



Final Minutes of January 14, 2010

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jennifer Carroll, Chairperson; Carlos Colon; Jack Frost; Jim Heffernan, Vice-Chair; Tom Kalal; Sheila Mulvey; Peter O'Meara; Patrick Vingo.

Absent: Donna Bouteiller; Gregory Kelly; John Pelegano, Secretary; Ted Walen.

DDS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Kathryn du Pree, Deputy Commissioner; Sarah Kasacek, Director of Investigations; Ed Mambruno, Ombudsperson; Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison.

GUESTS: Steve Becker, Andrea Barton Reed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jennifer Carroll asked for public comment. There was no one in attendance from the public.

Jennifer Carroll thanked Steve Becker, Executive Director of HARC, for sponsoring the Council meeting for January. Ms. Carroll recessed the meeting for a tour of the building. Mr. Becker spoke of the very positive relationship HARC has with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and complimented the department for being open and responsive to the provider community. Mr. Becker then described the organizational structure of HARC and discussed many of the agency's services supporting children and adults.

DECEMBER MINUTES:

Jennifer Carroll reconvened the meeting and asked for review and approval of the December 2009 minutes. No changes were made. Jim Heffernan moved and Sheila Mulvey seconded the acceptance of the minutes. The motion passed.

OMBUDSPERSON REPORT:

Ed Mambruno gave the ombudsperson report. He discussed his intervention on behalf of a woman placed in a nursing home for rehabilitation, which resulted in a long-term stay. The outcome was a move to a different setting where more rehabilitation could be provided. Mr. Mambruno is now meeting regularly with Jennifer Carroll so she is more aware of his ongoing activities and initiatives.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Rod O'Connor gave the legislative update. The session will be from February 3 to May 5, 2010 concentrating on budget adjustments. DDS will meet with the co-chairs of Public Health Committee on January 22 to discuss our legislative proposals that:

- Address technical changes to Birth to Three statutes
- Extend the DDS Council membership until successors are appointed
- Allow designees on the Family Support Council
- Repeal the sunset provision of the DDS abuse/neglect registry
- Changes one appointment on the regional advisory committee to include a consumer.

Jim Heffernan suggested that regional advisory councils include members of other providers, not just local ARCs as now required. Jack Frost asked a question about the Council's meeting requirement of bimonthly. Rod O'Connor clarified that this is the minimum requirement and the Council can meet more frequently.

Sheila Mulvey raised a concern about the act concerning regional advisory councils in regard to staff participation. Mr. O'Connor clarified it only limits the membership on a regional advisory council of state agency staff. This will be clarified with Jim Welsh in terms of inclusion of the term 'institution'.

Jennifer Carroll and Mr. O'Connor discussed the provision regarding Council members who miss three consecutive meetings and who then can be removed. Mr. O'Connor said that this is not automatically initiated by the terms of the bylaws but would be initiated by the chairperson in consultation with the Council and the Council member's appointing authority.

The final proposal expands DDS' access to the Department of Children and Families investigatory information for currently enrolled children in the Voluntary Services Program. We do not have an approved legislative proposal for respectful language but DDS has addressed it through the development of a policy that is being issued on January 15, 2010.

Appropriations Committee budget hearings are scheduled for February 8 to February 18, 2010. The date for the DDS budget hearing has not yet been scheduled. Mr. O'Connor will inform all Council members of the date. Governor Rell will address the legislature on February 3, 2010. Mr. O'Connor informed Council members that mileage reimbursement will be reduced to \$.50/mile effective January 29, 2010.

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE:

Peter O'Meara expressed the department's appreciation for the partnership with HARC and complimented HARC on the quality of services and historic support to families and consumers.

Commissioner O'Meara shared the current dynamic nature of the budget and state economy as a sizable deficit exists of \$300 to \$500 million. Revenue projections will be forthcoming and may require further budget reductions. The department will share information as it becomes public. The Governor's address will be televised on CTN. Commissioner O'Meara shared a response from the department to CCPA that addresses many budgetary issues.

The conversion process is proceeding with some homes beginning to transition later this month. Awards for 13 homes have been made. Four homes have been rebid with proposals due on February 5, 2010.

Commissioner O'Meara discussed the most recent rescission of \$3.6 million in the day services account. The department will address this rescission by implementing an attendance based reimbursement system beginning in February. He then explained that the majority of last year's and this year's reductions have been absorbed through public sector cuts, reducing DDS public expenditures by 11%. At the end of last year, the private sector had grown by 5% as a result of new development for school graduates, age-outs, voluntary services and the waiting list.

Commissioner O'Meara summarized the DDS Budget Reallocation and Reduction Options proposed for FY 11. Given the state's budget, it is more likely than in the past that these reductions will be

adopted. DDS has proposed that the larger amount of these reductions come from the public sector, but as the private sector is now 65% of the DDS budget, it is impossible not to impact the private sector. Private sector reduction proposals include rate adjustments. He reminded Council members that these are still only proposals under consideration by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Governor's Office.

The department has been able to project \$114 million in additional revenue for FY 10.

Jack Frost asked about the department's budget deficiencies, which are in OE, Worker's Compensation and Birth to Three. DDS plans to address its deficiencies internally with the exception of the Birth to Three deficiency.

Patrick Vingo asked about the attendance based reimbursement for day services, which was explained as establishing a 90% attendance expectation. Information will be sent to providers by January 19, 2010.

OLD BUSINESS:

Jennifer Carroll reported on her visit to the Lighthouse program. Ms. Carroll and Tom Kalal visited many of the program sites and were very impressed with the agency's services and vision. Mr. Kalal commented on the director's willingness to embrace and nurture staff's creative ideas that are responsive to consumer and family needs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sheila Mulvey asked Peter O'Meara about the closing of Cedarcrest and its impact on DDS. The department has utilized Cedarcrest and will continue to have access to the Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH). Kathryn du Pree reported briefly on the department's other initiatives to serve consumers with behavioral health needs.

Jack Frost made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Tom Kalal. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.