

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

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

DDS STAFF:

Sgt. Shane Hassett, Director of Investigations
Edward Mambruno, Ombudsperson
Christine Cooney, Legislative and Executive Affairs
Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison

Approved Minutes of October 13, 2011

In Attendance: David Hadden, Jim Heffernan, Thomas Kalal, Sheila Mulvey, Patti Silva, Patrick Vingo, Terry Macy, Christine Cooney.

Guests: Self Advocate Coordinators: Carlos Colon (North Region), Josse Torres (West Region), Joyce Rivers (South Region), Jamie Louchen (West Region), Genna Lewis (South Region) and Carol Grabbe (South Region). Also in attendance were Cindy Zakoscielny, Tonya Abeling, Anthony Dunston, Jacqueline Barnes, Marquetta Smith and Andrea Flammia.

Jim Heffernan opened the meeting at 6:05 PM.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Self Advocate Coordinators (SAC) Presentation:

Six of the nine DDS Self Advocate Coordinators (SAC) made a presentation to the council. Their presentation covered the five focus areas that the SACs have set as goals including 1) self advocacy, 2) promoting employment for all, 3) leadership through committees, 4) taking charge of their life through hiring and managing their own staff and 5) healthy relationships. The SACs discussed these focus areas/goals and made suggestions on how to support them in furthering these goals. The SACs asked for the council's help in supporting 1) self advocacy for everyone, 2) the use of people first language (i.e. consumer with intellectual disabilities), 3) "real work for real pay", 4) consumer leadership and 5) healthy relationships. The presentation ended with the SACs stating, "Together We Make Life Happen!" After the presentation, the SACs explained how it is important for consumers to invite whoever they want to participate in their Individual Plan (IP) meetings. There were suggestions that SACs do some outreach to schools and transition academies. Members were encouraged to check out the newly launched "Consumer Corner" website. The suggestion was made that it might be appropriate for the Council to contact the press regarding the use of respectful and people first language. The issue of how to encourage employment opportunities was discussed.

Review of July and September Minutes:

Sheila Mulvey made a motion to accept the minutes of the July meeting with edits which was seconded by David Hadden and passed unanimously.

Patrick Vingo made a motion to accept the minutes of the September meeting which was seconded by Sheila Mulvey and passed unanimously.

Ombudsperson's Report:

Ed Mambruno shared his September report with Council Members and went over concerns and issues that he addressed throughout the month.

Legislative Update:

Christine Cooney shared the Commissioner's testimony for the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee (LPRIC) public hearing on the provision of selected services for consumers with intellectual disability. Ms. Cooney explained that the final report regarding findings and recommendations would likely be issued in December 2011 and DDS will have the opportunity to provide feedback at that time. Legislative proposals are being drafted for submission to and review by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Governor's office. More details should be available by the next council meeting. The autism waivers were officially submitted to the federal government on September 30th initiating a 90-day review period. The draft licensing regulations are close to completion and should be ready for formal review in the near future. Ms. Cooney updated the council on activities related to the DDS Five Year Plan. There is a link on the DDS website with information about the draft plan and the opportunities for feedback.

Commissioner's Update:

Commissioner Macy gave a brief overview of the draft Five Year Plan crafted with input from his listening tours. He updated the council members on recent progress in the department being allowed to refill a number of essential positions and explained that a number of requests for temporary worker retiree (TWR) positions had been denied. The Commissioner mentioned several of the current key positions that have been approved for refill including the Director of the Autism Division, medical positions, case managers, residential supervisor staff and a Regional Director. A follow up meeting with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) on additional DDS positions will take place in a couple of weeks.

The first Human Services Cabinet meeting took place and there seem to be many opportunities for these state agencies to collaborate. DDS's sister agencies appear to have a similar interest in examining the sustainability of their legacy systems. A five percent reduction option is due to OPM this month. The Commissioner informed members that options for reductions that do not impact family services are quite limited and therefore this is a challenging exercise. Commissioner Macy provided an update on the number of families and guardians at Southbury Training School (STS) who have expressed an interest in residential options outside of STS. Seventeen individuals are exercising an option to move and eleven others are exploring the option at this time.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Patti Silva shared recent press coverage of the Sparkle Effect program started at Wethersfield High School. Chairman Heffernan asked members to consider volunteering to be part of the nominating committee that will present a slate of officers for next year's Council at the annual meeting in December. He will ask for these volunteers at the November meeting. Council members discussed topics for the November 10th meeting which Secretary Ben Barnes from OPM is tentatively scheduled to attend. Members decided the following items should be discussed: 1) staffing needs related to DDS retirements, 2) employment opportunities for DDS consumers that the state might be able to provide and 3) general budgetary issues (reinforcing DDS related needs).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM on a motion made by Tom Kalal and seconded by David Hadden.