



# Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** February 5, 2013

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Juanita Jackson 854-4467

**Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:** Sherri E. Fleming,  
County Executive for Health and Human Services and Veterans Service

**Commissioners Court Sponsor:** Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

**AGENDA LANGUAGE:**

Consider and Take Appropriate Action to Approve the Appointment of Brook Son to the Early Childhood Council.

**BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) is a formal advisory body to the Austin City Council. The ECC is comprised of 13 members; 11 of which are appointed by City Council, one member is appointed by the Austin Independent School District and one member is appointed by the Travis County Commissioners Court.

Anna Lisa Fahrenthold, the Commissioners Court's former appointment, and Early Childhood Planner at TCHHS/VS, has left her role at HHS/VS Department and ended her term on the ECC as of December 2012.

Health and Human Services staff recommends Brook Son, a Senior Planner in the Research and Planning Division for the position. As a staff member serving on the ECC, Brook Son would continue to represent the interests of Travis County and contribute content knowledge in the areas of child development, community needs, systems of care for young children and collaborative community problem solving.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

TCHHS&VS staff recommends approval this appointment.

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to Cheryl Aker in the County Judge's office, [Cheryl.Aker@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:Cheryl.Aker@co.travis.tx.us) by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. for the next week's meeting.

**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

Appointing staff to this body now has successful precedent and is common practice. Currently, the AISD appointment is the Director of Early Childhood Education, Jacqueline Porter.

**FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

None.

**REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

Blanca Leahy, Director, Research & Planning Division

Ron Hubbard, Early Childhood Coordinator, City of Austin

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to Cheryl Aker in the County Judge's office, [Cheryl.Aker@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:Cheryl.Aker@co.travis.tx.us) by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. for the next week's meeting.



**TRAVIS COUNTY HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES  
and VETERAN SERVICES**

100 North I.H. 35  
P. O. Box 1748  
Austin, Texas 78767

**Sherri E. Fleming**  
Executive Manager  
(512) 854-4100  
Fax (512) 854-4115

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** Feb. 5 2013

**To:** Members of the Commissioners Court

**From:**

*Sherri E. Fleming*  
Sherri E. Fleming, Executive Manager

Travis County Health and Human Services and Veteran Services

**Subject:** Travis County Commissioners Court Appointment to the Early Childhood Council

**Proposed Motions:**

Consider and take appropriate action on the appointment of Brook Son to the Early Childhood Council.

**Summary and Staff Recommendation:**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) is a formal advisory body to the Austin City Council. The ECC is comprised of 13 members; 11 of which are appointed by City Council, one member is appointed by the Austin Independent School District and one member is appointed by the Travis County Commissioners Court.

Anna Lisa Fahrenthold, the Commissioners Court's former appointment, and Early Childhood Planner at TCHHS/VS, has left her role at HHS/VS Department and ended her term on the ECC as of December 2012.

Health and Human Services staff recommends Brook Son, a Senior Planner in the Research and Planning Division for the position. As a staff member serving on the ECC, Brook Son would continue to represent the interests of Travis County and

contribute content knowledge in the areas of child development, community needs, systems of care for young children and collaborative community problem solving.

Appointing staff to this body now has successful precedent and is common practice. Currently, the AISD appointment is the Director of Early Childhood Education, Jacqueline Porter.

TCHHS/VS staff recommends approving this appointment.

**Budgetary and Fiscal Impact:**

None

**Background:**

Early Childhood Council. *Member roster and bylaws attached.*

The Early Childhood Council was formed in 1982 and primarily provides recommendations to the Austin City Council for the development and sustainment of programs that promote quality services for young children and the corresponding systems of care. In the past, the ECC has encouraged community engagement through community discussions, awareness campaigns and spotlights on best practices and local programs.

Brook Son. *Resume attached.*

Brook Son joined the Research and Planning Division in early 2004 and current areas of focus include early care and education, Department-wide strategic planning, and collaborative problem solving. Brook currently teaches Community Leadership at the UT School of Social Work. She has a range of education and experience in the areas of services for low income working individuals and families, child and youth development, demographic trends, family economic security, and planning and policy development in both nonprofit and government settings.

