

**FINAL Minutes of March 12, 2009**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Jen Carroll, Chairperson; James Heffernan, Vice Chair; John Pelegano, Secretary; John Frost; Ted Walen; Carlos Colon (with support staff Kettle Guerrin); Patrick Vingo; Lou Richards; Thomas Kalal; Kevin Morey; Peter H. O'Meara - Ex-Officio.

**DDS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:** Deputy Commissioner, Kathryn du Pree; Ed Mambruno, DDS Ombudsperson; Christine Pollio, Dir. Legislative and Exec. Affairs; Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison; Captain Michael Woodson, Director of Investigations.

**Jennifer Carroll called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Pat Johnson from CIB/Oak Hill was in attendance and shared information regarding CCPA's analysis of actions providers are taking to cope with the impact of the 0% cost of services increase for FY09 and anticipated action steps to cope with the cumulative impact of 0% cost of services increase for FY09, FY10 and FY11.

**NEW MEMBER**

Chairperson Carroll took a minute to introduce the newest member of the Council, Mr. Thomas Kalal of East Lyme. Members and staff went around the table to do introductions.

**MINUTES**

Chairperson Carroll asked for a review of the February minutes. The minutes were approved as drafted. Mr. Kalal abstained from voting on the minutes as he was not at the February meeting.

**PRESENTATION: MANAGED HEALTH CARE PILOT PROGRAM, NORTH REGION**

North Region staff Dory McGrath (Health Services Director) and Karen Stebbins (Managed Health Care Coordinator) presented on the North Region's Managed Care Pilot Program. (Slide show on the presentation is attached)

**OMBUDSPERSON REPORT (ED MAMBRUNO)**

Ed Mambruno reviewed his March report with Council members. Ed met with a Connecticut group that is trying to replicate an employment program in Minnesota that may be of particular benefit to individuals with autism. Ed has continued his visits to nursing homes that are used by our consumers and was very impressed with the Masonic Home and Hospital. They offer comprehensive medical, clinical and rehabilitative services. Ed was very complimentary of the programs he is seeing in the South Region and of the quality of case management.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (CHRISTINE POLLIO)**

The Department has been busy testifying on numerous bills before the legislature. Christine reminded members that testimony is available on the DDS website. DDS testified before the Appropriations committee on Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, the Appropriations Health and Hospitals subcommittee on March 5<sup>th</sup> and the Finance Revenue and Bonding subcommittee on March 6<sup>th</sup>. DDS submitted testimony to the Transportation Committee on March 4<sup>th</sup> regarding SB 428, AAC the Safety of Individuals being Transported by State Agencies and to the Planning and Development Committee on March 6<sup>th</sup> regarding HB 6596, AAC Notification Requirements of Halfway Houses.

DDS's agency bill, HB 6309 has moved favorably through both the Public Health Committee and the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee. It is being prepared in file copy and will be sent to the house floor. Agency bill SB 756 (access to DCF Child Abuse & Neglect Registry) has moved favorably through the Public Health Committee and the Human Services Committee (with technical substitute language). The bill is being prepared in file copy and will be sent to the Senate floor. Agency bill SB 789 (VSP info sharing bill) has moved favorably through both the Public Health and Human Services Committees and is being prepared in file copy to be sent to the Senate floor. DDS's agency bill regarding voluntary services has not yet been given a bill number or had a public hearing. The agency sexual assault bill (HB 6645) will have a public hearing before the Judiciary Committee on March 16<sup>th</sup> and the Commissioner will be testifying.

The 2 bills related to the Program Review and Investigations Committee's Aging Needs study (SB 752, SB 753) were favorably voted out of committee with substitute language. We are waiting for the file copy. The private provider "rescue fund" bill (HB 6909) was voted out of the Human Services Committee favorably with substitute language.

### **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Current budget efforts are to resolve FY 09 budget deficit, which is \$900 million - \$1.3 billion. The department remains pleased with the Governor's recommended budget for DDS but will continue to watch any efforts to address providers' financial concerns and the waiting list. FY 09, 10 and 11 depend on union concessions, which have not been resolved yet.

All positions that are vacant have been cancelled including direct care, nursing and case management. There are more aggressive controls on spending in all areas and DAS approval is required for most purchases. The Department has been able to keep services in place. The Department administration continues to meet with DDS staff in all regions to keep them informed of developments but there are not yet answers on a retirement incentive plan or the types of union concessions being proposed.

Policy debate continues regarding the level of service cuts versus tax increases.

Peter and Kathryn have an audio-visual message available on the web and will continue to update as new information is available.

Providers' union contracts and nursing home contracts are up this spring.

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Pat Vingo asked about the process to request refills through the requirement to reestablish positions. The Commissioner indicated the department will present the impact and costs. The department will also need to make decisions to operate more efficiently. The department will continue to present the argument of revenue generation. Carlos Colon asked if the advocates can be helpful getting information to consumers so they understand what is happening. The Commissioner encouraged their participation in our town meetings and family forums. Deputy Commissioner du Pree will present at the People's First conference in May. Carlos offered to help develop some written material for self-advocacy groups. Jack Frost and Dr. Pelegano asked about the wisdom and cost effectiveness of not filling direct support positions. We will present the requests to OPM.

The Commissioner thanked Chairperson Carroll and the Family Support Council for an excellent legislative breakfast focused on family needs.

Ed Mambruno is nominated for his 3<sup>rd</sup> term as a board member of CHRO.

The Commissioner spoke of an increase in recent incidents of fraud concerning payroll and client funds in both the public and private sectors. We are pursuing arrests where appropriate.

Lou Richards asked that the department resume sharing the Registry reports again. Christine Pollio will make sure these are sent electronically.

Chairperson Carroll asked Commissioner O'Meara if the Council could help to advocate to fill direct support positions. The Commissioner will report back next month as to whether we are able to get them approved.

The Commissioner indicated that the department will update the web frequently and the Trades meeting is broadcast monthly.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to discuss.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairperson Carroll and Jack Frost introduced the question about starting the meeting earlier. The decision was to move the time to 6:00 PM for April and May. Dr. Pelegano made a motion, which was approved by all.

Carlos Colon announced the North Region's legislative breakfast of March 25<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 – 10:00 AM in the LOB dining room.

Michael Woodson extended an invitation to Council members to attend the April investigation training in Meriden at the Academy.

Christine Pollio has added information to the binders, which can be kept here or taken home. Please leave blue binders. RAC minutes will no longer be copied since they are on our web.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.**