



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Council on Developmental Services

Morna A. Murray, J.D.
Commissioner

Jordan A. Scheff
Deputy Commissioner

Minutes of Thursday, June 16, 2016

Location: Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Central Office, Conference Room A

In attendance: Adrienne Benjamin, Chair; Lisa Weisinger-Roland, Vice Chair; Jamie Lazaroff, Secretary; Karen Hlavac; Rick Lenz; Diana Mennone; Patti Silva; Dr. Neil Stein; Deborah Ullman (via phone); Patrick Vingo

Absent: Jennifer Carroll; Morna A. Murray, J. D., Ex-Officio; Arlene Reith; Kevin Zingler

Staff: Margaret Castonguay, Executive Secretary; Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison; Jordan Scheff, Deputy Commissioner

Introductions

Chair, Adrienne Benjamin, called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

Public Participation

Jack Frost, Rick Rothstein, Fay Lenz, Stan Soby, Frank King, Denise King

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the June meeting were approved.

Topics for Discussion

Jordan Scheff, Deputy Commissioner, updated the Council on the regional center closings. The Deputy Commissioner spoke to the Council about the Ella Grasso Regional Center in Stratford and the Meriden Regional Center in Meriden having a closing date effective June 30, 2016. DDS is making this difficult decision due to the severe budget constraints the State and the Department are facing. With the escalating costs of providing residential services through the public sector and the current state budget deficit, DDS is required to make some hard choices. Residents of the facilities will be able to choose from a number of residential options. These include portability of funds, MFP, Self-Direction, In-Home Supports (in their own or a family home), Shared Living, Community Companion Homes (CCH), private or public Community Living Arrangements (CLA), or relocating to one of the three other DDS regional centers in Norwalk, Newington and Torrington. The Deputy Commissioner told the Council some families have been more actively engaged in the process than others and therefore DDS will not be able to meet its projected target date of June 30th because not all of the resident's plans have been finalized.

The Deputy Commissioner gave the Council an overview of the public CLA conversions as required by the state's budget to convert 20 homes. In an effort to manage the budget constraints, DDS is undertaking several initiatives within budgetary limits, including support for individuals to remain in their current residence with their same services being delivered by a private provider. Conversions of public CLAs and redeployment of state employees will result in the reduction of overtime costs while keeping DDS's commitment to providing quality services and supports which are person-centered.

The Deputy Commissioner gave background information on Office of the Inspector General's report and DDS's efforts to improve the reporting of incidents of abuse and neglect with the focus on improving the safety of individuals and accurate reporting of all critical incidents. Kendres Lally, Director of Investigations, the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner and DDS's Information Technology (IT) department have met on how to improve the critical incident procedure and its reporting forms. Training staff in appropriate reporting of incidents that may be the result of abuse or neglect, working with the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (OPA), the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) on improving the current system of reporting and investigation of incidents of abuse or neglect are DDS's main objectives.

Shelagh McClure, Chair, and Molly Cole, Director, of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities presented to the Council. Ms. McClure and Ms. Cole explained their roles, the Council's five-year plan and its mission to ensure the full inclusion of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the community of their choice. They spoke about achieving their mission through advocacy, capacity building, and systems change initiatives. Ms. McClure and Ms. Cole spoke about their proposals for transportation and employment initiatives. Both answered questions from Council members. Both Councils agreed to collaborate and work together going forward.

New Business:

- Judy Dowd, Section Director, from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) will speak to the Council on cost comparisons.
- Siobhan Morgan, Director of Waiver Services for DDS will speak to the Council
- Council members will discuss the regional advisory council's (RACS)
- Council members spoke about forming a subcommittee on dental care for individuals with intellectual disability.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.