

DDS North Region Regional Advisory Council

May 18, 2022

Meeting Minutes – Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams (meeting was recorded)

Members Present: Kathleen Hayes, Chair; Annette Scully, Vice Chair; Donna Clauson; Rick Rothstein; Lori Sandora; Tammy Selinger; Stacie Silva-Gordon, DDS North Regional Director (ex-Officio member)

Guests: Adrianna Ramirez

Meeting called to order at 5:05pm.

Kathleen Hayes began the meeting with a reminder that she will be stepping down as Chair, and that this will be her last meeting in that capacity. She will continue to be an active member on the Council. Rick Rothstein will take over as temporary Chair until nominations and vote are made to elect a new permanent Chair.

- Supported Decision Making Presentation – Atty. Kathleen Hayes
 - Attorney Hayes shared a presentation with the Council on the Supported Decision-Making process, explaining the process and how it differs from the Guardianship process. The full presentation can be viewed on the DDS website under the “Boards and Councils” section where the recording of this meeting will be posted.
- Approval of April Meeting Minutes – Annette Scully made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Tammy Selinger; minutes were approved.
- Legislative Updates:
 - An email from Kevin Bronson, DDS Legislative Liaison, was shared with the Council prior to the meeting with relevant legislation that has been passed.
 - Kathleen shared that she was aware of one of the bills that basically says that anytime there is an issue presented to a probate court, the state agency has to be given notice of that hearing and they have the opportunity to participate in the hearing and to object. After a decision is made by the probate court, the legislation says that the state agencies need to comply with the court orders that would pertain to their services. The intent is to basically align everybody to make sure that agencies are participating in the hearing so when an order is issued it is binding and not something that could be overturned by an agency later.
 - Rick Rothstein shared part of SB 369, which for the most part were routine changes. One part is in the event that a representative (guardian, conservator, etc.) is not available to consent to a medical procedure, the Commissioner now has the authority to sign on behalf of the individual in an emergency situation.
 - The budget worked out well for both the Department and families.
 - Two senators from Ohio have introduced legislation (SB2065) that would liberalize the rules for recipients of SSI. They would like to see the restrictive income and asset limitations for SSI changed.
- Regional Director’s Update – Stacie Silva-Gordon
 - Stacie stated that the North Region is seeking any parents that would be interested in participating in the Human Rights Committee to review requests that are sent in from the private providers. The committee meets the 2nd Thursday of each month and the next meeting is June 9th. If anyone from the Council is interested, or if anyone knows of any parents that may want to participate, they can contact Serginho (Serge) Walker at (860) 263-2469 or by email at Serginho.Walker@ct.gov.
 - Recently a memo went out to the qualified providers that the rate for compensation for individualized home supports (IHS) and personal support services will be increasing to try to help the stability of the IHS program.
 - The Region continues to work on the National Core Indicators (NCI’s). The surveys are being conducted with individuals to measure how well we are doing with providing services. Stacie will share when the results are completed.

- Donna Clauson raised a question regarding transportation and whether those rates would be increased, especially now with the price of gas increasing so much. It is costing so much more to provide those services so something should be done to help address that. Stacie stated that transportation is a big concern, and the Department is looking at a number of things, including transportation. She will share the concern and bring the response back for the next meeting.
- Tammy Selinger asked if there would be an increase for IHS for self-determination as well. Stacie stated that there would be.
- Nominations for Chairperson –
 - Since Kathleen will be stepping down, nominations will be needed to replace her as Chair.
 - Rick Rothstein stated he would consider it on a short-term basis. He agreed to fill the role until January when nominations are made, and a vote can be taken.
- The Litchfield ARC is holding a webinar on the autism waiver at 6:30pm.
- A question was asked about how the North Region is doing with staffing with all of the recent retirements. Stacie Silva-Gordon replied that it has been a big strain on the private providers who are struggling to find staffing. It has been very challenging.
- Open Forum for Public Participation
 - No new topics raised.
- Motion to adjourn was made by Donna Clauson; seconded by Rick Rothstein. Meeting was adjourned at 6:12 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21st at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia Neumann
Executive Secretary