



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 February 15, 2018

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

**In attendance:** Adrienne Benjamin, Chair; Kevin Zingler, Vice Chair; Jamie Lazaroff, Secretary; Pamela DonAroma, (via phone); Joseph Duffy; Karen Hlavac; Rick Lenz; Diana Mennone; Arlene Reith; Deborah Ullman

**Absent:** Rick Rothstein; Dr. Neil Stein; Lisa Weisinger-Roland

**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 5:01 p.m.

**Public Participation**

Faye Lenz; Jack Frost; Walt Glomb; Dawn Odour; Stan Soby

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes for the January meeting were approved with edits

**Topics for Discussion**

**Ed Mambruno, Ombudsman**

Mr. Mambruno introduced himself to the new Council members and highlighted his duties as DDS Ombudsman and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator and Compliance Officer. Mr. Mambruno answered questions from the Council.

**Chairperson, Adrienne Benjamin, Update**

Ms. Benjamin spoke about the presentation she, Rick Lenz and Deb Ullman prepared on behalf of the Council at The Arc's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Connecticut IDD Caucus Family Hearing Day on February 21<sup>st</sup> at the Legislative Office Building from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Ms. Benjamin passed around copies and discussed with the Council. She will present the material on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Jamie Lazaroff spoke to the Council about hosting a Council breakfast with the legislature. The Council, DDS staff and Walt Glomb, Executive Director of the CT. Council on Developmental Disabilities, gave input and ideas. The Council would like to move forward with planning the breakfast for the next legislative session with Kevin Zingler coordinating. Details will be discussed in the future.

The Commissioner gave the Council a Level of Need (LON) hand-out and discussed the information explaining the charts and answering questions from the Council. Council members would like to have acronyms on the hand-out spelled out for

easier reference. The Commissioner pointed out the handout gives a representation of many people from a broad reference point.

Question was asked about accommodating public participation via phone. The Commissioner and Christine Pollio Cooney will follow-up with Ed Mambruno and Rod O'Connor.

Ms. Benjamin thanked the Commissioner, Christine Pollio Cooney and Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff, for their effort in putting the LON information together.

### **Christine Pollio Cooney, Legislative Liaison**

Ms. Cooney advised Council members that the agency's budget hearing before the Appropriations Committee would be from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Friday, February 16, 2018, in Room 2C at the Legislative Office Building (LOB) and the public testimony would begin at 4:00 p.m. on the same day. The testimony will be available online and Margaret will share the final testimony with members. Follow up with the Appropriations Committee's Health subcommittee is scheduled for Tuesday February 27, 2018, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Room 1B at the LOB.

Ms. Cooney described the five proposed agency bills that the Public Health Committee has already raised at DDS's request. Additionally, she mentioned additional concepts that have been raised by the committee. Once bills are drafted and have bill numbers, Rod O'Connor will include them in his legislative update. Ms. Cooney also discussed the work of the Lean Licensure and Certification workgroup and related legislative proposals for the session. Rod O'Connor and Ms. Cooney will share information about a public hearing date on DDS bills in the Public Health Committee as soon as that information is available.

Ms. Cooney spoke about the Medical Assistance Program Oversight Council (MAPOC) which has a Developmental Disabilities Work Group. There is a meeting tomorrow (February 16<sup>th</sup>) where members are expected to discuss their proposed recommendations for legislation which is really focused on increasing supports to youth with intellectual disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), behavioral health needs, voluntary services program, etc. There could be legislation coming out of this workgroup. Ms. Cooney will share with the Council when information becomes available.

### **Commissioner, Jordan Scheff**

The Commissioner spoke to the Council explaining enhanced contract monitoring and the types of DDS visits made to homes and answered questions from the Council.

The Commissioner reviewed the budget proposal from the governor, the process for his testimony and how DDS would manage the changes.

The Commissioner addressed the part of his testimony that will cover the Governor's \$5 million to address the needs of emergency situations with alternative placements with a specific focus on some youth. The Commissioner explained his proposal of addressing several gaps in the system in spending the appropriations in part on step up and step down units. The Commissioner described how individuals, both adults and children, in behavioral acute crisis situations, go to hospitals and are medicated to become stable. Upon stabilization in the hospital setting, they are asked to be released without addressing the issues that brought them to the hospital causing more trauma to the individual and his caretakers. The Commissioner would like to develop a mobile crisis response system not unlike the one Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS) uses and a few other states that do this for people with intellectual disabilities using a combination of supports before and after a crisis or to avoid an emergency situation altogether which would be the ultimate goal.

The Commissioner updated the Council on the Community Companion Home (CCH) opportunities available which provide successful environments for the individuals we support as well as being cost effective for the department. There will be partnering with some people in telling their stories of living in CCHs.

The Commissioner spoke about the upcoming job fairs and conversions.

The Commissioner told the Council there was a statutory change to the Intellectual Disability (ID) Partnership last year that reconstituted it. The Commissioner's staff have done some background work researching who will be identified for the group and staff will be sending out invites and a schedule of meetings.

## **New Business**

On-going Council advocacy

Council field trips

- MARC of Manchester - April Council meeting

Council meeting future presenters:

- Robin Wood, Director of Family Support Strategies & Advocacy, to speak on Assistive Technology
- Scott McWilliams, DDS Chief Of Fiscal & Administrative Services to speak at March Council Meeting
- Win Evarts, The Arc of Connecticut, Inc. Executive Director
- Walt Glomb, Executive Director of the CT. Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Kendres Lally, DDS Director of Investigations & Peter Hughes, DDS Special Investigator
- Peter Mason, Deputy Commissioner, Siobhan Morgan, DDS Social Services Medical Administration Manager and Robin Wood on Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Community Living Right Changes 2019
- Steve Morris, Executive Director, FAVARH, to present on Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder Housing (IDASH) program
- Dr. Peter Tolisano, DDS Director of Psychological Services

Bylaw update and approval

Communication and follow-up with the Governor and the Legislature

Council members spoke about forming a subcommittee on dental care

Waiting List

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.