flynn-O'Brien and Commissioner Davis prepared a revised draft of the committee resolution to formally adopt three committees. The goal of the resolution is to get as much work done through these committees as possible so the commission can have full, but efficient discussions during meetings. There were no questions or comments.

Commissioner Bernie Lopez moved to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. With no further discussion or opposition, the resolution was adopted by the Commission. Once signed by Chair Zamora and Commissioner Davis, the original will be sent to Director Gillia and Katherine.

VIII. Director's Report.

Special Meeting – needed to address salary equity and compression issues, including approval of a small raise for the Executive Director. The Commission will also pick the next Chairperson at the Special Meeting.

Staffing – OFRA currently has 27 full-time employees. We are advertising for additional positions. We currently have:

- 6 of 7 in our Leadership team. The Executive Director, 2 Deputy Directors, 2 Division Directors, and Chief Information Officer positions are filled. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position remains open, but we currently use a mobile CFO that DFA has assigned to us for up to 8 hours/week, as well as a contract accountant.
- 1 executive secretary
- 8 attorneys, 1 paralegal, and 1 law clerk
- 1 social worker and an offer for another
- 5 family peer support navigators, with another position posted soon
- 1 access coordinator
- 1 financial specialist
- 2 HR staff
- IT systems administrator

We have an offer pending for a project manager.

We expect to have all 49 approved positions filled by the end of FY26. We are advertising both in Albuquerque and Las Cruces for attorneys, supervising attorneys, and family peer support navigators.

Offices – We will be moving into our Albuquerque office at 500 Marquette NW on July 21, 2025. We have done a lot of planning to have a trauma-informed environment. We have lots of informal meeting space, a lactation room, quiet room, lots of small and large meeting areas, and a nice training room. We plan to have an open house in the late fall. Commission meetings will be hybrid once we have occupied our offices.

We have adopted a hybrid work policy for all non-probationary employees to allow flexibility for some teleworking.

We have another RFP open for an office in Las Cruces. The first RFP closed with no bids. We reissued the RFP and had 5 potential bidders at the opening meeting. The RFP closes on July 18, 2025.

OFRA's second "birthday" is coming up soon. During this time, we've learned a number of lessons that we've incorporated into our contracts, practice guide, existing policies and policies under development (including HR, finance, travel, capital assets, procurement, leave and absence, and an employee code of conduct). Our entire staff co-created Guidelines to Build and Sustain a Healthy Collaborative Organizational Culture, which addresses commitments we make as OFRA employees to demonstrate the practical behaviors we expect. It is a coaching tool and will be used in evaluations and training.

Chair Zamora expressed her appreciation and gratitude for the support OFRA has given to each other.

DEI - Director Gillia updated that we have contracted with Everett Hill, a local New Mexican who has a PHD in social work. Dr. Hill will be creating a comprehensive DEI training curriculum for our entire staff, will review our policies and hiring practices and identify opportunities to be more welcoming and clearer and more supportive of a fully diverse workforce.

Budget – Director Gillia discussed the closing of FY25. We are doing better than last year with a \$14,000,000 budget. We anticipate a small reversion, somewhere near \$500,000. We'll have exact figures later this calendar year.

Director Gillia and the Commissioners discussed budget terminology (including encumbrances, reversions, and carry forwards).

FY26 Budget – The total budget is \$14,727,800 (including state general funds, funds for salary increases and increased health benefits, IV-E reimbursements, IV-E funds that carry forward from the current year, and GRO funds). As has been the case in prior fiscal years, our largest expense in FY26 will likely continue to be contract attorneys, though staffing expenses and related costs will go up.

IX. Update on Commission Vacancies.

No Commission vacancies exist. Cristen Conley will rejoin the Commission as the representative for the Corinne Wolfe Center for Child and Family Justice on July 1, 2025. Commissioner Tim Flynn-O'Brien was appointed by the Supreme Court to fill Chair Zamora's spot. At the time of the meeting, the Commission was still awaiting a letter of appointment for Representative Herndon. [Note: the letter was provided to the Executive Director after the meeting.]

X. Adoption of Meeting Schedule for 2025 and 2026.

The Commission discussed the meeting schedule and locations and decided on the following:

DATE	LOCATION	PURPOSE
June 30, 2025	Virtual Special Meeting	Executive Director's salary, committees, election of a new Chairperson
August 25, 2025	Hybrid	budget approval
October 27, 2025	Hybrid	
December 8, 2025 (not 4 th)	Hybrid	
January 5, 2026	Hybrid	Prep for Legislative Session

February 23, 2026	Hybrid	
April 27, 2026	Hybrid	
June 22, 2026	Hybrid	
August 24, 2026	Hybrid	Budget approval
October 28, 2026	Hybrid	
December 14, 2026 (not 7 th)	Hybrid	

XI. Other Business. No other business was conducted.

XII. Adjournment of Meeting. Commissioner Davis moved, and Commissioner Bernie Lopez seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm.