

**DDS-South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2013**

Members Present - Jean Brookman, Carol Cooney, Steve Harney, Lauralyn Lewis, and Thomas Dailey, Regional Director, DDS South Region.

Guests - Ms. Bai, Old Saybrook Director of Student Support Services, Ms. Constance English, Ms. Denise Shepard, Ms. Denise King, and Ms. Michele Weaving

Call to Order – Chair Brookman called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Introductions – All made introductions.

Citizen Comment – Ms. King suggested that DDS respite centers assist in family networking by providing incoming families with contact information for parent groups. This seems to be in line with the DDS Five Year Plan goal of increasing communication with parents and families. Mr. Dailey offered to explore the possibility further and suggested some alternatives.

The issue of case managers connecting families was raised. Mr. Dailey commented that this is already happening behind the scenes.

In response to an inquiry about the DDS secure web portal, Mr. Dailey explained that the portal is a place providers can go to review information on consumers being referred for residential placement.

The Commissioner's 2014 Funding Priorities were reviewed next. They are individuals with Emergency status, individuals with immediate protective service plans in place, and individuals who are on the waiver, but have unmet needs.

Member Harvey asked if the parents group were to come up with a way of creating housing that would result in a savings for DDS, would that enable the department to help families out with staffing costs. Mr. Dailey explained that lack of resources would not make this possible. What DDS is trying to do is help people who do not need 24/7 settings transition into more individualized settings, so that that funding could be used for E's.

A review ensued of the DDS Notice of Opportunity and the variances in the development of Continuous Residential Support settings (CRS) versus Community Living Arrangement (CLA).

Approval of Minutes - Review ensued of the September meeting minutes.

In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the September meeting as presented to the meeting.

Member Lewis requested an amendment to the May 15, 2013, meeting minutes to reflect that she did not "testify" at the May 7, 2013, panel discussion held at the State Capitol hosted by the Connecticut Community Providers Association, the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits, and the ARC of Connecticut.

Regional Director's Report

Mr. Dailey reported on the following:

- Family grant account
- Upcoming family forums
- Grant awards for a provider mentoring project
- Budget
- Legislative initiatives
- Expansion of family support teams
- Direct care staff reminders of food consistency vigilance during the holidays
- CT Behavioral Health Partnership

Member Lewis commented that she heard about cuts to the family grant account through a case manager. Mr. Dailey informed the Council that there has been no discussion of cuts to this account this year.

New Business

- **Membership** - Ms. Weaving shared her interest in becoming a Council member. The Regional Director's office we recommend her appointment to the Council to Commissioner Macy. Ms. Weaving should expect to receive an appointment letter before the next meeting.

There are still two openings on the Council. The Regional Director's office will prepare and distribute another recruitment flyer.

Discussion ensued on ways of enhancing the relationship between DDS and SPED departments as a means of raising families' and districts awareness of DDS. Mr. Dailey offered to arrange for Robin Wood to attend the next meeting to talk about an after Birth to Three initiative.

- **2013-2014 Council Goals** - The Council set the following goals:
 1. The Creative Housing Parent Workgroup initiative will continue. The group meets the 2nd. Thursdays of every month from 6-8:15 at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook.
 2. Communication
 3. Legislative Advocacy/Involvement

2014 Schedule of Meeting - The 2014 proposed schedule of meetings was presented and agreed to. The next regularly scheduled Council meeting will be held on January 15, 2014, at the Clinton Library from 6:00 -8:00 PM.

Adjournment - With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jolie Crescimano-Goss
Jolie Crescimano-Goss, Executive Secretary, DDS-South Region