

DRAFT

DDS North Region Advisory & Planning Council

May 18, 2011
Meeting Minutes

Present: Kathleen Perrier, Nancy Bilyak, Sara Glad, Deb Godsell, Florence Guite, John Houchin, Susan Miller, Claudia Neumann, Patti Silva

Guests: Tina Abbate, DDS NR Assistant Regional Director

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Draft minutes from the meeting of March 16, 2011 were reviewed. Nancy Bilyak made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Deb Godsell seconded. Minutes were approved by the Council as written.
- Kathleen Perrier thanked those who attended the Legislative Meet & Greet that was held on April 20, 2011 at the Legislative Office Building. No presentations were given this year due to the small number of legislators that were in attendance, however, the chairpersons from the councils in the other regions, as well as the Regional Directors from both the South and the West Regions were in attendance. Attendance was low this year because the date fell during school vacation week when most of the legislators were not working. Even though the turnout from legislators was low, the event seemed to go well. With the smaller group that was there, not doing the presentations seemed to make it more personal. It gave people more time to talk to each other. A suggestion had been made to perhaps have the regional councils have an opportunity to meet with the statewide Council. Patti Silva brought this suggestion to the statewide meeting and they will be working on trying to plan something.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Being that this meeting is the last one for Dr. Houchin due to his retirement, Council members each expressed their thanks and appreciation for everything he has done to assist them and the support he has given to the Council during his time with the Region. Dr. Houchin will be retiring as of June 1, 2011.
- Regional Director's Updates
 - Dr. Houchin introduced Tina Abbate who is the Assistant Regional Director for Public Programs. Upon John's retirement, Tina will be the Interim Regional Director for the North Region.
 - Budget
 - The current DDS budget information was shared and reviewed by Dr. Houchin. John explained that the cuts really do not affect people directly. The cuts are to "cash", not annualized money. There is about a \$2 million cut from what the Governor's budget was so the impact is not very much.

- Grads that are in immediate need and will not receive money until December may be covered with “one-time” money that can be used as bridge money until funding begins.
- Dr. Houchin shared the Governor’s “Plan B” budget which would cut 10% (\$106 million) within the Department. The Department was asked to submit a plan, however, the plan that was actually put out was much different than what we proposed. Only 54 positions statewide would be cut, and instead of \$106 million, DDS is only projected to be cut by \$42 million. This plan would go into effect if the \$2 billion agreement is not reached by State employee unions. If the unions do support and accept the agreement, there still is a shortfall of about \$400 million which would need to be adjusted in the budget, however, this should not have a very big impact on our department.
- Dr. Houchin reported that a new waiver will be starting for autism so there will now be three types of waivers: children, adult, and the DMHAS waiver. DDS will possibly be getting 50 children with autism from DCF. These children must be on the waiver to receive services. There will be a certain number of slots and now it needs to be decided how these will be assigned. Nothing has been finalized yet because of an issue regarding funding systems. CMS (Medicaid) uses one system for billing and DMHAS uses a different system.
- Approval has also been given to add a new Employment Waiver. There will now be the Comprehensive Waiver, the IFS Waiver, and the Employment Waiver. This waiver has been added for people who are school grads for up to \$28,000 which can be used for additional services and employment.
- Other
 - There was discussion regarding a recent news story about abuse that occurred in a caretaker’s home in Hamden. John stated he was unaware that the individuals were part of the Department, however, they are not part of the North Region.
 - Dr. Houchin shared some information about the new Commissioner, Dr. Terrence Macy.
 - Patti Silva reported that the next statewide Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 9th if anyone is interested in attending and meeting the new Commissioner.

There are no meetings scheduled for June, July, and August. The next regularly scheduled NR Advisory & Planning Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 21, 2011.

On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. by Kathleen Perrier.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann

Claudia Neumann
Administrative Assistant