Brook Son holds a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master of Science in Social Work with a focus on Administration and Planning from the University of Texas at Austin.

CC: Blanca Leahy, Director, Research & Planning Division  
Ron Hubbard, Early Childhood Coordinator, City of Austin

**Brook M. Son**

1207 Cloverleaf Dr. Austin TX, 78723 512-751-6849 brookmson@gmail.com

---

**Relevant Experience**

Planner, Travis County HHS & VS Research & Planning January 2004 – Present

- Through the *Community Solutions Project*, mentored and trained other human service and planning professionals in best practice models and theory for solving shared community level problems.
- In partnership with ACC Center for Community Based and Non-Profit Organizations, developed and implemented a modular year-long training series for human service professionals and others engaged in collaborative problem solving processes.
- Supervised Master level social work interns from the UT School of Social Work.
- Worked within the Travis County early childhood community to plan and align resources at a system level.
- Coordinated Travis County HHS/VS early childhood investment dollars.
- Conducted program development, strategic planning and various levels of human service evaluation.
- Researched and wrote professional community conditions data reports.
- Wrote grants with substantial funding implications.

Adjunct Faculty, UT Austin School of Social Work August 2009 – Present

- Taught a *Leadership in Community Building* graduate course at the UT School of Social Work.  
Course objectives for students included:
  - Understand the need for community building and social change in civil society from diverse national and global perspectives;
  - Critique key concepts, theories, and models of community building;
  - Compare and contrast leadership roles and responsibilities, as well as strengths and limitations of citizens and practitioners in community building;
  - Apply theory and action principles of community building to a contemporary issue or case involving citizens and practitioners;
  - Demonstrate knowledge and skill in community building through a service learning project or case study;
  - Critique personal skills in community building as well as potential conflicts in ethics, values, or cultural orientations.

Board of Directors, Austin Discovery School - Elementary Charter Mar 2007 – Present

Board Chair, March 2007- June 2011

- Guided an elementary level Texas charter school board of directors through a process of defining scope of board role and board level work. Developed work plan and working board structure.
- Oversaw school Executive Director/Superintendent in her administration of the elementary school program and budget.

Center Director, Mainspring School (Austin Community Nursery School) May 1999 – May 2001

- Supervised the daily operations of a childcare center licensed for up to 60 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years.
- Administered grant contracts in a team environment.
- Supervised 20 teachers in age-appropriate learning assessment and curriculum development for classrooms.

**Education:**

Master of Science in Social Work, Administration & Planning  
University of Texas at Austin

Bachelor of Social Work, University of Texas at Austin

<b>City of Austin Early Childhood Council Current Membership January 2013</b>	<b>First Appointed</b>	<b>Date Reappointed</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
<b>Kyle Holder, Chair</b> Nominated by: Council Member Mike Martinez	10/28/99	08/23/12	07/31/15
<b>Anna Lisa Fahrenthold, Vice Chair</b> Nominated by: Travis County Representing: Outside (Austin Independent School District and/or Travis County)	10/19/10		12/31/12
<b>Albert Black</b> Nominated by: Council Member Laura Morrison	06/23/05	07/28/11	07/31/14
<b>Sofia Casini</b> Nominated by: Mayor Lee Leffingwell	08/02/12		07/31/15
<b>Lawrence Elsner</b> Nominated by: Mayor Lee Leffingwell	08/20/09	08/02/12	07/31/15
<b>Aletha Huston</b> Nominated by: Mayor Lee Leffingwell	02/03/00	08/02/12	07/31/15
<b>Debra Keith-Thompson</b> Nominated by: Council Member Chris Riley	06/04/92	07/28/11	07/31/14
<b>Laura Koenig</b> Nominated by: Mayor Lee Leffingwell	03/01/12	08/02/12	07/31/15
<b>Rhonda Paver</b> Nominated by: Mayor Lee Leffingwell	04/05/90	08/02/12	07/31/15
<b>Jacqueline Porter</b> Nominated by: Austin ISD Representing: Outside (Austin Independent School District and/or Travis County)	05/13/10	08/02/12	07/31/15
<b>Cindy Rojas Rodriguez</b> Nominated by: Council Member Bill Spelman	03/01/07	09/27/12	07/31/15
<b>Avis Wallace</b> Nominated by: Council Member Sheryl Cole	10/26/00	08/16/12	07/31/15



## **BYLAWS OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

### **ARTICLE 1. NAME.**

The name of the board is Early Childhood Council (ECC).

