

# **Child Support Guidelines Review Panel**

## **September 15, 2010**

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Members Present:**

Craig M. Burshem, Esquire  
Lawrence D. Diehl, Esquire  
Carol B. Gravitt, Esquire  
Brian S. Hawkins  
Dennis M. Hottell, Esquire  
Delegate G. Manoli Loupassi  
Senator Frederick M. Quayle  
The Honorable A. Ellen White

#### **Staff Present:**

Amma E. N. Appiah  
Alice G. Burlinson  
Cynthia G. Coiner  
Melody C. McKinley  
C. Robert Owen  
Nathaniel L. Young, Jr.

#### **Members Not Present:**

Bonnie Akkerman-Crawford  
Amy Atkinson  
Delegate William K. Barlow  
Jennifer Crown  
The Honorable Wilford Taylor, Jr.  
Delegate Ronald A. Villanueva  
Michael W. Woods, Esquire

#### **Observers:**

David Cotter, Legislative Services  
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Crane  
Tommie McNeil, Virginia Public Radio  
Mrs. Frederick M. Quayle  
Kevin Stokes, Legislative Services

#### **I. Welcome**

Senator Quayle

Senator Quayle welcomed the members and thanked them for their time and service on the Panel. Senator Quayle made some introductory remarks and cited the fact that the 2009 quadrennial Panel had recommended at its last meeting on September 25, 2009 that future Panels meet more frequently than toward the end of the four year review cycle. The 2009 Panel recommended at least an annual Panel meeting to ensure adequate time to review the child support guideline and related issues, finalize a report and make recommendations to the General Assembly. In response to that recommendation, this meeting was scheduled to reconvene the Panel to begin its work for the 2013 cycle, introduce new Panel members, present the General Assembly's resolution to Mr. Joseph Crane, and discuss the process for the guideline review, the Panel's future goals, meeting frequency and meeting dates.

#### **II. Introduction of New Members**

Senator Quayle

Senator Quayle introduced Craig Burshem, Senior Assistant Attorney General and Chief of the Child Support Section of the Office of the Attorney General, as a new Panel member; Senator Quayle then asked the other members to introduce themselves: Carol Gravitt, Larry Diehl, Dennis Hottell, Judge Ellen White, Delegate Manoli Loupassi and Brian Hawkins.

### III. Presentation to Joseph Crane

Senator Quayle

In recognition and appreciation of his many years of service to both the Division of Child Support Enforcement and the Guideline Review Panel, Senator Quayle and Nick Young presented Joseph S. Crane with a framed joint resolution adopted by the 2010 Session of the General Assembly.

### IV. Message from the Director: Nick Young

Nick Young, Director of the Division of Child Support Enforcement, shared a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview and current data on the child support program in Virginia.

Questions from Panel members included:

- (1) Why was there a decrease in paternity establishment in 2004?
- (2) Is private operation of Hampton and Chesapeake child support offices a good thing or a bad thing?
- (3) What about the legislation that was passed to penalize for failure to establish paternity? (Clarification that the penalty is at the federal level for failure to meet incentive measure for paternity establishment)

Mr. Young introduced the staff present at the conclusion of his remarks: Cindy Coiner, executive assistant to Mr. Young; Alice Burlinson, Regional Senior Assistant Attorney General, who works for Craig Burshem and works extensively on DCSE legislation; Melody McKinley, legal services analyst who works with Craig Burshem; Bob Owen, policy analyst with vast institutional knowledge of DCSE, the guideline process and the work of previous review Panels; and Amma Appiah, Assistant Attorney General.

### V. Goals for this Meeting

Craig Burshem

Craig Burshem gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the guideline development process, the history of the Panel's recommendations from 1995-2009, the various methodologies currently used by states to determine their guideline schedules, and options for consultants to develop revised economic data in support of a comprehensive review of Virginia's guidelines.

Suggestions for consultants included Jane Venohr, Ph.D., of the Center for Policy Research in Colorado and an as yet unnamed economist from George Mason University.

Questions and comments from Panel members included the following:

- (1) Panel members raised issue of using the Melson methodology and the self preservation model;

- (2) Senator Quayle requested a copy of the new Maryland guidelines and report be provided to every Panel member; and
- (3) Policy issues were raised including studying the costs of raising a child and the recommendations from the study conducted by Dr. William Rodgers of The College of William and Mary in 2002.

#### VI. Plans for Future Work of Panel

All

There was general discussion about possible consultants and experts to conduct a study, including Jane Venohr and Laura Morgan, and the process to hire such an expert;

A proposal was made and seconded to hire a consultant to conduct an economic study; all Panel members present voted in favor of the proposal;

There was discussion to get further input from other stakeholders such as the Family Law Coalition.

Judge White and Ms. Gravitt raised the issue of the interest charged on child support arrears as an issue for the Panel to study and review.

#### VII. Comments / Questions

All

See above.

#### VIII. Schedule Next Meeting

All

December 17, 2010, 1:00 p.m.

Discussion of the December meeting date resulted in consensus to try to set the 2011 meetings at the December meeting in order to get these dates on members' calendars. A series of dates will be circulated by staff for four meetings in 2011.

#### Action Items for Staff:

1. Determine method to post documents for access by panel members and other interested persons.
2. Identify and circulate proposed 2011 meeting dates.
3. Prepare and circulate minutes of September 15, 2010 meeting.
4. Send 2008 Maryland report to panel.
5. Request panel input on developing list of stakeholders and policy issues.
6. Proceed to engage economists for research and development of guidelines based on current economic data.
7. Send September 15, 2010 meeting handouts to panel members not in attendance.