



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Council on Developmental Services

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

Minutes of December 14, 2017

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, (via phone); Rick Lenz; Diana Mennone; Arlene Reith; Dr. Neil Stein; Deborah Ullman; Kevin Zingler

Absent: Patti Silva

Staff: Margaret Castonguay, Executive Secretary; Ed Mambruno, Ombudsman; Christine Pollio Cooney, Legislative Liaison; Jordan Scheff, Commissioner

Introductions

Chair, Adrienne Benjamin, called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m.

Public Participation

Jack Frost, Thomas Reith

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the November meeting were approved with edits

Topics for Discussion

Chairperson, Adrienne Benjamin, Update

Ms. Benjamin spoke to the Council on future meeting topics and field trips. Council person, Rick Lenz will confirm Steve Morris of The Arc of Farmington Valley, Inc. (Favarh) presenting at the January Council meeting. February's meeting has an open agenda. Scott McWilliams, DDS Chief of Fiscal and Administration Services will be invited to present at the March meeting. On April 19th, the Council will tour MARC of Manchester. Council person Kevin Zingler will coordinate the information. Other future topics will be listed under new business with dates to be determined including re-inviting Kendres Lally, DDS Director of Investigations and Peter Hughes, DDS Special Investigator to present and update the Council on investigations; Walt Glomb, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities will be invited to discuss his new role as executive director and collaboration; Ms. Benjamin would like to learn more about the Chapel Haven School in New Haven and what the school offers for services for the individuals we support. Ms. Benjamin thanked the Council for their ideas and efforts in working together for the individuals we support.

Council person, Rick Lenz, spoke to the Council about inviting Steve Morris, executive director of Favarh to speak about Project SEARCH. Mr. Lenz would like the Council to learn more about the program and to consider the possibility of supporting its expansion beyond central Connecticut to the rest of the state. Mr. Lenz explained Project SEARCH is a one-year internship program for young adults with disabilities who are capable of or demonstrate clear potential for competitive employment. It is a national model that is offered in local communities around the country. Favarh partners with UConn

Health, participating school districts, the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and the Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to bring the Project Search model to Central Connecticut. Project SEARCH features total immersion in the workplace to facilitate the teaching and learning process as well as the acquisition of employability and marketable work skills. Young adults in the program participate in three internships to explore a variety of career paths. The interns work with a team that includes Project SEARCH Instructor and staff, Favarh Director of Transition Services, Favarh Transition Coordinator, School Representative/DDS or DORS Case Manager and the intern's family to create an employment goal and support the intern during this important transition to independent employment. Mr. Lenz will speak to Mr. Morris to present at the January Council meeting.

Council person, Lisa Weisinger-Roland, suggested to the Council exploring Assistive Technology for the individuals we support to create and enable independence. Robin Wood, Director of Family Support Strategies & Advocacy, will be invited to present to the Council on Assistive Technology possibly for the May Council meeting.

Ed Mambruno, Ombudsman Report

Mr. Mambruno spoke to the Council about receiving a call from a military parent who was looking to transfer to Connecticut and asked about the type of services her daughter would receive. Mr. Mambruno explained the Connecticut eligibility process, placement, level of need (LON) and how services and supports given in one state do not necessarily guarantee that they will transfer exactly to another state.

Mr. Mambruno spoke to the Council about the types of case management inquiries he receives, most are referring calls and e-mails to the most appropriate regional staff as well as determining which calls an Assistant Regional Director or Regional Director should receive.

Mr. Mambruno spoke about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance training. DDS was able to have the training be accessed from YouTube with captioning giving people more opportunities to view the training on-line. DDS staff, as well as private providers, are mandated to comply with the training.

Currently, many calls Mr. Mambruno has been receiving are being referred from Connecticut 2-1-1 concerning mental health. He also told of some complaints that were forwarded from the Governor's office to DDS. Mr. Mambruno is now working collaboratively with a Human Service Advocate, Client Rights and Grievance Specialist at the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) who has been very helpful and resourceful in responding to the inquires and giving DDS information for guidance in future calls.

Mr. Mambruno spoke about attending the Americans with Disabilities Act Coalition of Connecticut (ADACC) annual conference on October 27, 2017, at the Newington Senior & Disabled Center. The conference hosted speakers who covered many ADA topics. One speaker was an attorney who spoke about ADA Federal and state laws, service animals, assistive technology, ADA regulations and ADA issues for libraries. The conference was very informative and well presented.

Commissioner, Jordan Scheff

Commissioner Scheff gave the Council a budget update stating the Governor put out a \$300 million deficit mitigation plan suggesting revenue ideas to close the budget gaps. Until there is something more definitive from the legislature, there will not be a more comprehensive DDS analysis.

The Commissioner updated the Council on his work with area hospitals in helping to find solutions for people remaining in emergency rooms and not having transitional placements available. The Commissioner said the hospitals have no mechanism available to bill Medicaid and sometimes there is the question of other state agencies and DDS trying to figure out who should be supporting the individuals. The Commissioner and some hospital representatives will be meeting with the Office of Policy & Management (OPM) for discussions and eventually will involve some sister agencies as well.

The Commissioner stated he is excited about his good working relationship with Walt Glomb, Executive Director of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities and Win Evarts, Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, Inc. He suggested the Council invite both executives to present to the Council.

The Commissioner explained the Day Waiting List to the Council. There are 134 people on the day waiting list as of September 30, 2017. The list does not have new graduates but consists of various reasons why people are on the list and are asking for day funding.

The Commissioner answered a question from the Council on mental health and intellectual disabilities awareness. The Commissioner has been working with his Director of Psychological Services, Peter Tolisano, to make improvements and increase trainings for providers and staff. The Commissioner is collaborating with other state agencies and trying to focus on treating with cures and not just prevention. The Commissioner will speak with Dr. Tolisano about continuing education credits for mental health professionals and when the training presentations will be placed on the DDS web site.

Nominating Committee Update

The Council Nominating Committee of Rick Lenz, Diana Mennone and Deb Ullman, announced the re-appointment of Chair, Adrienne Benjamin, the new appointment of Vice Chair, Kevin Zingler and re-appointment of Jamie Lazaroff, Secretary.

New Business

On-going Council advocacy

Council field trips

Council meeting presenters - dates to be determined:

- Robin Wood
- Scott McWilliams
- Win Evarts
- Walt Glomb
- Kendres Lally & Peter Hughes
- Peter Mason, Siobhan Morgan and Robin Wood on CMS Community Living Right Changes 2019
- Communication and follow-up with the Governor and the Legislature

Bylaw update and approval

Council members spoke about forming a subcommittee on dental care

Waiting List

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.