### **ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE AND DUTIES.**

The Early Childhood Council shall, as stated in City Code § 2-1-123 (B):

- (1) make recommendations to the city council for the creation, development, and implementation of programs that promote optimal development for young children;
- (2) develop, for recommendation to city council, programs and activities that contribute to the continued development of a system of high- quality early care and education and after-school programs for Austin's children;
- (3) explore and develop, for recommendation to city council, cooperative arrangements with area governments in the metropolitan region to support a system of quality early care and education;
- (4) encourage volunteerism and philanthropic efforts in order to generate broad-based community involvement and support for quality early care and education and promote the well being of families of young children; and
- (5) develop, for recommendation to city council, strategies encouraging individuals and agencies to continually improve the quality of their services for young children; and
- (6) support innovative approaches to quality early care and education and leadership development in fields relating to the optimal development of young children.

### **ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP.**

- (A) The board is composed of 13 members. Eleven members are appointed by the city council. One member is appointed by the Travis County Commissioners' Court. One member is appointed by the Austin Independent School District.
- (B) A member serves at the pleasure of the appointing body.
- (C) Board members serve for a term of three years beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> on the year of appointment.
- (D) An individual board member may not act in an official capacity except through the action of the board.



- (E) A board member who is absent for three consecutive regular meetings or one-third of all regular meetings in a “rolling” twelve month timeframe automatically vacates the member’s position subject to the holdover provisions in Section 2-1-27 of the City Code. This does not apply to an absence due to illness or injury of the board member, an illness or injury of a board member’s immediate family member, or the birth or adoption of the board member’s child for 90 days after the event. The board member must notify the staff liaison of the reason for the absence not later than the date of the next regular meeting of the board. Failure to notify the liaison before the next regular meeting of the board will result in an unexcused absence.
- (F) At each meeting, each board member shall sign an attendance sheet which indicates that the member does not have a conflict of interest with any item on that agenda, or identifies each agenda item on which the member has a conflict of interest. Failure to sign the sheet results in the member being counted as absent and his/her votes are not counted.
- (G) A member who seeks to resign from the board shall submit a written resignation to the chair of the board, the staff liaison, or the city clerk’s office. If possible, the resignation should allow for a thirty day notice so the city council can appoint a replacement.

#### **ARTICLE 4. OFFICERS.**

- (A) The officers of the board shall consist of a chair and a vice-chair.
- (B) Officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the board at the first regular meeting after October 1<sup>st</sup>. In the event a current officer becomes ineligible to serve as an officer, the board may hold an emergency election as needed.
- (C) The term of office shall be one year, beginning November 1<sup>st</sup> and ending October 31<sup>st</sup>. An officer may continue to serve until a successor is elected. A person may not serve as an officer in a designated position of a board for more than three consecutive one-year terms. A person who has served as an officer in a designated position of a board for three consecutive terms is not eligible for re-election to that designated office until the expiration of two years after the last date of the person’s service in that office. The board may override the term limit provision for an officer by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the authorized board members.
- (D) A member may not hold more than one office at a time.

#### **ARTICLE 5. DUTIES OF OFFICERS.**

- (A) The chair shall preside at board meetings, appoint all committees, represent the board at ceremonial functions and approve each final meeting agenda.
- (B) In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall perform all duties of the chair.

## **ARTICLE 6. AGENDAS.**

- (A) Two or more board members may place an item on the agenda by oral or written request to the staff liaison at least five days before the meeting. After first consulting with and receiving input from the staff liaison, the chair shall approve the each final meeting agenda.
- (B) The board liaison shall submit the meeting agenda through the online agenda posting system for each meeting not less than 72 hours before the meeting.
- (C) Posting of the agenda must comply with Texas Government Code Chapter 551 (Texas Open Meetings Act).

