



## Council on Developmental Services



*Dannel P. Malloy*  
Governor

### **Minutes of Thursday, May 9, 2013**

Location: DDS Central Office, Conference Room A

**In attendance:** Patti Silva, Chair; Jack Frost, Vice Chair; Adrienne Benjamin; Jennifer Carroll; David Hadden; Jim Heffernan; Thomas Kalal; Sheila Mulvey; Dr. John Pelegano; Patrick Vingo

**Absent:** Jamie Lazaroff, Secretary; Dr. Terrence Macy, Ex-Officio; Lou Richards

**Staff:** Michelle Bacry, Executive Secretary; Christine Pollio Cooney, Director, Legislative and Executive Affairs; Joseph Drexler, Deputy Commissioner; Edward Mambruno, DDS Ombudsperson

Chairperson Patti Silva opened the meeting at 6:19 P.M.

#### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

#### **Approval of December Minutes**

Minutes for the March meeting were reviewed. Jim Heffernan made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Carroll to accept the minutes as written. The Council voted unanimously to accept the March minutes.

Minutes for the April meeting were reviewed. One edit was requested. Thomas Kalal made a motion, seconded by Dr. John Pelegano to accept the minutes with the change. The Council voted unanimously to accept the April minutes with one change.

#### **Presentation: Jennifer Bogin, Director of Autism**

Jennifer Bogin, Director of Autism, discussed her position as the newly appointed Director of the Autism Division within the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Her previous position within the private sector has allowed her to gain access and knowledge to help create methods and models that can be effective for many individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Ms. Bogin provided materials for the Council that provided the history and purpose of the Autism Division. DDS is the lead agency for autism in the state of Connecticut. The Autism Division within DDS is committed to providing comprehensive, coordinated and effective supports and services for DDS consumers with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. The Division's services ensure that consumers may engage in meaningful participation and self-determination in all aspects of their life.

Ms. Bogin discussed the current enrollment is 78 adults and 25 children from Department of Children & Families' Voluntary Services Program. Within the next five years, under the autism waiver that funds the division, 25 more children will be enrolled along with eight adults through from the Money Follow the Person (MFP) program (these are adults transitioning out of nursing homes).

Jim Heffernan and Adrienne Benjamin both asked what types of services are offered to these individuals. Ms. Bogin described they received the following: behavioral services, life skills coaching, job coaching, assistive technology, community mentoring, respite, social skills group, transportation and specialized drivers assessment.

David Hadden expressed how happy he is that DDS is taking the lead on Autism and that Jen is the Director and offered the Council's support if it is ever needed.

#### **Ombudsman's Report – Edward Mambruno, Ombudsperson**

Ed distributed his April monthly report and gave a quick synopsis of some of the calls he has handled during that month. Council members should contact Ed if they have questions regarding the March report that was previously emailed.

#### **Legislative Update – Christine Pollio Cooney**

Christine Pollio Cooney reminded the Council that session will be ending on June 5, 2013. Ms. Cooney informed the council that the budget is currently being negotiated between the Appropriation Committee and the Governor's Staff. The sexual assault bill that has been discussed at many Council meetings has made it through the House. DDS will be initiating a six month pilot program starting in June for medication disposal at DDS regional centers and the Southbury Training School starting in June. The pilot will be to try out alternatives to flushing medications which is the topic of legislation this session. Ms. Cooney agreed to share the link providing information on this method suggested by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. In addition, there is an act concerning the conveyance of approximately 800 acres of farm land from Southbury Training School to the Department of Agriculture for agricultural preservation.

#### **Commissioner's Update**

In Commissioner Macy's absence, who was presenting at the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, Deputy Commissioner Drexler shared with the Council that the recording studio that will allow DDS to do better outreach to families will be completed soon. Deputy Commissioner Drexler also advised members that key staff have been in discussions to modernize DDS's data systems so that the information is accurate and uniform. Commissioner Macy and Deputy Commissioner Drexler have been traveling around the state conducting Town Hall meetings with DDS staff. These meetings have been extremely productive and have initiated great dialogue among staff. Deputy Commissioner Drexler ended by discussing the budget and describing the impact it may have on DDS and the private providers.

#### **Old Business**

##### **Personal Care Attendants (PCA) Taskforce Update**

Shelia Mulvey shared that she is enjoying serving on the PCA Taskforce and working alongside state agencies that have such committed and remarkable individuals serving. To date, the Taskforce has had five general meetings and three negotiation sessions. At the June Council meeting, Jim Welsh will be attending and providing the Council a full update.

##### **Joint Council/Regional Advisory Council Meetings**

This meeting is still being explored and Michelle Bacry will report back once a date is secured.

Mr. Kalal expressed how he enjoys offsite meetings and to keep them in mind for future meetings.

Deputy Commissioner Drexler shared with the Council that Governor Malloy will be visiting Camp Harkness on June 25, 2013 at 2:30 pm to kick off the season and acknowledge all of the repairs that were possible due to funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after Storm Sandy.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 P.M. on a motion made by Adrienne Benjamin and seconded by Jennifer Carroll.