



Jodi M. Rell
Governor

Minutes ~ February 14, 2008

Members In Attendance:

Patti Silva – Chair, Jennifer Carroll – Vice Chair, Chavis Chappell – Secretary, Stuart Brown, Karen Hlavac, David Hadden, Kevin Morey, Peter H. O’Meara-Ex-Officio

DDS Staff:

Kathryn du Pree – Deputy Commissioner
Christine Pollio – Legislative & Executive Affairs Director
Rod O’Connor – Legislative Liaison
Ivette DeJesus – Executive Secretary

Patti Silva - Chair opened the meeting.

Citizen Input:

Mr. Tom Sullivan, Executive Director, ARC of New London
Mr. Steve Becker, HARC

Mr. Sullivan & Mr. Becker shared the following:

- Opened up the 1st group home recently.
- Discussed historical under funding. He went on to explain that a COLA of 3% was received last year and they were very pleased but then there were significant increases such as fuel, electricity, and a significant increase in workers comp.
- He provided a COLA analysis to Council.
- He shared that the Provider Rescue Fund bill will be presented on February 26th.
- The average increase for the past few years comes out to 1.4%.
- They are looking to the additional 9% in the upcoming year since the Governor approved only 3% when they requested 12%.
- The Residential and Day program - \$500,000 deficit
- 2/26 @ 10:00 a.m. – Human Services Public Hearing
- HARC Today was distributed.

Minutes:

January Council minutes were approved as presented.

Presenters/Guest:

Terry Cote introducing the new Aging Services Coordinator, Siobhan Morgan

Ms. Siobhan Morgan introduced herself and gave Council a brief history of her years with DDS. She touched a bit on what she is looking to work on and do in her new role and asked for input that may be helpful or information anyone may be looking for. Ms. Hlavac informed her that she belongs to another group aside from the Council and they are looking for information specifically regarding statistics and it would be great if she can assist with that.

Kathy Reddington, Update on Autism Division

Ms. Reddington shared the following:

- Update on what the Autism Division is doing. Many great things are happening with this program.
- She also shared that there are currently 28 people in the New Haven area in the program.
- Ms. Reddington shared information about the Autism Training DVDs.
- There is a Parent's Group that was initiated.
- There is a Feasibility Study for Medicaid waiver being worked on.
- March 13th – The Jewish Community Center will be having a film study and discussion open to the public. Will get information to Ivette to forward to Council.

Ombudsperson Report – Ed Mambruno:

December 2007 Updates:

Mr. Mambruno shared that he has hired an assistant for office of the Ombudsperson, Ms. Doralis Hernaiz and she can be reached at (860) 418-6043 or via email: Doralis.Hernaiz@ct.gov Doris previously worked for the Department of Motor Vehicles. She brings over 5 years of Secretarial experience to DDS and is fluent in Spanish and American Sign Language.

Mr. Mambruno informed the Council of the following updates:

- Spoke with a father whose son/daughter's behavior has become increasingly difficult to live with at home. Spoke with the case manager who had given the father advice to follow if behavior escalated. The father did not or will not do what was recommended, therefore enabling son/daughter's behavior. I advised Dad that this is indeed a difficult situation that would not be resolved easily unless he followed specific steps.
- A father called to inquire about placement for his nine-year-old child. I gave the father information for voluntary services and other supports that may be needed. I also referred him to school district for supports needed in school.
- A Hospital Social Worker called requesting if I can find placement for consumer that was brought to the emergency room. Person said that they do not have the proper supports for individual. Individual's behavior was not appropriate for facility and they deem that after an outburst they could not allow individual to stay. I called region and they contacted the Guardian and were looking for a more appropriate placement.
- Received call from mother whose son/daughter was recently approved for services. She was quite upset with the amount of money allocated to individual's day program, tried to explain to her the process of a budget with little success. The mother stopped

by the office unannounced on January 2nd with individual, sister and nephew, believing that I could change budget for her. During the meeting I gave her additional supports that she could access such as heating assistance, clothing, food stamps etc. While she was not completely satisfied with result she did gain an understanding that she had to meet with the case manager and re-schedule the PRAT that she had dismissed.

SNF Visits:

Made first visit to the Wethersfield Nursing Home. I met with four consumers while there and reviewed documentation that they are required to have. Some of this documentation is updated DNR's, completed PAS forms which are mandatory regarding reimbursement for payment. I also made sure a contact person and phone numbers is listed and if they had a guardian, that it be listed as well as their numbers. I completed this with an OBRA nurse for that region.

I also did the following in regards to the SNF Visits:

- Developed a standardized checklist to be used for all visits to the nursing homes and SNF's. Developing standardization of required forms that are required to be maintained in each individual's file.
- Sent e-mail to all regions asking that they add me to their lists when they supply information regarding updating the DNR list and any other information sent regarding nursing homes.
- There is a web site called: MemberoftheFamily.net, which lists all of the Nursing Facilities in Connecticut. They give a full perspective of complaints and inspections.

