



**CONNECTICUT FAMILY SUPPORT COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**December 10, 2015**

**Location:** Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities  
Hartford, CT

**In attendance:** Annika Burney, Laurie Cantwell, Sylvia Gafford-Alexander, Ann Gionet, Karen Hlavac, Sara Lourie, Linda Mizzi, Allison Quirion, Lisa Sheppard

**On Phone:** April Dipollina, Isabelina Rodriguez, Mona Tremblay

**Absent:** Mark Greenstein, Steven Hernandez, Jody Santoro, Renee Tooper, Robin Wood

**Call to Order:** 10:15 am

**Public Comment:** None

**Announcements**

Mona Tremblay raised a situation in the eastern part of the state involving a pre-teen boy with significant special needs, hospitalizations and police involvement at some point during which the boy's arm was broken. There were a lot of concerns related to this case and suggestions made including that Protection and Advocacy might be helpful to the family.

Annika Burney reported the Office of the Health Care Advocate will have a Behavioral Health Clearinghouse 800 number to provide direct access to providers.

Karen Hlavac mentioned a discussion that occurred at a Lower Fairfield Legislative Breakfast - concerns were raised regarding children who have significant medical and developmental disabilities who need to be served in publically (state) funded and staffed intermediate care settings because private providers are not willing/able to provide these services.

There was a request for information regarding school district wrap-around services for mental health and Isabelina Rodriguez mentioned a pilot being done in one area of the state.

**Approval of November Minutes** – There were several typographical/punctuation edits needed and Mona Tremblay made a motion to accept the minutes with those corrections; it was seconded by Laurie Cantwell and approved by Council membership with abstentions from Sylvia Gafford-Alexander and Karen Hlavac.

## **Old Business**

### Membership/Nominations Committee

There continues to be positive feedback about the new brochure which has been shared by Council members in various locations. Linda Mizzi mentioned that there are still slots available in the Partners in Policymaking class for this year.

### Family Networking Committee

There was clarification that we are sending the introductory letter to multiple family groups, those who respond will be invited and scheduled to attend a Council meeting (one at a time). Lisa Sheppard will connect with Robin Wood about using the mailing list for the FACT group (Family Advocacy Collaborative Team). In terms of the first group invited, April Dipollina spoke with Tesha Imperati around the Family Support Network (FSN) attending. April is able to represent the Network and provide a more formal report if the Council is clear about what information is needed.

To provide some guidance to FSN and other groups in gathering information, the discussion centered on how to address both what the Council will find most helpful in addition to what would be meaningful for the Family Groups to encourage vs. discourage participation. Ideas identified include: reports on what is happening for families across the state – what are their concerns, what are the trends the family groups see around those issues with which families are grappling?

It is a priority to obtain feedback from the FSN and other organizations representing all geographic areas of the state. So, April was asked if it is possible to get a report from the FSN by Region. April was not sure what data would be easily accessible due to competing demands on their technical staff person, but will do further checking on this.

### Annual Report Committee

The Annual Report Committee met on November 16 and Ann Gionet provided notes which she had also emailed to the Council but on which she got minimal feedback. Timing is a concern given that there is an interest in getting this out early in the Legislative session. The recommendation, which was agreed upon, was that this year's report will be an update to the last report but will balance the state agency information with a new section highlighting family stories and/or top issues from the family members on the Council (it was recommended that the families limit their responses to 1 page).

It was suggested that we try to get this done so it can go to the Legislators closer to their opening the session in February vs. later as we did last year. To meet this goal, the timeline for submission of written materials/updates for the state agencies is by the January Council meeting and for family members the end of January.

Identifying a state agency able to fund the printing of the report is still an issue.

## **New Business**

Use of Southbury Training School – as a new business item, Mona Tremblay brought an issue to the Council. DDS is in the process of soliciting public feedback regarding potential uses for the Southbury Training School buildings. The Council was in favor of submitting something but it has to be done by December 31, 2015. Ideas discussed were respite and intensive treatment setting for complex kids. The shortage of developmental pediatricians was also raised and whether there might be a role for some type of multidisciplinary diagnostic center. Mona and Karen Hlavac agreed to meet to draft something to send to Lisa Sheppard so it could be sent formally from the Council.

**Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 pm.

Minutes submitted by Sara Lourie, Secretary