



CONNECTICUT FAMILY SUPPORT COUNCIL

November 10, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location: DDS East Hartford Office, Training Room

In attendance:

Robyn Trowbridge, *Co-Chair*, Lisa Sheppard, *Co-Chair*, Marie Bennett, Jennifer Carroll, Mona Tremblay, Karen Hlavac, Cathy Adamczyk, Sylvia Gafford Alexander, Colleen Hayles, Thomas Brooks

Call to Order: 10:08 a.m. by Co-Chair Lisa Sheppard.

Open to Public: 10:09 – Public not in attendance at that time.
Public member arrived at 10:12 a.m.

Discussion

No comment.

Change in Meeting Agenda Order

Guest Speakers

Christine Cooney, DDS Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs, and Rod O'Connor, DDS Legislative and Regulations Analyst, introduced themselves and discussed their background. Ms. Cooney and Mr. O'Connor are liaisons for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and work with legislators, the Governor's office and other state agencies to address issues concerning DDS including legislation affecting the department and its consumers. They keep track of legislative bills and maintain contact with legislators. They produce updates that are posted to the DDS legislative affairs webpage that have bills that are being tracked and where those bills are in the process. All of the department's testimony before legislative committees is posted to the webpage and there are links to previous year's testimony as well.

Various handouts from the legislative affairs website were discussed. The session-end Legislative Summary Report details the impact of bills on DDS families. The next legislative sessions begins in February 2012.

DDS is presently working on regulations concerning Community Living Arrangements (CLA), Community Companion Homes (CCH) and Contracting for Individualized Home Supports and Continuous Residential Supports (IHS/CRS).

DDS in the process of setting up a web page for the public regarding dates, alerts that a hearing will be held.

There was an open discussion on how the Family Support Council can better advocate for their concerns with the Legislature.

Suggestions:

- Choose FSC priorities
- Whittle priorities down during the course of the year
- Don't get discouraged if things do not happen right away
- Target a message – all FSC members on the same page
- The personal message of families' need to connect to FSC goals/priorities and be presented in a “calm” manner.
- Identify the key legislators who will be helpful to you (key players)
 - Public Health Committee
 - Appropriations Committee
 - Human Services Committee
 - Select Committee on Children
- What are the legislator's priorities and do they tie in to what FSC is doing?
- Determine who can testify to represent the Council?
- Submit written testimony
- When meeting with legislators try to have someone from their district in the meeting.
- Contact both your State Representative and State Senator
- Council can both testify before a committee and submit written testimony
- Get to know the legislators, their legislative aides, and committee staff

Representatives of state agencies who are members of the FSC cannot provide testimony or vote on items at FSC, which are contrary to their department mandates

Legislative Breakfast

Tips to make it more focused

- Find legislators who are willing to sponsor the breakfast
- Everyone who comes to the breakfast should know who their legislator is and talk with them or their legislative aide while they are in the Legislative Office Building.
- Write a handwritten note on your focused message and priorities
- Buttons -- FSC
- Follow-up with legislators
- If legislators need further information send it to them
- Continue the dialogue with the legislator after the breakfast

Ask your Legislators if they had an opportunity to read the Annual Report. Is this information helpful to them if they receive it ahead-of-time. Ask if they have any input.. Send a thank-you note with any thoughts.

Old Business

Update: By-Laws sub-committee: No report. Tabled to next meeting

Review PATH Checklist

Submit a list of priorities – discussion:

- Streamline services available for the families – case management, agencies, single entry, easy access
- As funds are available as it relates to support
- Bureau of Early Childhood Education Race to the Top (Early Childhood) (Jen to present).
- Children’s Behavioral Health: What the state is doing for the Affordable Health Care Act
Department of Public Health

Meeting Adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 8, 2011, 10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Office of Protection and Advocacy, Training Room

Minutes recorded by Marie Bennett, Secretary