

**Final Minutes of May 13, 2010**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Donna Bouteiller, Carlos Colon, Jack Frost, Jim Heffernan, Tom Kalal, Gregory Kelley, Sheila Mulvey, Peter O'Meara, John Pelegano, Lou Richards, Patti Silva, Patrick Vingo.

Absent: Jennifer Carroll.

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

GUEST: Siobhan Morgan, Aging Services Manager.

Jim Heffernan called the meeting to order and welcomed Lou Richards back to the Council. Jennifer Carroll was not able to attend so Mr. Heffernan chaired in her place.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

No one from the public attended.

MINUTES:

Jack Frost moved to accept the minutes, which was seconded by Tom Kalal and approved unanimously.

OMBUDSPERSON'S REPORT:

Ed Mambruno reviewed his report for the month of April and discussed Karen Huntington's nursing home review, which is now focused on facilities in Fairfield County. Ed resolved a billing error problem for a family member, addressed a HIPAA violation, a community citizen's issue and emergency placement issues. Eligibility and placement concerns have increased. The number of calls about case management has not increased.

Based on conversation regarding individuals who are on the emergency list for residential placement, the Council is interested in the length of time people are in this status and the age of caregivers for individuals on the waiting list.

Jim Heffernan introduced Siobhan Morgan, Coordinator of Aging Services. Ms. Morgan first talked about Money Follows the Person (MFP), which is a federal initiative that provides funding for people who wish to move from nursing homes and institutions to community settings. Of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) consumers who are eligible, three individuals transitioned and four more have budgets approved. Ms. Morgan explained the various aspects of the initiative, which include building a workforce, improving discharge planning and developing an infrastructure. MFP supports one-time costs for temporary staff support, startup costs and home modifications. Ms. Morgan discussed the thoroughness of the planning process.

The annual aging conference was held on May 7, 2010 with opening remarks by Commissioner Peter O'Meara. The conference was well attended and presented a variety of topics including, hospice, assistive technology and service coordination. Fall prevention training is planned for September/October 2010. The department's response to the LPRIC recommendations from the 2008 study was summarized. DDS is collaborating with DDS providers and aging agencies to provide a caregiver education series. Series dates are posted on the DDS website.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Rod O'Connor discussed the legislative session that ended two weeks ago. There is a summary shared with Council members. The DDS agency bill passed (HB 5448). Other bills that passed include:

SB 316, which establishes a Commission on Nonprofit Health and Human Services.

SB 494, which is the budget bill and permits higher rates for DDS facilities in need of capital improvements for health and safety reasons.

SB 428, which clarifies that G and J Tube feeding can be delegated to unlicensed trained staff.

HB 5006 addresses insurance coverage for anesthesia for dental procedures and ostomy supplies.

HB 5372 expands the availability of accessible housing.

HB 5435 includes tax credits for businesses hiring people with disabilities.

HB 5448, DDS agency bill, which addresses:

- Birth to Three statutory definitions to conform to federal IDEA and includes regulatory language in statute that exempts grandparents or nonparent relatives from parent fees.
- DDS Council appointment term limit extension.
- Appointment of designees to the Family Support Council.
- DDS receiving DCF investigations for all VSP participants.
- Ends the sunset provision for the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry.

Jack Frost asked if there was a focus this session on reorganizing state government. Mr. O'Connor responded that while there was great interest and discussion, no major bills passed.

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE:

Peter O'Meara thanked Rod O'Connor for a tremendous job representing DDS and advocating for DDS issues during the FY 10 session. Commissioner O'Meara referred to the DDS budget update prepared by Mr. O'Connor for Council members. DDS is able to maintain our services in FY 11. Funding is in place for school graduates, age-outs and continuing services. VSP will be challenging as there is no new money. The Birth to Three deficit is addressed as is OE and Workers' Compensation. The DDS position count is modestly adjusted downward. There is no residential conversion. There was no Early Retire Incentive Program (ERIP) for FY 11. DDS has 800 employees who would have been eligible for an ERIP.

Special Olympics Advocacy Resource (SOAR) program, which is a project that will provide legal assistance and financial planning to Special Olympians and their families, is being piloted in Connecticut and Arizona. A handout describing the program was provided to Council members.

The Rate Study Committee continues to meet to review issues. The April attendance is 91.6%. There are a few providers requesting hardship assistance.

Brenda Sisco is the new Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Council may want to invite her to a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

There was a discussion about providing food for the Council members at meetings. The Commissioner asked how many members would be interested in having food at meetings and a majority of Council members responded affirmatively. Mr. O'Connor said that any food that could be ordered by DDS would have to be paid for in advance by members. The Council tabled the discussion until the next meeting at Camp Harkness. Mr. Kalal said that he would talk with staff at Camp Harkness to see about food for the June meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.