



Council on Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

APPROVED Minutes of October 11, 2012

Location: DDS Central Office, Conference Room A

In Attendance: Patrick Vingo, Vice Chairman; Marisol De Jesus; Jack Frost; David Hadden, Thomas Kalal; Jamie Lazaroff; Dr. Terrence Macy, Ex-Officio; Sheila Mulvey; Patti Silva

Absent: James Heffernan, Chairman; Jennifer Carroll; Dr. John Pelegano, Secretary; Lou Richards

Guests: Robin Wood, Family Support Strategies and Advocacy Director

Staff: Michelle Bacry, Executive Secretary; Joseph Drexler, Deputy Commissioner; Sgt. Shane Hassett; Rod O'Connor, Legislative and Regulations Analyst

Vice Chairman Patrick Vingo opened the meeting at 6:04 P.M. with introductions to Marisol De Jesus the newest member of the Council on Developmental Services.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Robin Wood, Director of Family Support Strategies & Advocacy Update Presentation

Introduction of Robin Wood, Director of Family Support Strategies, was done by Commissioner Macy, who was pleased to introduce the Council to the newest agent of change to the Department of Developmental Services. Ms. Wood position is the first of its kind in the United States and will be instrumental when implementing DDS's Five Year Plan.

Ms. Wood explained the four major areas on which she is focused based upon needs that have been expressed (see attached) and the continuing importance of having every level of participation from families, self advocates and staff as DDS moves forward. This is accomplished by asking two very important questions 1) "how can we help you do the work you do?" and 2) "how can you help us do the work we do?"

A current project Ms. Wood is working on is the Accessible Communications Pilot. This pilot will allow DDS staff to develop guidelines that will be used when creating written documents that are provided to individuals and families. Guidelines will include directions on format design, use of People First language, and use of Plain English precepts. This will improve communication with individuals and families by creating written materials which are clear, concise, and easy-to-read and which have a consistent format that is readily recognized as a DDS product.

Enhanced lifelong planning is an area that requires attention. DDS is developing a website that will work with families during every age of the lifespan of the individual.

On September 27th the Moving the Mission forum was held at Manchester Community College. This day was attended by Jen Carroll and Patti Silva from the Council. Ms. Silva discussed how wonderful and empowering the day was with everyone having the ability to stand and offer opinions and thoughts. She also stated that the day allowed her to interact with people she was not familiar with and hear many fresh ideas and thoughts from them.

Ms. Wood explained how the day was developed by Commissioner Macy to include stakeholders and other state agencies. The day was facilitated by three staff for the Department of Social Services. We have learned that by including other agencies in events such as this it allows DDS to create dialogue and discussions with them.

Approval of September Minutes

Minutes for the September meeting were reviewed. David Hadden made a motion to accept the minutes as written for the July meeting. Patti Silva seconded the motion. The Council voted unanimously to accept the September minutes as written.

Legislative Update

Rod O'Connor advised the Council that the DDS Legislative Package that contained four DDS legislative proposals for the 2013 session was submitted to the Office of Policy and Management and the Governor's office for review. A comprehensive list of the department's legislative proposals will be distributed via email to Council members once they are reviewed by the Office of Policy and Management and the Governor's office.

Mr. O'Connor advised the Council of the Governor's appointments to the Personal Care Attendant Workforce Council. They are as follows: Janet Van Tassel, Leslie Simoes and Mary Ann Handley. Sheila Mulvey asked how a consumer would become appointed to the PCA Council. Commissioner Macy stated felt that Leslie Simoes, Executive Director, Arc Connecticut, would protect and represent the individuals who self hire staff.

Mr. O'Connor is in the process of updating the DDS Manual. This project should be completed by January 1. The manual is located on the DDS website. Also, the Appropriations and Human Services Committees will be holding a hearing on the renewal of the DDS Individual and Family Support (IFS) Waiver on Tuesday, October 23, 2012 at 10:00 am at the LOB in Room 2C.

Mr. O'Connor reminded Council members that it is a political season and the importance of voting in November. Jamie Lazaroff also reminded the Council that if you don't vote you can't complain.

Commissioner's Update

The Commissioner updated the Council on the most recent department activities concerning the Florida Institute for Neurologic Rehabilitation (FINAR). The Commissioner stated the team that was sent was in agreement that all individuals were safe and well supported. A full report is being prepared with extensive detail for the Commissioner. A comprehensive plan is being developed to return 6 of the 10 individuals to Connecticut. The agency's goal is to bring DDS consumers who are placed out-of-state back to Connecticut.

Commissioner Macy invited the Council to the DDS's New Mission and Vision Kickoff event that will be held Thursday, November 1 starting at 11:00 am at the DDS Central Office. The new Mission and Vision reflect DDS's values which dictate the direction and practices of the DDS service delivery system. The community of self advocates, family members, providers, and other stakeholders will be the ultimate designers of supports and services. At no time in this process is guidance more necessary than at the beginning of the journey. This is why November 1st is so important.

The Connecticut Family Support Network held its second annual One Voice Parents Conference on Tuesday, October 9. Genna Lewis, Self Advocate Coordinator, spoke. Ms. Silva shared how after listening to Ms. Lewis speak at the conference it left her hungry for more. Ms. Lewis' impact on the day was immeasurable.

Old Business

The Connecticut Supreme Court has upheld an Appellate Court ruling overturning the conviction of a Bridgeport man found guilty of sexually assaulting a woman with intellectual disabilities. Mr. O'Connor explained that current state law does not specifically cover the circumstances of this case, but the Chief State's Attorney's office is working on legislation to correct this "gray" area. Ms. Silva requested to be updated regarding this issue and any forthcoming legislation.

Sergeant Shane Hasset updated the Council that he has been in touch with the forensic team that is processing the evidence from the abuse case in East Hartford. He advised the Council If any other perpetrator is identified swift action will be taken accordingly.

New Business

Mr. Vingo addressed the Council on whether it was necessary for Ed Mambruno, DDS Ombudsperson to attend every Council meeting. Section 17a-210a (d) of the Connecticut General Statutes states that he must report monthly to the Council but is silent on whether he must attend Council meetings. Shelia Mulvey made a motion to have Ed Mambruno, Ombudsperson attend every other month's Council meeting and that the Ombudsperson report be distributed monthly to the Council members. David Hadden seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 7 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention.

Ms. Mulvey shared information regarding a pamphlet that is being distributed regarding the organization of Personal Care Attendants. Ms. Mulvey expressed her dissatisfaction with the creation of a registry and had shared this with Commissioner Macy who took this concern to the Governor's office. In addition, a Candidates Forum on Disability Issues flyer was also distributed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 P.M. on a motion by Shelia Mulvey and seconded by Tom Kalal.