



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Council on Developmental Services

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Minutes of Tuesday, July 11, 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; Rick Lenz; Diana Mennone; Arlene Reith; Dr. Neil Stein; Deborah Ullman

Absent: Patti Silva; Kevin Zingler

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

Introductions

Chair, Adrienne Benjamin, called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

Public Participation

Faye Lenz; Rick Rothstein; Lynn Arrezzini

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the June meeting were approved with edits

Topics for Discussion

Commissioner Jordan Scheff

The Commissioner updated the Council on the budget explaining reduced expenditures affecting DDS. The Commissioner regularly attends meetings with other state commissioners, Secretary Barnes of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the Governor's Chief of Staff, Brian Durand, and the Governor who attends periodically. During the meetings, there are discussions concerning contingency plans and when the legislature will come to a vote. The Commissioner works fondly and closely with many legislators and has looked at each proposed budget and was appreciative but concerned over the potential impact on DDS. The Commissioner stated one of the hardest things he had to do as a professional was to impose cuts to the private provider community. Peter Mason, DDS Program Manager, Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff, went with the Commissioner to meet with providers and answer questions and discuss implementation plans. Besides provider cuts, the Commissioner sent notices of intent to cancel contracts, grants will be less and lower amounts will be available, vacancies, except for emergencies, will not be able to be filled. The Commissioner is hoping for a budget by October 1st and that current levels of funding will be restored back to July 1st. The Commissioner answered questions from the Council and explained the recommendation to eliminate Community First Choice State Plan Option from Connecticut Medicaid (CFC). The Commissioner will send out employment information to the Council.

Chairperson Adrienne Benjamin

Budget funding and Council advocacy what can the Council do?

Advocating and working with legislators. Ms. Benjamin shared with the Council the Hartford Courant article, *Susan Campbell: State's Woes Shouldn't Be Zoe Benjamin's, A Young Woman With Disabilities* and how the article will be sent via email to the legislature. Ms. Benjamin proposed a draft letter, addressed to Governor Malloy, for the Council to consider and to request a meeting with the Governor. The Council edited the letter as a group and spoke about reaching out to legislators and the Governor via U.S. mail and email. Rod O'Connor, Legislative Liaison, offered information to the Council on how to contact legislators and also provided guidance on ways of communicating and following-up with legislators.

New Business

On-going Council advocacy

Communication and follow-up with the Governor and the Legislature

Bi-law update and approval

Council/RAC meeting to be scheduled for October in Central Office

Council members spoke about forming a subcommittee on dental care

CMS Community Living Right Changes 2019, Peter Mason, Siobhan Morgan and Robin Wood to be invited

Waiting List

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.