



Approved Minutes of May 12, 2011

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Donna Bouteiller; Jennifer Carroll; Jack Frost; David Hadden; Jim Heffernan, Chair; Thomas Kalal; Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D., Commissioner Ex-Officio; Dr. John Pelegano, Secretary; Lou Richards; Patti Silva; Patrick Vingo, Vice-Chair.

Absent: Gregory Kelley, Sheila Mulvey.

DDS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Kathryn du Pree, Deputy Commissioner; Sgt. Shane Hassett, Director of Investigations; Ed Mambruno, Ombudsperson; Christine Pollio Cooney, Legislative & Executive Affairs; Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison.

There was no one from the public in attendance.

Jim Heffernan opened the meeting at 6:02 PM welcoming Commissioner Terrence Macy and Sergeant Shane Hassett who is now the Director of the Division of Investigations. He asked each member to introduce themselves and talk about their involvement with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Council.

The Council reviewed the draft minutes from the April 12, 2011 meeting. Mr. Heffernan raised a concern about a section of the Old Business and recommended a deletion. The group agreed and the minutes will be accepted as amended, motioned by Patrick Vingo and seconded by Patti Silva.

OMBUDSPERSON REPORT:

Ed Mambruno summarized his monthly activities and inquiries from family members and consumers. Mr. Mambruno reminded Council members that they are invited to the Governor's Coalition for Youth with Disabilities Scholarship on May 16, 2011. Mr. Heffernan inquired about a delay in a family member requesting records.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Christine Pollio Cooney discussed the status of legislation. The nomination hearing for Commissioner Macy was held on May 6, 2011 and he was confirmed by the Senate on May 11, 2011. The theme of legislators' questions included: autism, Southbury Training School (STS) and provider financial stability. The bill encouraging respectful language is now passed as is the autism bill. The bill allowing charitable organizations who utilize volunteers to access the DDS Abuse and Neglect registry is through the Senate and may be voted on by the House on Monday. The sexual assault bill is still under review. The bill implementing recommendations from the Commission on Enhancing Agency Outcomes is still in consideration and still includes a study regarding STS. If it passes, the department has asked that a person who lives at STS as well as a guardian or family representative be members of the study group. A Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' (DMHAS) housing bill now has several siting amendments that would allow more scrutiny by municipalities when a CLA or group home was being planned. This would impact DDS development of Community Living Arrangements (CLAs). The amendments have not been called and the bill has not yet passed. The legislature approved the submission of the three autism waivers to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS). A revision to one of the appendices is needed and therefore the submission originally scheduled for May 1, 2011 is being delayed by an estimated 30 to 60 days.

Council members expressed a great deal of concern and engaged in discussion about SB 852, which includes the siting amendments. Mr. Heffernan asked that Ms. Cooney email the members the bill information so members can follow up with their senators. The legislative session ends June 8, 2011. John Pelegano asked

about the process to amend a bill, which Ms. Cooney explained. The bill to implement a pilot program for federal criminal background checks of certain health care workers is moving forward and contains a study of a broader federal background check implementation. DDS Intermediate Care Facilities are likely to be among the first group in the pilot for implementation.

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE:

Commissioner Macy is Vice Chairman of Madison's Planning and Zoning Commission and testified against the original siting bills presented earlier this session. Commissioner Macy talked about his initial thoughts in his third week as Commissioner. He appreciates the commitment of DDS staff. He is concerned with the impact of upcoming retirements and its effect on our ability to manage and provide services. He has already raised this concern with the Governor's Office. He thanked Ms. Cooney and Rod O'Connor for their assistance and support through the confirmation process. Commissioner Macy fulfilled his goal of conducting his first outside meeting with People First who expressed concerns about their employment and continued supports from staff. He toured STS last week and was impressed with staff. Commissioner Macy supports the implementation of the Messier Settlement Agreement. He wants to make sure everyone at STS has enough information to make an informed choice.

Commissioner Macy commented on the department's efforts to support people with autism. He discussed his interest in changing the approach to meeting with the Trades Associations. He is committed to putting consumers and families first and developing a community of providers including public and private providers. He will conduct listening tours with families, staff and providers. He will use what he hears to develop an action plan. Commissioner Macy will be putting together a transition team that will include Mr. Heffernan, a self advocate and labor, provider and staff representatives to help chart the direction for the first six to 12 months. He also plans to focus on interagency cooperation.

Commissioner Macy and Deputy Commissioner Kathryn du Pree discussed the budget and the requirement for each state agency to submit reduction ideas. The department is making efforts to maintain as many services as possible for consumers and families including supports for new school graduates.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Heffernan and Ms. Silva discussed the April legislative breakfast hosted by the Council and the Regional Advisory Councils (RAC), which was conducted as a meet and greet. RAC members discussed their interest in joint meetings with the Council. Mr. Heffernan will put it on a future agenda.

The vote on the revision to the bylaws related to teleconferencing will be scheduled for the June Council meeting.

Ms. Silva provided an update on the Sparkle Effect, which will be the first unified cheerleading squad in New England.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Silva congratulated Mr. Heffernan and his wife for the honor they are receiving from HARC.

Next month, the Council will discuss a meeting with the RACs and an invitation to Ben Barnes to address the Council.

David Hadden made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Dr. Pelegano. It passed unanimously and Mr. Heffernan adjourned at 8:25 PM.