



CONNECTICUT FAMILY SUPPORT COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2015

- Location:** Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
- In attendance:** Sylvia Gafford-Alexander, Sara Lourie, Linda Mizzi and Lisa Sheppard
- By phone:** Laurie Cantwell, April Dipollina, Karen Hlavac, Allison Quirion, Marcus Rivera, Mona Tremblay and Robin Wood
- Absent:** Sharon Dexler, Ann Gionet, Mark Greenstein, Steven Hernandez, Jody Santoro, Renee Toper, and Robyn Trowbridge
- Call to Order:** 10:15 am
- Public Comment:** None

Approval of January Minutes – Karen Hlavac moved to accept the minutes as written; Sylvia Gafford-Alexander seconded the motion and they were approved by the Council membership with Mona Tremblay and Marcus Rivera abstaining.

Old Business

Report from Bylaws/Membership ad hoc committee – The Bylaws/Membership ad hoc committee (Lisa Sheppard - chair, Laurie Cantwell, Jody Santoro and Sara Lourie) met and after reviewing the Bylaws made the following recommendations:

1. Develop a new standing committee to focus on liaison with other family advocacy and support groups. There has been much discussion about the need to network with existing groups, both collect and share information about the status of family support in CT and coordinate activities. This committee would address these issues.
2. Develop a combined Nominations/Membership committee; the current Bylaws specify simply a Nominations committee so this would broaden the scope to allow for focus on increasing and maintaining membership, coordinating with the appointing authorities and developing more specific procedures for a membership application and vetting process.
3. The Chairs of these two standing committees would sit on the Executive Committee along with the two Co-Chairs and the Secretary. This would

- expand the Executive Committee to broaden the base of input and also provide additional back-up/coverage as needed.
4. A Bylaws revision would be required to reflect these changes.

Sara Lourie made a motion to open the Bylaws for revision, which was seconded by Mona Tremblay and approved by Council members. The Committee will prepare a draft revision of the Bylaws based on the recommendations made which can then be reviewed and discussed by full Council membership.

Report from Annual Report ad hoc committee – Mona Tremblay, Robin Wood and Sylvia Gafford-Alexander reported the results of the Annual Report committee meeting. The recommendation to the Council is to try to differentiate this year's report from the last several years by utilizing a different format. The state agencies will be asked to select and briefly describe services the agencies provides to/for families. In addition, they are asked to highlight and provide links to a few reports, publications and/or guidelines that they feel should be highlighted. The services information would be placed into a grid or chart format to make this easy to read and understand and also be a useful guide for the reader. The target for completion of the report is the end of March; state agencies will need to complete their portion by the end of February.

New Business

Executive Committee Changes – Lisa Sheppard announced that Mona Tremblay has resigned as Co-Chair of the Family Support Council. Mona spoke as well and indicated that she will remain on the Council and wants to continue to support this important work, but for personal reasons cannot continue as Co-Chair. Lisa and all Council members present expressed their heartfelt support to Mona and her family and great appreciation for her hard work and dedication on behalf of Connecticut families.

A new Co-Chair will be sought and according to the Bylaws, the Council can vote to temporarily fill the Co-Chair seat until the Annual Meeting in July at which time the Nominations Committee will present a full slate of officers.

Announcements

Mona Tremblay mentioned the new Medicaid/HUSKY coverage for services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) up to age 21. This new coverage was effective January 1, 2015 and Mona has received feedback from families who have already applied that DSS is not ready. Sara Lourie is participating as one of the DCF representatives in meetings with Value Options (VO), DSS, and DDS to discuss implementation issues. VO is working hard to encourage providers to enroll so that services can begin and families are encouraged to call VO as they now have an Autism team dedicated to this process. The team includes peer/family navigators to assist, but it is clearly still early in the implementation phase. Sara will send copies of the draft regulations and DSS policy transmittal via email to the Council membership. There is a hearing on the draft regulations at DSS offices on February 10, 2015.

Karen Hlavac announced that she did request and receive her new appointment letter. Due to legislative changes, she had to contact a new appointing authority. She reported that her reappointment letter was sent to the Commissioner of DDS.

April Dipollina announced that the Connecticut Family Support Network “meet and greet” held at the Legislative Office Building on February 4, 2015 was a success. Attendance was a bit low due to weather but a number of legislators did stop by to talk with constituents.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 am

Minutes submitted by Sara Lourie, Secretary