

Long Term Care Planning Committee

June 25, 2024

Meeting Minutes

LTC Planning Committee Members in Attendance: Melissa Morton, Chair, Office of Policy and Management (OPM); Kelley Kendall, Department of Developmental Services (DDS); Margy Gerundo-Murkette, Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS); Commissioner Amy Porter, (ADS); Jessica Rival, Office of Health Strategy (OHS); Michael Santoro, Department of Housing (DOH); William Seals, Department of Children and Families (DCF); Erin Leavitt-Smith, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS); Laura Watson, Department of Housing (DOH); Christine Weston, Department of Social Services (DSS)

Others Present: Elyse Pearson, OPM; Mairead Painter, Office of the LTC Ombudsman

Excused Absence: None

Members Absent: Barbara Cass, Department of Public Health and Lisa Rivers, Department of Transportation

Called to order by Melissa Morton at 10:02 AM

Welcome and Introductions

Melissa Morton offered words of welcome and reviewed the agenda for this meeting. Ms. Morton introduced Christine Weston, the new appointee representing DSS. Ms. Weston is the new Director of Community Options replacing retired DSS staff Dawn Lambert and Kathy Bruni. Ms. Weston and her team will be presenting the annual rebalancing update in September. Ms. Morton thanked Amy Dumont for her time as interim DSS representative on the Committee.

Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2023 and March 12, 2024 Meetings

- 1) **Vote to Approve Minutes from December 12, 2023, Meeting:** Motion made by Commissioner Amy Porter to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2023, LTC Planning Committee Meeting. Seconded by Erin Leavitt-Smith. No discussion. One abstention, Christine Weston. The remaining eight members voted in favor and zero opposed. Minutes from the December 12, 2023, meeting approved.
- 2) **Vote to Approve Minutes from March 12, 2024, Meeting:** Motion made by Erin Leavitt-Smith to approve the minutes from March 12, 2024, LTC Planning Committee Meeting. Seconded by Michael Santoro. No discussion. Two abstentions, Christine Weston and Commissioner Amy Porter. The remaining six members voted in favor and zero opposed. Minutes for the March 12, 2024, meeting approved.

Updates and Announcements

Melissa Morton expressed that 2024 was a successful session for the long-term services and supports system in Connecticut and noted that much of the meeting will consist of session highlights shared by Mairead Painter, Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman and Elyse Pearson, Planning Analyst at OPM. Ms. Morton introduced Ms. Painter.

- **Legislative Highlights from the State LTC Ombudsman:** Mairead Painter presented summaries of several bills including Public Act 24-39 *An Act Supporting Connecticut Seniors and The Improvement of Nursing and Home-Based Care* and Public Act 24-19 *An Act Concerning The Health and Safety of Connecticut Residents* that addressed areas including but not limited to community-based supports, Medicaid presumptive eligibility, eliminating three and four bed rooms in nursing homes, development of a homecare provider registry and nursing home consumer dashboard, and creation of centers for excellence in partnership with nursing homes.. Summaries of the bills can be found in the [OPM legislative update](#).
- **Legislative Highlights from OPM:** Elyse Pearson provided a brief overview of some of the major long-term services and supports-related legislation that was passed in the 2024 Legislative Session. Melissa Morton provided an overview of Senate Resolution 7 and House Resolution 9, Resolution Proposing Approval of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Workforce Council and the New England Health Care Employees Union, District 1199, SEIU. Ms. Morton shared the successor collective bargaining agreement (CBA) includes a wage and benefit package designed to address the workforce shortage by supporting PCA recruitment and retention. Specifics include PCA minimum wage increasing to \$23/hour by 2026, first time longevity bonuses, and expanded paid time off and healthcare premium assistance benefits. Ms. Morton also shared that GT Independence is the new fiscal intermediary serving Connecticut, replacing previous fiscal intermediaries Sunset Shores and Allied Community Resources. A complete CBA Summary can be found [on the PCA Workforce Council web page](#).

The complete written legislative summary can be found on [the Long-Term Care website](#).

Member Updates and Announcements

- **Multisector Plan on Aging and Disability Development Update:** Margaret (Margy) Gerundo-Murkette provided an overview on Connecticut's development of a Multisector Plan on Aging and Disability. The initiative started with Connecticut's participation in a national learning collaborative comprised of many states in varying cohorts with the goal of providing technical assistance to states interested in developing multisector plans. The Connecticut team included representatives from DSS, OPM, the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO), and the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. The following are highlights from the update:
 - The Plan is a road map that helps transform policy, infrastructure, and service coordination for the aging population and, hopefully in Connecticut, people with disabilities. As a cross-sector strategic plan, all state agencies can look at how their

policies and planning impact older adults and persons with disabilities while bringing together stakeholders to outline a clear framework for addressing the needs of older adults. Ms. Gerundo-Murkette shared the next steps to move into the phase of Plan development.

- The federal Administration for Community Living has released its framework for a National Plan on Aging. Ms. Gerundo-Murkette shared the national development committee will be comprised of representation from various states and agencies charged with developing national recommendations on key issues and the creation of a strategic framework for a national plan on aging. Ms. Gerundo-Murkette noted that seeing this discussion occur at a national level signifies the importance of the Multisector Plan in development activity underway in Connecticut. Additional information regarding the National Plan on Aging and its framework can be found [here](#).

Member Updates and Announcements

- **Christine Weston, DSS**, formally introduced herself and expressed her enthusiasm for her new role at DSS and on the Planning Committee as well as the work being done on the Multisector Plan. Ms. Weston shared her prior experience presenting to this group in another role while working at DSS and looks forward to having the opportunity to collaborate with Committee members in various capacities.
- **Margy Gerundo-Murkette, ADS**, informed members that the State Unit on Aging is now called the Bureau of Aging (BOA) which aligns with the Department and Bureau structure within state government. Additionally, Ms. Gerundo-Murkette noted that the public comment period for the BOA's draft Three Year State Plan on Aging ended today, June 25th and the comments and feedback received will be reviewed for inclusion in the final version of the State Plan which will be submitted to the federal Administration for Community Living on July 1st.

Long-Term Care Advisory Council Comments

Melissa Morton noted that Michael Werner, Chair of the LTC Advisory Committee, is travelling and unable to attend today, however, she encouraged members to watch the recording from the June Long-term Care Advisory Council meeting as it was a very informative meeting. The link to this meeting can be found [here](#).

Christy Kovel, CT Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and member of the LTC Advisory Council, shared a summary of [Senate Bill 307](#), addressing biomarker testing for Alzheimer's disease. This was a leading priority this year for the Alzheimer's Association and the LTC Advisory Council. Ms. Kovel also shared that in this new era of treatment, there is currently a promising treatment for Alzheimer's disease in the early stages and another pending.

Other Business

No new topics were raised.

2024 Meetings

Tues., Sept. 10th -- 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM -- Microsoft Teams

Tues., Dec. 10th -- 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM -- Microsoft Teams

Meeting adjourned at 10:51 AM

Full meeting recording can be accessed here:

<https://youtu.be/GOL9LDmwcG8>