

**DDS South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2015**

Members Present: Chair Carol Cooney, Jean Brookman, David Cassano, Susan Gardner, Steve Harney, Lauralyn Lewis, Diane Martin and Thomas Dailey, DDS South Regional Director

Guests: Jennifer Cooney and Robin Wood, DDS Director of Family Support Strategies & Advocacy

Call to Order: Chair Cooney called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

Citizen Comment: None presented.

Approval of Minutes: Review ensued of the May 20, 2015, meeting minutes. *Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2015, meeting.*

Chairperson's Report:

• **Creative Housing Workgroup Update**

- The Roommate Match event held June 4 at Camp Harkness was a success. Families from across the state and individuals with a wide range of abilities attended. A couple of people who already had housing came to look for roommates. The hope is that the event will serve as a springboard for similar events in other parts of the state. Discussion ensued on the benefits on limiting the geographical catchment area next time around.
- A presentation entitled Making Independent Housing for Adults w/ID Work: A Nuts and Bolts Approach for Families will be held on June 24, from 7-8:30 p.m., at the Elm Wood Community Center in West Hartford. The Arc Connecticut is sponsoring the presentation.

• **Field Activities Update**

- The Coalition of People Matter held a press conference at the LOB yesterday in response to the Governor's latest round of recommendations on the budget regarding business taxes. Families and advocates in attendance asked state leaders not to make changes to the budget passed last week. Media was well represented. Member Lewis commented on the need for more families to become involved in advocating at the legislative level. Discussion ensued on what more DDS could do to bring families to the table.

Presentations by Robin Wood, DDS Director of Family Support Strategies & Advocacy:

- **Community of Practice (COP)** – The Connecticut Community of Practice team, which includes The Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities and DDS, is part of a national team comprised of five states that received a grant to examine processes for improving supports to individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families across their lifetime. The goal of this initiative is to establish a national framework for moving forward. Focus areas include enhancing material outreach and family-to-family connections.

In consideration of these areas, DDS will kick-off the following initiatives at the Building a Great Life conference in October sponsored by a cross-section of state agencies, advocacy organizations, community providers and educators:

1. College of Direct Support for Families
2. Safe and Smart Technology Campaign
3. Tyze

The Council will receive a copy of the save the date announcement as soon as it becomes available.

- **Tyze** – Tyze is a private, online community focused around the care and support of an individual. DDS is in the early stages of developing a CT Tyze. It will be piloted for one year with individuals who self-hire. This Council expressed interest in participating in the pilot.
- **Roommate Services** – Ms. Wood reported the Arc of Connecticut received a grant for the development of a roommate service. DDS is also exploring a roommate match program.
- **Cooperatives** – Ms. Wood suggested the Council explore what is happening in Illinois with Human Service Cooperatives at <http://www.iambc.org>.

Administrative Updates:

- Regional Director Dailey updated the Council on the budget, the family grant account, emergencies served FY to date, and new Medicaid benefits for children with Autism (additional information will be distributed following the meeting).

New Business:

- **Executive Board Nominations**

Executive board nominations made and accepted as follows:

1. Chair – Steve Harney
2. Vice Chair – Carol Cooney
3. Secretary – Susan Gardner

Executive board elections will be held at the September 16 meeting.

- **Location of Future Meetings**

Following discussion, the Council decided to hold future meetings at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook. If the Acton Library is not available, meetings will be held at the Clinton library (to the greatest extent possible).

Next Meeting Date: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DDS South Regional Advisory and Planning Council is September 16, 2015, at 6:00 p.m., at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: ~~Jolie Crescimano-Goss~~ Jolie Crescimano-Goss, Executive Secretary