



Council on Developmental Services

DDS

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Joseph W. Drexler, Esq.
Deputy Commissioner

APPROVED Minutes of March 8, 2012

In Attendance: Jennifer Carroll; Jack Frost; Jim Heffernan, Chair; Thomas Kalal; Terrence Macy, Ex-Officio; Shelia Mulvey via Phone; Patti Silvia; Patrick Vingo, Vice Chair

Absent: Donna Bouteiller; David Hadden; Jamie Lazaroff; John Pelegano, Secretary; Lou Richards

Guests: Robin Wood, Director of Self Determination and Carlos Colon, Self Advocate Coordinator

Staff: Michelle Bacry, Executive Secretary; Christine Pollio Cooney, Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs; Joseph Drexler, Deputy Commissioner; Ed Mambruno, Ombudsperson

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Ombudsperson's Report:

Ed Mambruno shared his February report with Council members and updated them on a few issues he has worked on with families.

Jennifer Carroll asked what percentages of individuals are waiting for day programs. Deputy Commissioner stated very few individuals are waiting as the demand is not as great as for residential placement and the legislature has consistently funded age outs and high school graduates.

Employment Presentation:

Robin Wood, Director Self Determination introduced Carols Colon, Self Advocate Coordinator who opened the discussion on employment by reading a statement written by Genevieve Lewis who was unable to present due to an illness.

Ms. Lewis, who is also a Self Advocate Coordinator, expressed the mission of her work as helping to create employment opportunities for anyone who is able.

Mr. Colon presented the "Employment Idol" video which offered examples of individuals and their abilities to acquire gainful employment through the supports of their loved ones at an early age and their own personal desires to succeed.

Ms. Wood discussed all of the progress that is being made in employment. She emphasized the importance of educating families to foster a strong work ethic and the sense of accomplishment at a young age so they will continue through the school years and beyond. Studies have shown that individuals who have employment prior to leaving school are more likely to maintain it and this is being accomplished by positives paths being created with the school systems.

Thomas Kalal asked Ms. Wood how an individual would get a job if they wanted one. Ms. Wood directed Mr. Kalal to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) website: www.ct.gov/dds and to the **Consumer Corner** link that will bring you to the **Employment** section that will provide both consumers and their families' detailed information. The keys to successful employment are to help discover the individuals' passion and encourage the individuals to ask for help from the many resources to refine the job search and help improve the chances of finding the right job. The individual should always be aware of their options and rights and most importantly be self-determined.

Ms. Carroll shared that she is finding that the school assessments are more complete which provides more direction for the individual.

Ms. Wood shared that individuals at with levels of need of 1, 2 and 3 will need to have goals in their individual plan to move into competitive employment. Additionally, providers who succeed in securing gainful employment will receive incentives.

Patrick Vingo asked if there is anyone who would not be able to work. Ms. Wood stated she could not see limiting anyone and if enough time is spent with a person anything is possible. James Heffernan shared the example of his son who was able to secure employment doing what he loved- tearing the covers off of books. Mr. Heffernan stated that he never thought it would have been possible for his son to acquire gainful employment but by being creative, it was accomplished.

Ms. Carroll expressed what a positive impact Carlos and all the Self Advocate Coordinators have and the need for many more.

Ms. Wood's expressed the goal is to have a self advocate – employment champion in each agency. Someone who will be a direct contact for the self advocate coordinators and who use information obtained from the self advocate coordinators to promote self advocacy and employment at each agency.

Mr. Heffernan thanked Ms. Wood and Mr. Colon for their informative and inspiring presentation.

Legislative Update:

Christine Cooney provided a written update to the Council on the status of several bills currently before the legislature, including three agency bills. Ms. Cooney reminded everyone that legislative information and updates are available on the DDS website under the Legislative Affairs Link and that members should be receiving regular weekly updates from Rod O'Connor as well.

The Council discussed the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Quality Home Care Workforce Council Question and Answer session that was held on Wednesday, March 7th at the Board of Education and Services for the Blind regarding Executive Order #10 and requested a copy of the minutes if there were any. This led to a discussion about House Bill (H.B.) 5433: An Act Creating a Procedure for Personal Care Attendants to Collectively Bargain with the State.

New Business:

H.B. No. 5433 (Raised) Labor and Public Employees. 'An Act Creating a Procedure for Personal Care Attendants to Collectively Bargain with the State' was discussed. Shelia Mulvey made a motion, seconded by Jack Frost, to draft a letter raising objections to the bill. The Council voted unanimously to write the letter addressed to the Labor and Public Employees Committee, Caucus Leaders and Governor Malloy. Mr. Heffernan agreed to draft the letter on behalf of the Council and share a draft with members for input.

The Council reviewed the letter to send in support to the Education Committee for the Connecticut Deaf Child Bill of Rights and agreed to submit it by Friday, March 9th.

Review of February Minutes:

Thomas Kalal made a motion to accept the minutes as written for the February meeting. Jennifer Carroll seconded the motion. The Council voted unanimously to accept the February minutes as written.

Commissioner's Update:

Commissioner Macy updated the Council with the announcement of the new regional directors: Thomas Dailey will be in the South Region and Jordan Scheff will be in the North Region.

Commissioner Macy was pleased to announce that he and Deputy Commissioner Drexler have completed Town Hall meetings with DDS staff across the regions.

The DDS Mission and Vision are in a draft form has and have been sent to John O'Brien for review. Once reviewed by Mr. O'Brien, they will be sent to the readers group comprised of a small group of volunteers from the Mission planning day in January. Commissioner Macy stated his goal is to have the final product available within the next month.

Connecticut is participating in the National Core Indicators Project. Commissioner Macy explained that this is the only opportunity to measure DDS's service delivery system against all of the other participating states.

Old Business:

Ms. Cooney reviewed the revised 2012 Meeting Topics and Site Visits calendar. The Council requested an email be sent to the members regarding the site visit to Camp Quinebaug in July to determine what would be the best start time of the meeting due to the distance that everyone will be traveling.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Vingo, seconded by Ms. Silva.