

**DDS-South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2009**

Members Present: Vice Chair John (Jack) Frost, April Dipollina, Steven Fusti, Nancy Kalal, Danielle Shepard, Claire White, Kim Wollschleager, and Mary McKay, RD DDS South/Ex-Officio Member.

Members Absent: Marianne Burke and Michael Del Sole

I. Vice Chairperson's Report

Call to Order - Vice Chair Frost called the meeting to order at 6:25pm.

Citizen Comment –There were no citizen comments.

Review of Minutes - Members reviewed the minutes of the March 25, 2009. In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2009 meeting, as presented to the meeting.

Statewide Council on Developmental Services Update – Vice Chair Frost gave an update on the last mtg. of the Statewide Council on Developmental Services. Questions and discussion ensued on the topic of transitioning to a fee for service system. Effective July 1, 2009 all providers of day services will be subject to attendance-based billing and reimbursement. An individuals level of funding will be determined by the newly revised level of need tool. A copy of the presentation presented to the statewide Council on the new rate will be emailed to members of the RAC following tonight's meeting.

II. Regional Director's Updates

Budget Update – As of today, there is still no final mitigation plan to settle this year's budget. It is possible that next fiscal year's budget won't be done until the end of June although the legislative session officially ends on 6/3. The inclusion of funding for high school grads is still part of the various proposed budgets but the final outcome is not known.. The region is working with affected families to try to determine urgency of need for temporary, interim services thru the summer months since grads may have to wait until October 1st to receive the funding, if approved.

Concession negotiations between Governor Rell and SEBAC have concluded. The approved agreement includes a retirement incentive program. Although approximately 900 DDS employees are currently eligible for the program, it is estimated that somewhere between 300-400 employees will actually retire. All participants must leave by June 30, 2009. The Governor continues to impose and maintain across the board restrictions on state spending and has called for the abolishment of vacated positions in an effort to mitigate the deficit. DDS Administrators are meeting regularly to discuss ways of restructuring the agency so it is better positioned to do more with less and to set the groundwork for moving forward in spite of the uncertainties of the times.

Changes to DDS Services – Due to state budget concerns, the hiring freeze, and the anticipated retirement of several hundred DDS employees, it has become necessary for the department to restructure its service delivery system in order to manage its core functions. Effected areas include CM (discontinuance of CM services for some families), IFS grants, summer respite, and day programs and employment support services. Legislators received notice of these impending changes in a memo from Commissioner O’Meara. Ms. McKay distributed copies of the memo to the Council at tonight’s mtg.

Discussion ensued on how affected families would access services without an assigned case manager. Ms. McKay shared that the department intends to establish regional call centers to address this need. Call center attendants would be responsible for receiving, fielding, and processing incoming requests. Ideally each center would be staffed with a clerical person and a case manager or a member of the family support team.

The council recommended that affected families and consumers be notified, in writing, of the new process for accessing services once plans are finalized.

Family Forums – SR Spring Family Forums are scheduled for the evening of June 3 at the DDS Wallingford Office and June 4 in the Norwich Office (flyer distributed). The focus of the forums is the DDS budget. Commissioner O’Meara and Deputy Commissioner duPree are scheduled to attend. In light of the state’s budgetary crisis, a decision was made to defer the topic of creative ways of pooling client resources to a future forum. Jolie will forward a copy of the announcement to April for distribution through the FSN list serve.

III. New Business

Nomination of Officers – The following RAC members agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee: Steve Fusti, Nancy Kalal, and Kim Wollschleager. The positions to be filled are Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The term of office is one year.

IV. Adjournment

With no further business before the Council, Vice Chair Frost adjourned the meeting at 8:00pm.

V. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the DDS-South Region Advisory and Planning Council will be held on June 24, 2009 at 6pm at the Henry Carter Hull Library in Clinton, CT.

Minutes Submitted By:

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

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DDS-South Region