

DRAFT Minutes of Thursday, May 8, 2014

Location: DDS Central Office, Conference Room A

In attendance: Adrienne Benjamin; Jack Frost, Vice Chair; David Hadden; Dr. Terrance Macy, Ex-Officio; Diana Mennone; Dr. John Pelegano; Patti Silva, Chair; Lisa Weisinger-Roland;

Guest Speakers: Robin Wood, Director of Family Support Strategies and Advocacy

Absent: James Heffernan, Jamie Lazaroff, Sheila Mulvey, Patrick Vingo

Staff: Christine Pollio Cooney, Legislative and Executive Affairs; Joseph Drexler, Deputy Commissioner; Margaret Valentino, Executive Secretary

Invited Guests: The meeting took place via videoconference with members from the Regional Advisory Councils and DDS Regional Directors participating.

Chairperson Patti Silva opened the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Public Comment

No one from the public attended the meeting.

Approval of April Minutes

Minutes for the April meeting were reviewed and two technical edits were made. The council voted to accept the April minutes with changes.

All members and video conferencing guests introduced themselves.

Presentation:

Robin Wood spoke about the May 1st 'Open Invitation to Individual and Family Advocacy Groups' meeting held at DDS with the Commissioner. Robin explained what the meeting was about and the interactions at the meeting among the participants. She talked about the outcome and the majority wanted to continue to meet in the future.

In expressing the need to be more electronically connected, the Commissioner spoke about getting people's email addresses and asked for suggestions in obtaining and keeping emails up-to-date. There were suggestions such as: sending post cards, using list serves, going through case managers, tracking in eCAMRIS, asking the Help Line, and using Special Education resources. Robin said we have about 1200 emails but to also include people via mail who do not communicate via email. The Commissioner spoke about getting the word out to have people use our website which is filled with information.

In closing, Robin gave a summary of what the Community of Practice is. Robin explained the Connecticut Community of Practice team is part of a national team comprised of five states that received a grant to examine processes of improving supports to individuals with intellectual disability and their families across the span of their lifetime.

The question was asked if Best Buddies had been invited to anything. Robin said they are always invited and we were working on communicating with them and their new director. The Commissioner had met with the Senior Vice President for Best Buddies and said we were reaching out to the Special Olympics

as well. The Commissioner spoke about Comptroller Lembo doing a video with Jennifer Bogin, Director of the DDS Autism Division, to talk about his support of accessing community resources and the video will be posted to the DDS website. Robin asked about sharing success stories that can be posted to the DDS website.

Christine gave the update on the legislative session. Session ended on May 7th at midnight. She gave special thanks to Rod O'Connor. She reminded members and guests that if they want to be added to the legislative email list to send an email to her or Rod. They will be compiling a year end session wrap up at a future date. DDS had five agency bills that all passed the legislature this session. Christine presented with a handout and went through the update.

Ed Mambruno spoke about his role as the Ombudsman and gave his report.

The Commissioner gave his update:

- He mentioned the Direct to Families newsletter would be mailed out soon and asked for any feedback.
- He gave praise to Christine and Rod on how knowledgeable and connected they are from knowing all the personalities and their broad base of knowledge. Having five out of five bills passed in this environment is amazing.
- Commissioner spoke about the problem of people stealing from the people we serve. Substantiation of financial exploitation will now trigger a referral to the DDS Abuse and Neglect registry to keep them from working anywhere else. Individuals with autism spectrum disorder are at significant risk. This legislation includes first steps to help protect those on the autism spectrum.
- He spoke about Robin and the Community of Practice using tools that we have to make essential systemic changes. What would the DDS of the future look like? He spoke about his conversation with Nancy Thaler, the Executive Director from NASDDDS, about Living the Mission. He received advice to give up the model idea and speak with Michael Smull and the Mentoring Project which comes in and routinely mentors private provider agencies.
- At the end of month, Beth Mount and Hanns Meissner are coming to Connecticut. Commissioner Macy talked about Hanns' book, *Creating blue Space*, which focuses on current systems being unsustainable.

Old Business

No comment.

New Business

No comment.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:47 p.m.