

**Final Minutes of March 11, 2010**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Donna Bouteiller; Jennifer Carroll, Chairperson; Carlos Colon; Jack Frost; Jim Heffernan, Vice-Chair; Tom Kalal; Gregory Kelly; Sheila Mulvey; John Pelegano, Secretary; Patti Silva; Patrick Vingo.

Absent: Peter O'Meara.

DDS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Kathryn du Pree, Deputy Commissioner; Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison.

GUESTS:

Carol Grabbe, Genna Lewis, Joyce Rivers, Varian Salters, Jossie Torres, Ivan Villa, Beth Aura Miller, Kathleen Perrier

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS:

Jennifer Carroll welcomed the Self-Advocate Coordinators and members of the Regional Advisory and Planning Councils. She asked that everyone at the meeting introduce themselves.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was no one from the public who spoke.

REVIEW OF MINUTES:

One change in wording was recommended and accepted after a motion by John Pelegano, seconded by Patrick Vingo to accept the February minutes with this revision.

OMBUDSPERSON REPORT:

Ed Mambruno was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment. The Ombudsperson's Report for February was submitted to the Council.

REGIONAL ADVISORY AND PLANNING COUNCIL UPDATES:

Kathleen Perrier from the North Region Regional Advisory and Planning Council discussed the various speakers that had presented to the North Region Council and how helpful this information was to the members. She discussed the March 10th legislative breakfast that was held at the Legislative Office Building. She reported on the interaction the Council members had with specific legislators and how individuals who spoke thanked legislator's for their support of DDS programs and services. Jennifer Carroll and Jim Heffernan said that the legislative breakfast was well done and set the right tone for legislators.

Jack Frost from the South Region Regional Advisory and Planning Council discussed the efforts of the South Region Council to educate parents and guardians of persons who lost individual case management services about the case management services available through the regional help line. The South Region RAC held meetings with families in Norwich, New Haven and Middletown to discuss how to best use the help line's services.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Rod O'Connor discussed the two bills that make up the DDS legislative package for 2010. HB 5448 - AAC the Administration of the Department of Developmental Services is scheduled for a public hearing on Friday, March 12, 2010. Mr. O'Connor explained that this year there is a particular urgency in getting this bill passed because it contains definitions of "parent" in the Birth to Three statutes that need to be revised so that the proposed Birth to Three regulations can be approved. HB 5380 - AAC the Sexual Assault of Persons Placed or Treated under the Direction of the Commissioner of Developmental Services has not been scheduled for a public hearing at this date but is expected to have its hearing the week of the March 15th.

Mr. O'Connor reported that the Chief State's Attorney's sexual assault bill, SB 315 - AAC Sexual Assault of a Developmentally Disabled or Severely Physically Disabled Person, had a public hearing in the Human Services Committee. Subsequently, after discussions between the Human Services Committee legal staff and staff from the Office of Protection and Advocacy, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, DDS and the Chief State's Attorney's office changes in the language of the bill were agreed upon and will be included in substitute language.

Sheila Mulvey asked Mr. O'Connor what had happened to the bill that Senator Looney had proposed that would offer tax credits to businesses that hired persons with disabilities. Mr. O'Connor said that there was a proposed bill (PSB 113) in the Commerce Committee but that it had not gotten a public hearing and was not moving forward. Mr. O'Connor said he would follow up with Senator Looney's staff to see if the concept of the bill was being considered as part of another tax credit or jobs bill.

PRESENTATION: SELF ADVOCACY – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Self Advocacy Coordinators attended the Council meeting accompanied by Beth Aura Miller, Self Determination Director for the West Region. They made a presentation about self advocacy. They discussed their goals and activities, reviewed the meaning and philosophy of self advocacy, and special projects the coordinators lead. They shared much of the information about self advocacy that is on the Department of Developmental Services' (DDS) website. DDS coordinators are presenting to various community groups and to students graduating from high school.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Kathryn du Pree provided the monthly update on the department's activities.

Budget:

Currently, the department has been able to reduce its FY 10 deficit to approximately \$3.5 million, which is in Birth to Three. This has been accomplished through effective regional and central management. Funding will be transferred from various accounts in April through the FAC process. The Governor's recent deficit mitigation proposal does not include any new reductions for DDS.

Attendance Based Reimbursement:

The reimbursement methodology for day services was implemented on February 1, 2010 for day services to absorb the \$3.7 million reduction made by the Governor in November. January attendance was up to 88%. Providers experiencing particular hardship are addressing these concerns with the regions.

Conversion:

Two homes have already transitioned and another four are scheduled for transition on March 15th. Of the remaining seven homes, which have been awarded, six will be completed by April 15th and one is still to be scheduled. The four homes that were rebid all have responders. RFP committees including family members are currently reviewing the proposals.

Fatality Review Board (FRB) Report was issued by OPA. DDS responded to the four recommendations regarding case management, aging in place, nursing home placement, and DNRs. Kathryn discussed the responses, which will be sent electronically to Council members.

Dr. John Pelegano would like DNR information at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Tom Kalal asked about this year's meeting topics and locations. The Council agreed that the calendar for 2010 is appropriately scheduled.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jennifer Carroll introduced Patti Silva who has rejoined the Council after two years away.

The Council discussed a bill raised by Senator Looney to create incentives for businesses to hire individuals with disabilities (S.B No. 113). It will not have a public hearing so will not be raised this session. Rod O'Connor will check if it has been integrated with another bill.

Ms. Carroll raised the idea of hosting an event to recognize previous council members who made significant contributions to the activities of the Council. Sheila Mulvey and Ms. Silva spoke in favor of this approach; supported by Dr. John Pelegano. Jim Heffernan suggested all alumnae members be invited and might explore if the Governor might participate or give proclamation. Peter O'Meara and Kathryn du Pree are asked to review the previous member list to discuss at the April meeting.

Ms. Carroll asked Mr. O'Connor to confirm the agenda for the June meeting, which will be held at Camp Harkness.

Jack Frost asked Mr. O'Connor about the process of amending bills. Mr. O'Connor discussed the process that varies depending on whether it has a fiscal impact or not. Fiscal implication can lead to the creation of an unfriendly bill. Mr. Frost asked what would happen if the bill to halt the attendance-based reimbursement system were to pass. Deputy Commissioner du Pree discussed the ramifications since the change was implemented on February 1, 2010. Ms. Mulvey asked about the original proposed change to the fee for service rate system. Deputy Commissioner du Pree explained the department's rationale for adopting this change.

Mr. Frost made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Ms. Mulvey and unanimously approved. Ms. Carroll adjourned at 8:40 PM.