

**DDS-South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2011**

Members Present: Jean Brookman, Carol Cooney, April Dipollina, Jack Frost, Diane Martin, Danielle Shepard, Kim Wollschleager and Mary McKay, DDS-SR Regional Director/Ex-Officio Member.

Members Absent: Michael Del Sole, Steve Fusti, Nancy Kalal, and Lori Richardson

I. Chairperson's Report

- **Call to Order** – In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, Secretary Wollschleager called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.
- **Citizen Comment** – None presented.
- **Review of Minutes** - A review of the February 16, 2011, meeting minutes ensued. **In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2011, meeting as presented.**
- **RAC Legislative Meet and Greet Wrap-Up** - Council members Brookman, Frost, Kalal, and Martin attended the Legislative Meet & Greet co-hosted by the DDS Advisory and Planning Councils on April 20 at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. Although public and legislative turnout was low, the event was an excellent opportunity for the Councils to network with each other. Discussion focused on what the Council could do to increase attendance at future Meet and Greets. Ms. McKay commented that in her experience, locally held functions are usually well attended by area representatives. The Council may explore this idea further when planning their next event. The primary goal of the Meet and Greets is for legislators to get a real sense of the people behind the circumstances. April suggested that family sound bites, written up as brief vignettes, could also be used to bring the information to them and that the Council could try promoting itself as a viable resource to legislators as a way of bringing them to us on a regular basis. The Council might also try to establish a relationship with Representative Deborah Heinrich, the former State Representative who was appointed by Governor Malloy to a newly created position advocating for non-profits. The Council discussed the possibility of inviting Ms. Heinrich to an upcoming meeting or to serve as a guest speaker at a future RAC event.

- **Misc. Updates** – April announced that the Family Support Network (FSN) will hold its annual picnic on June 1 at Camp Harkness.

II. RD's Report

- **Administrative Changes** – Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D., has been appointed to serve as the new Commissioner of DDS. Commissioner Macy served as the Executive Director of Sarah Tuxis for the past 20 years. His platform includes organizational stability, family needs, and putting consumers and families first in all we do. Members of his Transition Team come from a cross section of the field of ID and include a DDS Self-Advocate Coordinator, the Chair of the DDS Council, an 1199 rep., Deb Heinrich, a DDS North Region manager, Dan O'Connell, who formerly served as Superintendent of Hartford Regional Center, and a Private Provider Executive Director. The Transition Team is scheduled to convene in June. Commissioner Macy plans to embark on a series of Listening Tours in each Region in June for the purpose of meeting families receiving DDS services. The Commissioner would like to hear from families representative of a cross section of DDS services (i.e. B23, DCF VSP, Helpline, Self Determination, Grads, Employed, Public, Private, Waitlist, RAC, Respite Center, CTH and Money Follows the Person). Following discussion, Jean Brookman, Carol Cooney, and Diane Martin volunteered to participate in the Commissioner's Listening Tour for the SR in their capacities of RAC member, ICF rep., and Employment rep., respectively. The group size will be limited and not all volunteers will be invited to participate. As soon as a date and location are determined for the SR Listening Tour, the Commissioner's office will be in touch with each to confirm their participation.

As a sidebar, April suggested the RAC write a welcome letter to Commissioner Macy.

- **Budget Update** – The budget for FY12-13, as passed by the legislature a couple of weeks ago, assumes \$2B in state employee concessions. Negotiations between OPM and SEBAC have resulted in a concession packet that will be presented to union membership for a vote. If the concession vote fails, the Governor may move forward with "Plan B". The implementation of Plan B would result in deeper cuts to agency budgets that could include layoffs. The budget passed by the legislature funds grads beginning in December. Bridge funding will be given to families of grads who need to start their day program sooner. Mary cautioned that Plan B, as it relates to DDS, eliminates funding for high school grads for the next two fiscal years. DDS suggested alternatives to Plan B but has received no feedback or implementation directions to date. Ms. McKay said that she would email budget updates to the Council as they become available.

The South Region of DDS expects to lose roughly 35 staff to retirement. Although the refill process remains stringent and we are currently in a “hard freeze”, a few critical positions are being approved for refill.

Discussion centered on transition and employment options. Ms. McKay shared that she recently had the pleasure of learning more about transitional academy programs for students 18-21 years old on college campuses. This is an exciting area that the Council might want to learn more about. The possibility of inviting the Coordinator of Wesleyan University’s transitional academy program to a future RAC meeting or event will be explored further.

- **SR Family Forum** – The next South Region Family Forum will be held on June 8 from 5-8PM at the Wallingford DDS Office, with a focus on Internet Safety and Technology. There will be two breakout sessions and on-site vendors. All are encouraged to attend. A second forum will be held on the eastern side of the Region this fall. Jack suggested inviting Commissioner Macy to attend.

III. New Business

- **Executive Board Nominations** – Executive Board nominations were held. The following nominations were made:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>
Diane Martin	Chair
Jean Brookman	Vice Chair
Carol Cooney	Secretary

In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to close nominations.

- **Membership Vacancies** – A review of membership vacancies ensued. Jack Frost and Nancy Kalal have both served two full terms of membership and will be leaving the Council this summer. Kim Wollschleager will not be renewing her membership at this time. Statute mandates a minimum of 10 members so there will be two vacancies to fill. Members are encouraged to ramp up recruiting efforts over the summer and bring interested new members to the first fall meeting.

The Council agreed to have a picnic/pot luck supper at the June meeting as a way of thanking the outgoing officers/members for their work on the Council. Jolie will email a refreshment sign-up sheet to the group following tonight’s meeting.

IV. Old Business

- **2011 Council Priorities – Next Steps**

Transition Planning/Outreach–targeting 16-21 year-old population: Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed. Item deferred to next meeting.

Creative Housing Options: Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed. Item deferred to next meeting.

V. Statewide Council on Developmental Services Update: No update.

VI. Council Networking Session: Due to time constraints, a Council Networking Session did not take place.

VII. Next Meeting Date: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DDS-South Region Advisory and Planning Council will be held on June 22, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., at the Henry Carter Hull Library in Clinton.

VIII. Adjournment: Secretary Wollschleager adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Jolie Crescimano-Goss, Executive Secretary, DDS-South Region