

FAMILY SUPPORT COUNCIL
Monthly Meeting
October 16, 2008

Date: 10/16/2008

Place: Office of the Child Advocate

Time: 10:00am –12 Noon

Attendees: Moira O’Neill, Terry Cote, Chris Sloss, Jennifer Carroll, Karen Hlavac, Colleen Hayles, Robyn Trowbridge, Deborah Pagano, Tom Brooks, Sheila Harris, Angela Spino, Liza LeGrier, Mike Selvaggi, Sara Reed, Merva Jackson, Alice Buttwell, Joan Law, Kathy Bradley, Lisa Sheppard (via conference call),

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Acceptance of September minutes

3. Appointment Recognition – Mike Selvaggi was introduced to the group as the most recent appointment. His appointment will run 10/1/08-6/30/10. Robyn Trowbridge was also recognized as an official member. Her appointment runs 1/22/07-6/30/10. Merva Jackson has also received her appointment from Senator Williams. Her appointment runs 9/4/08-6/30/12

4. Subcommittee Updates:

Membership – The subcommittee has not had a chance to meet again recently. Questions arose about the need to strategize to recruit racial, ethnic and community diverse family members.

It was explained that the membership committee currently is focusing on the bylaws and the legislative piece. We want to be sure our bylaws clearly state what our mission is and want to make sure that the council is meeting the goals of what the statute states we are required to do.

The group is interested in bringing awareness about the council and educating folks about the legislative work we do. We’d like to have a strong collaboration of families across the state to support us regarding the issues. The committee is looking at the possibility of writing letters to those who still have vacancies and asking for their recommendations. If someone wants to contact any of the appointing authorities to seek appointment, they are able to do so. We are in agreement that diversity is absolutely something the council needs to focus on. Hopefully we can present by the next meeting (depending on the schedule of those involved) some strategies along the lines of diversity for the membership of this council.

Tom is working on a draft of a revision of the statute and looking into an ethics issue regarding membership on the council.

It was pointed out that two of the appointing authorities will change next year. Speaker of the House and the House Majority Leader will be different people than they are now when the session begins.

Insurance and Health Committee – see notes from first meeting (attached) Jen gave a brief summary of the meeting

Awaiting the Health First Authority reports before proceeding

Karen forwarded testimony to Moira earlier in the day. This testimony would represent the letter that would be sent to the authority from the family support council

It was suggested that we cite Molly's research information as an attachment to this letter

Vote to send consensus by electronic vote of a finalized letter that will include amendments suggested at the meeting. Jen, Moira and Karen will do the final edits.

Education subcommittee – The subcommittee just met prior to the FSC meeting – they will provide their update at the next meeting

Family Support Subcommittee –

Trying to get charts of services offered by agencies

Try to refine duplication of efforts / other resources

Trying to find ways to get agencies to optimize use of the FSN and referrals

Consistency of Agency Representation on the council

Suggestion: If agency representation is not consistent it is suggested that we educate the Commissioners about the benefits of the agencies involvement with the council. New Commissioners may not be familiar with the Family Support Council. (Suggested allowance of a number of excused absences)

Response – the focus is meant to be directed more at how we can maximize an agencies presence at the council meetings to elevate our concerns. It was requested that we articulate/identify the expectations of the agencies role on the council. That would be helpful in agency representatives' reports back to their commissioners.

What we would like to ask of the agencies:

Meet with each bureau within your agency and find out on a regular basis how they are interfacing with children with special needs. Bring information about Council recommendations back to the agencies.

Further discussion continued about agency involvement, responsibilities and the importance of sharing information within and between agencies, council and network.

Suggested Plan – Family Support subgroup to communicate with membership committee to develop a plan of communications to agency members. What are we asking of our state agency representatives and at the same time what should the council be sharing in terms of summary of interest.

5. Strategy Proposal for priorities identified at Annual Retreat – Karen and Moira have developed a strategy of responses for each issue. For example: there was concern that to get voluntary services you have to call the hotline for abuse and neglect. They felt that this was something that the council can write a letter to the Commissioner about and make a request for a

new phone number for voluntary services. Additionally, they suggest that we develop some fact sheets. They will distribute this electronically. **It was suggested that we move this to next month's agenda for review.**

6. State Agency Members:

Priorities to add to councils 2009 FSC Plan of Action. What are the state agencies highlighted plans of action for 2009?

DCF is under reorganization so they do not yet have formal plan outlined.
DDS has responded to OPM with initial proposals.

- Question for the executive branch – At what points along the process are they able to share with the council what policy and budget options they are proposing to OPM? For this council to do its job it needs to know what the state agencies are proposing and moving in terms of policy. From an executive agency standpoint at what point do you feel you are able to share with this council what the agency is advocating. It would be helpful to know at what point in time the agencies can share information with the council. This council can then expect to be updated on information for example every Dec 1.

Suggestion by Merva – Compose a letter to all listed commissioners responsible for being a part of this council. Send a letter of invitation along with key legislators who chair those committees that they are connected to or have over site over them. And have a meeting at the LOB & each of us mobilize a strong contingency of families along with council members and have serious meeting at the LOB restating what our roles and responsibilities are as a council

Once we complete the work of the membership/bylaw committee we could then share with commissioners:

- Our bylaws
- What we are mandated to do
- How we see ourselves going about doing this
- Outline our legislative agenda

Mike suggests having CTN broadcast our meeting at LOB

Move to have the state agencies share with the council at the November meeting what information can be shared and when.

7. Meet and Greet vs. Forum

Forum (with CTN covering it) provides greater visibility

Suggestion – we need to clarify our purpose of the December meeting before we decide how we are going to run the meeting

- Is the purpose to engage the state agencies in our work (both in what we are doing & they are doing---keeping open communication) If so, Merva's suggested plan would be appropriate.
- If the purpose is to let the communities around the state know about who we are then a forum taped by CTN is appropriate.

- If it is to let the legislature generally know who the Council is, then the legislative breakfast should be the focus

Comment - Engagement of our membership, agency participation, roles and responsibilities need to be clear before we go to the public or legislators with our message

There are two different events we are talking about :

- (1) is a meeting of the council in December at which we would ask agency leaders to be engaged in dialogue with us over the councils agenda
- (2) Public legislative event (typically called the legislative breakfast typically done in February) where we release our completed legislative agenda for the public, press and legislators.

The strength of this council is that it is family driven and it needs to be led by families. The majority of council members are intended to be family members. Families, as opposed to state agencies, should be making recommendations about our direction and advising the state about meeting children's needs.

Private members dining room was used for the legislative breakfast year's ago where a slideshow was shown that was very powerful. We need to think about how we are going to connect our stories to our legislative agenda.

8. LISTSERV

We have an increasing interest in our statewide and regional listserv. Due to the size of the listserv has been suggested that we create a second listserv (for those who regularly attend our meetings) specifically for the purpose of announcements and electronic voting of items presented at our meeting's. We all agreed that this would be fine.

9. CT Family Support Network:

FSN Medical Home statewide forum will be held Nov 13th

B-3 Together we will proposal: Jen and Karen separately submitted proposals which will be structured around children with special health care needs and the medical home model. Jen had not seen Karen's proposal but was able to share that her proposal speaks to their project of educating families about the FSN, training pediatricians around the medical home model and families around family centered care. They will not know if they will be able to do breakout sessions until sometime in December.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before us, Motion to adjourn: Robyn; Second April.
Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,
Chris Sloss