## **ARTICLE 7. MEETINGS.**

- (A) The board meetings shall comply with Texas Government Code Chapter 551 (Texas Open Meetings Act).
- (B) Board meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- (C) The board may not conduct a closed meeting without the approval of the city attorney.
- (D) The board shall meet monthly. In November of each year, the board shall adopt a schedule of the meetings for the upcoming year, including makeup meeting dates for the holidays and cancelled meetings.
- (E) The chair may call a special meeting, and the chair shall call a special meeting if requested by three or more members. The call shall state the purpose of the meeting. A board may not call a meeting in addition to its regular scheduled meetings as identified in its adopted meeting schedule, more often than once a quarter, unless the meeting is required to comply with a statutory deadline or a deadline established by Council.
- (F) Seven members constitute a quorum.
- (G) If a quorum for a meeting does not convene within one-half hour of the posted time for the meeting, then the meeting may not be held.
- (H) If only a quorum is present at a meeting, a board action is adopted by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the quorum (5 votes). If more than a quorum is present at a meeting, a board action must be adopted by an affirmative vote of the number of members necessary to provide a quorum (7 votes).
- (I) The chair has the same voting privilege as any other member.
- (J) The board shall allow citizens to address the board on agenda items and during a period of time set aside for citizen communications. The chair may limit a speaker to three minutes.

- (K) The staff liaison shall prepare the board minutes. The minutes of each board meeting must include the vote of each member on each item before the board and indicate whether a member is absent or failed to vote on an item.
- (L) The city clerk shall retain agendas, approved minutes, internal review reports and bylaws. The Health and Human Services Department shall retain all other board documents. The documents are public records under Texas Local Government Code Chapter 552 (Texas Public Information Act).
- (M) The chair shall adjourn a meeting not later than 10 p.m., unless the board votes to continue the meeting.
- (N) Each person and board member attending a board meeting should observe decorum pursuant to Section 2-1-48 of the City Code.

## **ARTICLE 8. COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS.**

### COMMITTEES

- (A) The Early Childhood Council shall have the following committee:
- Executive: Duties: Review meeting agendas, plan and manage ECC activities, and leadership development.
- (B) Each committee must be established by an affirmative vote of the board. A committee cannot meet until its creation is approved by the Council Audit and Finance Committee. Each committee shall consist of at least three board members appointed by the chair. A staff member shall be assigned to each committee by the director of the Health and Human Services Department.
- (C) The board chair shall appoint a board member as the committee chair, with the member's consent.
- (D) A majority of the total number of appointed committee members constitutes a quorum.
- (E) Each committee shall meet on a regularly scheduled basis at least quarterly.
- (F) Each committee shall make an annual report to the board at the January board meeting.
- (G) Committee meetings must be posted in accordance with Texas Government Code Chapter 551 (Texas Open Meetings Act).
- (H) At each committee meeting, a committee member shall sign in on a sheet provided and shall indicate that the member has no conflict of interest with any item on the committee meeting agenda, or identify each agenda item on which the member has a conflict of interest.

WORKING GROUPS

- (A) The board can determine the size of a working group but the number of board members serving on the working group must be less than a quorum of the board.
- (B) A working group may designate a chair, with the member's consent, but is not required to do so.
- (C) Quorum requirements do not apply to working groups.
- (D) Staff support will not be provided for working groups.
- (E) Working groups are not required to post their meetings in accordance with the Texas Government Code Chapter 551 (Texas Open Meetings Act).

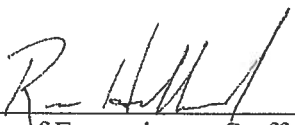
**ARTICLE 9. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY.**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the board in all cases to which they are applicable, except when inconsistent with these bylaws or with special rules of procedure which the board or city council may adopt.

**ARTICLE 10. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS.**

A bylaw amendment is not effective unless approved by the Council Audit and Finance Committee.

The bylaws were approved by the Early Childhood Council at their meeting held on January 11, 2011.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Executive or Staff Liaison

Early Childhood Coordinator, HHSD  
Title