

STS Board of Trustees

June 23, 2020

**The Southbury Training School Board of Trustees
Met via Conference Call on Tuesday, June 23, 2020**

Present: Eileen Lemay, Chair
Ann Dougherty, Vice Chair
Diana Mennone
Mark Cooper
Eugene Harvey, STS Director

Eileen Lemay, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:04pm.

COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Report on DDS Council Meetings

Presented by Diana Mennone to the STS Board of Trustees on June 23, 2020.

Topics of Discussion:

Diana Mennone reported on the November 2019 and May 2020 meetings of the Council on Developmental Services to the STS Board of Trustees on June 23, 2020.

On 11-21-2019 there was a joint Meeting of Council on Developmental Services with members of the Regional Advisory and Planning Councils from the North, South and West Regions. The meeting was held at DDS South Region Office in Wallingford, CT.

Commissioner Scheff discussed the DDS Residential Services Waiting List. He explained that the criteria for needs and services have evolved over time. There are now three categories of individuals - #1. Emergency, #2. Urgent, #3. Future Needs. #1 & #2 are on the Waiting List and #3 are on the Department's Planning List. As of June 2019, there were 759 individuals on it and the planning/future needs list contains 1,079 individuals. Updated information may be found in the quarterly DDS Management Information Reports (MIR) on the DDS website.

The DDS North Regional Director, Elisa Velardo, spoke about the DDS enhanced family support system in response to the Department's ongoing initiatives to respond to the emergencies involving persons with complex health care needs. Hospitals have reacted positively to DDS's Step Up / Step Down Unit which allows individuals who need a higher level of care to leave hospitals and receive appropriate care in the unit as they transition back into the community.

Diana Mennone was unable to attend meetings on 12-19-2019 and 1-16-2020 .

The 2-20-2020 minutes have not been approved yet.

On 2-26-2020 the Council on Developmental Disabilities held the 2nd Annual Legislative Breakfast & Awards Ceremony from 8-10am at the Legislative Office Building, 2nd Floor Atrium. 2020 Honorees were Jamie Lazaroff, Award for Self-Advocacy, Beanz & Co., Hospital for Special Care & Robinson & Cole were given Awards for Business Champions. State Senator Paul Formica & State Representative / Speaker of the House Joe Aresimowicz were given Awards for being Legislative Champions.

The 3-19-2020 and 4-16-2020 meetings were cancelled.

The 5-21-2020 meeting was held via Microsoft Teams.

Commissioner Scheff updated the Council on the number of people who, at the time of this meeting, had tested positive from COVID-19.

At this time, testing continues to increase.

The Commissioner continues to engage with the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) to explore strategies and exchange ideas with counterparts throughout the country regarding COVID-19 mitigation efforts and safety measures.

DDS continues to work with the CT Department of Health (DPH) and with the Governor's office on additional guidance regarding a support person accompanying an individual with a disability to a hospital admission.

There was no legislative update as the CT General Assembly had not yet scheduled a special session.

To read complete approved DDS Council Minutes go to:

www.ct.gov/dds

Click on BOARDS AND COUNCILS. Click on COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES. Scroll down & click on 2020 MEETING SCHEDULE (Agenda & Minutes). Under the Minutes column click on the date of meeting to read the Approved Minutes.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Pam Webb will be retiring on July 1, 2020. Michael Wodjenski, Administrative Assistant will be taking over the Director's Office responsibilities.
- Our current population is 157.
- As of March 30, 2020, we had 20 individuals who tested positive for Covid. As of two weeks ago we had no new cases. About a week ago, an individual from C-34 was admitted to Waterbury Hospital for several days with health concerns unrelated to Covid. When the gentleman returned to STS he tested positive for Covid and was placed in the PUI unit. All of his housemates were tested for Covid and all tests came back negative. After the individual tested negative for Covid twice, he was able to return home.
- Because of concerns relating to the virus, protocols were put in place to protect the individuals and staff of STS. Staff are only permitted to work in their assigned cottage. Staff are not permitted to be pulled to or work overtime in any cottage other than their own. This is being done to help prevent cross-contamination. Visitors are not currently allowed on campus. Nonessential employees are also not permitted to go into cottages unless there is an emergency situation. All meetings are held by conference calls. Cottage 36 has moved into Cottage 30 because it is a larger building (4 apartments) and will help with social distancing. Cottage 16 and 36 have been transformed into isolation

buildings. After an individual has been in an isolation building for two weeks and tested negative he will be moved to Cottage 15, our step-down unit. At the step-down unit, after an individual tests negative two times for the virus, he will then be able to go back to his cottage. Our individuals have their temperatures taken six times per day and employees' temperature is taken two times per shift.

