



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

***Developmental Services Council
May 18 2023 Meeting Minutes***

Location: Meeting Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Adrienne Benjamin, Alexis Calacro, Fredrick Lenz Jr., Dawn Dematteo, Richard Rothstein, Diana Mennone, Pamela DonAroma, Brian Dillon, Patti Silva, Kelly Dorsey (Self-Advocate Coordinator (SAC) – Midstate ARC), Christine Hainsworth-Straus, Kevin Zingler

Absent: Joseph Duffy, Arlene Reith, Lisa Weisinger-Roland

Guests: None

DDS Staff: Jordan A. Scheff, Commissioner, Gunnar Abrahamsson, Executive Secretary Kevin Bronson, DDS Director of Legislative & Executive Affairs, Shannon Jacovino, DDS Ombudsperson, Trevor Rogers & Darrell Spears, Customized Employment Specialists

Introductions

Chairman Zingler called the meeting to order at 4:32PM and noted that the threshold for a quorum was met.

Moment of Silence for those affected by COVID-19

Chairman Zingler held a moment of silence for those affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Opportunity for Public Participation

Chairman Zingler next asked if there were any members of the public who were interested in addressing the Council under the "Public Participation" section of the agenda. Members of the public are allotted three minutes to do so. There were none.

Dialogue

There were brief remarks by Commissioner Scheff in which he introduced DDS Staff members Trever Rogers and Darrell Spears who gave a presentation on customized employment services offered by DDS.

Chairman Zingler moved on to the review and approval of the April 20th meeting minutes. There was a motion to amend the minutes to reflect the year "2023" was made by Christine Hainsworth-Strauss, and noted by Gunnar Abrahamsson. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Rick Lenz and seconded by Adrienne Benjamin. The minutes for the April 20th meeting were approved by a unanimous vote.

At this point Chairman Zingler moved on to the ombudsperson report, DDS Ombudsperson Shannon Jacovino suggested the report be discussed in the executive session planned for the end of the meeting. Councilmembers were in agreement. The Ombudsperson report was tabled for review at the executive session.

Chairman Zingler asked Commissioner Scheff to please give an update on DDS activities and noteworthy items. Commissioner Scheff explained to the council that much of the month of April was spent looking at legislative bills, language revisions, testimony, and funding for initiatives. Commissioner Scheff provided updates on the Supporting Transformation to Empower People (STEP), and the forums DDS is hosting throughout the month of May to highlight the seven service options that STEP focuses on.

DDS Director of Communications, Legislation, and Regulations Kevin Bronson provided an update on legislative bills, topics, and matters of importance. Director Bronson informed the council that DDS Staff has been distributing "bill trackers" to the council and these same tools are available on the Connecticut General Assembly website. At this point Commissioner Scheff updated the council on news related to rumors of pending strike action from private providers.

This concluded the discussion topics for the meeting and a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 5:28PM.

The Council then moved into Executive Session at 6:00pm. A motion was made by Rick Rothstein and Rick Lenz to leave Executive Session at 6:29 p.m. Motion passed. NOTE: No votes were taken during Executive Session. A motion was made by Adrienne Benjamin and seconded by Patti Silva to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Motion passed.

Minutes Recorded by:
Gunnar Abrahamsson
Executive Secretary
DDS Central Office

Nothing Follows //