January 2008 Updates:

- A consumer called office wanting to meet with me to discuss concerns she had with the Department's audit of her child's funds. I met with the audit team, read their findings and determined that because she did not fill a required IRS form that this would be best addressed on a Federal level. I spoke at length with her new case manager and recommended that her best recourse would be to have the mother speak with or meet with her Congressman or US Senator.
- A father called regarding son/daughter being brought to Hospital's Emergency room after a behavior issue at his/her group home. The father was questioning why they had to call 911 leading to his/her emergency room stay. He was informed that this was not an unusual practice especially when staff is injured. After a lengthy stay in the ER, the father called my office, I contacted region and found temporary placement in respite before moving into a more appropriate placement.
- Received a call from a Guardian requesting that I expedite the placement of a consumer who was placed in a group home. She was concerned that the placement was not appropriate because the consumer has been sleeping on the couch for over a month. Guardian was told that this was only going to be a temporary placement. After speaking with the region they agreed that it was longer than they had planned, however, no private providers would accept the consumer but assured me that meetings were set up with other providers. I received an email this week stating that a private provider had been found at a supportive setting with staff to be trained. The time frame for placement would be in place in a week or two.
- Received a call and an unexpected visit from a very unhappy mother regarding the budget amount allocated for her son/daughter. Mom, the primary caretaker, questioned why and how the amount was determined and wanted to speak with anyone and everyone who was involved. She expressed disappointment with the case manager's work and requested

that I intervene to help her obtain a new case manager. The mother also asked if I would investigate why she was not receiving a larger budget amount. I advised her to find out exactly what the budget amount she was to receive covered and advised her to determine exactly how she was going to budget this amount. I told her that it has been my experience that when other individuals talk about other families there are usually circumstances or specific needs and or supports that are required for that individual that they do not know. I spoke with the region, they explained the budget.

SNF Meetings:

- Met with Regional Nurse Coordinator, OBRA Nurse and LTC Case Managers from the South Region. We discussed ways I can be of assistance to them. I shared the checklist that I have developed, the “Nursing Home Review” and we discussed the questions and changes and/or additions that could be made.
- Following a recommendation from the South Region sent e-mail to Regions asking to be put on CC list when changes are made to a DNR list.
- Visited two Nursing Facilities: Haven Health in West Hartford and Bloomfield Health Center.

Legislative Report - Christine Pollio:

Ms. Pollio informed the Council of the following updates:

- We are in session as of February 6th. Thus far, fast pace and will go very quickly.
- Agency specific appropriation meeting was held yesterday. Apologies for not getting information to you prior. Copies have been supplied and Ivette emailed it to you yesterday.
- Clarified definition of a quorum.
- DDS goes before the Appropriations Health & Hospital Committee on Tuesday, February 19th at 3:15 p.m. The next step is that Appropriations comes out with their recommendations for a mid term budget adjustment.
- Some COLA related bills have been raised. 5298=5% increase DMHAS Providers, 5302=3% COLA non-profits referred to Public Health Committee, 5002 = 3% COLA referred to Appropriations.
- Discussion of a few bills took place that do not have bill numbers assigned yet.
- Budget inquiry regarding 1.1 million dollar reduction: This is a \$1.1m reduction of cash during FY’09 that will not effect the annualization of services in FY’10. Anyone needing to begin adult day services or supported employment in July who is a school graduate will have the opportunity to do so. The funding reduction will be accomplished as a result of normal late starts by some graduates, either because they take more time to select a service provider or because they first receive temporary job assessment and training support from BRS before starting with DDS.
- Two new members have been appointed to the Council on MR:
 - Jim Heffernan
 - John Pelegano

Commissioner’s Updates:

- Commissioner briefly brought up the DDS Conference that will consist of 2 or 3 days. To be discussed at next months meeting. Would like the Council to be a participating member.

- Budget: In general, supports and maintains our current services with the exception of the COLA.
- There was a lot of criticism yesterday as to the Governor's decision but in all fairness, it has to be difficult to be in her shoes and have to address such a tough budget. Certain decisions have to be made and not everyone will be happy.
- As we think about the biennium budget, the Waiting list initiative is coming to an end and we would like to have it continued. Something for the Council to consider and think about supporting?
- Council discussion on cost to keep the waiting list ongoing.
- Jennifer brought up the topic of the possibility of a Husky Plan restructure. Discussion followed. DDS is not aware of any changes related to the Husky Plan.

Old Business:

- Private Provider Issue: With the hearing scheduled for Feb. 26th, Dave may not be there. Dave Hadden is willing to help with testimony. David questioned Patti if she would entertain idea anymore letters to Appropriation Committee? He's willing to draft the letters.
- Dave Hadden is in support of the Community Provider Rescue fund, Patti Silva also in agreement.
- Bylaws discussed by Rod, copies distributed. Please review during the following month and bring any edits to the next Council meeting.

New Business:

- There is a legislative area on the DDS web page now.
- In Home Respite (Kevin Morey): Mr. Morey requested at the last meeting to discuss In Home respite at this meeting. Mr. Morey wanted to share the following:
 - Suggestion to make the home the NPO. For there to be no separate budget for this. Process is that families go through Case Manager to incorporate into budget but way of doing things doesn't always work well. Respite facilities are overwhelmed.
 - Looking to see if there is any way possible to provide respite at consumers home?
 - Is this worthy of the Council to petition to DDS through Case Manager specific for help on Respite care at home? Any input on these types of issues would be helpful.
 - There is no formal In Home Respite, some funds available through Title 19 waiver through DSS but that is it.
 - Commissioner shared that through Self Determination you can hire your own self-coordinator. Commissioner asked that Kathryn or Terry do presentation of options at the next Council meeting.
 - Commissioner also shared that DDS has been looking at concept on family support teams at each of the regions.
- Chavis wanted to share that he is very happy to be back after being out for a little while. He missed everyone! 😊

****The next meeting will be held on March 13th.****

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned: 8:30 p.m.