- We lost one of our individuals to the virus. He already had a DNR in place when he tested positive for the virus. We also lost three of our staff to Covid.
- STS is currently trying to install Wi-Fi in every building so that our residents can face-time with their family and friends. Large screen TVs have also been ordered for every cottage.
- We are currently proposing a new protocol so that by the end of the week we may be able to allow families and guardians to meet with their loved ones. We are trying to set up C-1, C-2, C-8, C-12, Gatehouse Café, and the Pavilion at Lake Stibbs for the visits. Attendees will have to wear masks, gloves and disinfectant wipes will also be provided.
- Staff can now stay with our individuals at hospitals. STS provides full packages of PPE to the staff.
- Some clinics will not permit our individuals entrance if they are not wearing a mask. We are working on desensitizing our residents to wearing masks.
- STS will be executing a promotion over the next few weeks to inform staff not to be complacent outside their work environment.
- We will be holding a memorial service for the three STS staff that have passed from Covid. The service will be held behind C-6. Our chaplains and the bishop from Marlene Thompson's church will be performing the service.
- We have tested over 98 staff, all of whom have tested negative. We are working on other opportunities for staff to be tested in the future.
- Phase 2 will allow our individuals to go home for family visits. STS will provide masks, gloves, and wipes for these visits.
- Recreational trips are being reviewed. Our Program Supervisors are working on a proposal to follow social distancing. Only two individuals will be allowed in a van at one time and only one individual and one driver per car.
- Our residents will not be attending Camp Harkness this year. They will have an opportunity to use the pool on grounds starting in July.
- Music Therapy may be offered soon. A carport was ordered for each cottage. This would give each cottage an outside space for music therapy and other events. Easy erectable tents were also ordered to provide additional outside spaces.
- Day Programs are currently being examined. It may be several months before a system is in place. STS individuals will no longer be traveling by bus to attend day programs.
- We are starting to look at reopening the Dental, GYN and other clinics in two weeks. The protocol will be to completely clean the offices between patients. Patients will be expected to wait outside until they are called in for their appointments. There will be a new dental hygienist starting mid-month.
- Staff training protocols are being looked at. CPR and PMT training may now be virtual and computer-based trainings. CPR will now be done by compressions only and not by mouth to mouth. There was a three-hour behavioral intervention training that was successfully completed. Attendees wore masks and gloves.

Ann Dougherty thanked Director Harvey and the staff of STS for all their extra diligent and compassionate work during the past several months.

Ann raised a concern about the gentleman from C-34 who tested positive for Covid upon return from Waterbury Hospital. Ann is guardian for that individual who had been in the ER with an STS staff member for over 60 hours. She asked if there were no beds available in the main hospital at that time or if the patient was held in the ER for another reason. Ann would like to see better communication between our Medical Department and the hospitals.

The phone numbers for C-4, C-15 and C-16 will be shared with guardians when they have an individual in these buildings due to Covid concerns.

An article was published in the Hartford Courant that was sent by an STS employee. Board members felt it was well written. Some Board members indicated that they would also like to write a letter to the paper in support of STS.

OLD BUSINESS

Sandy O'Neill expressed continued interest in filling one of the vacancies on the STS Board of Trustees. She has submitted her paperwork to the Governor's Office. It is currently being reviewed.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board of Trustees will be sending flowers to Pam Webb to thank her for her valued service to the Board of Trustees.

The next meeting of the STS Board of Trustees will be held on **Monday, September 28, 2020 at 1:00pm via conference call.**

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 2:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Wodjenski, Recording Secretary

Mark A.R. Cooper, Secretary

Approved by the STS Board of Trustees