

**The Southbury Training School Board of Trustees
Met via Conference Call on Tuesday, November 24, 2020**

Present: Eileen Lemay, Chair
Ann Dougherty, Vice Chair
Diana Mennone
Eugene Harvey, STS Director

Excused: Mark Cooper

Eileen Lemay, Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Report on DDS Council Meetings

Presented by Diana Mennone to the STS Board of Trustees on November 24, 2020.

A report was given by Diana Mennone STS Board of Trustees member on the Council on Developmental Services meetings that were held on June 18, 2020, July 16, 2020, September 17, 2020 and October 15, 2020. There was no meeting in August.

At all meetings Commissioner Jordan Scheff gave COVID-19 response updates, the progress made, challenges that remain, and how DDS plans to reopen, delay or close services while remaining committed to the safety of the individuals in DDS. There are approximately a dozen committees within DDS. Trends and figures pertaining to COVID positivity among staff and individuals are posted on the DDS website and updated daily (Mon-Fri).

<https://portal.ct.gov/DDS/General/Covid19/DDS-COVID-19-Figures-and-Trends>

The committees continue their work to plan and execute safe protocol of DDS services including employment and day services, visitation guidelines, etc. There have been some frustrations and pushback on visitation guidelines, but DDS must continue to stay cautious. Each plan is specific to the providers and individuals. The Commissioner feels there is a need to mitigate negative effects of isolation. Connecticut has done well when compared to other states. The Commissioner continues monitoring progress (in relation to other states) and remains vigilant.

The Commissioner would like to have more robust testing. Chief of Staff, (Katie Rock-Burns) is working on testing for all public and private staff, but there are lots of moving parts that make these plans difficult to pin down. Testing situations change frequently.

Ken Cabral, Director of Family Services Strategy gave an overview of Day and Employment Services. He talked about issues presented from surveys concerning anticipated numbers of individuals who want to come back (40%-47%). Council members reported transportation is a huge issue. Big buses can only carry 1 or 2 individuals. Ken is working with others to identify transportation and other issues that need troubleshooting re: sanitizing, cleaning, sneeze guards, etc. As residential providers decide to be conservative and decide on a low risk tolerance, some are offering in-home supports.

Krista Ostaszewski, Director of Legislation, Regulations and Communications reported a short, special legislative session was planned for later in the year. Topics to include policy accountability, absentee ballots, insulin, tele-health and budgetary items.

The Council heard a presentation by the CT Office of Health Strategy concerning health needs of individuals supported by DDS. Goals include identifying strategies to coordinate care and to ensure people have access to services and primary care. The Council members expressed their concerns - not enough PCP's and of the ones that exist, relatively few have knowledge, let alone expertise about caring for individuals with intellectual disability. Also, because of lack of prevention and early identification of health and behavioral needs, sometimes unnecessary or long ER visits occur. There is a need for specialized training. Three members of the Council drafted a statement on behalf of the Council in support of the workgroup. They also plan to attend a public Primary Care Work Group to make these issues better known and understood.

To view complete Council on Developmental Disabilities minutes, go to the State of CT DDS website: ct.gov/dds - click on BOARDS and COUNCILS, click on COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES, scroll down & click on 2020 MEETING SCHEDULE (AGENDA & MINUTES). Scroll down to find dates of MEETINGS; see AGENDA columns and MINUTES columns to the right. Scroll down further to view previous years' MEETING SCHEDULE / AGENDAS / MINUTES.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Our current population is 154. We have had 3 deaths since the last meeting.
- We were doing well regarding the Covid-19 virus until last week. We have had a total of three individuals from Cottage 33 test positive and one individual from Cottage 42. The other individuals in these cottages have tested negative. Testing for the staff in these two buildings has begun. These buildings are currently being quarantined.
- We currently have more staff that have tested positive for Covid than we did in March.
- Some staff have volunteered to work in our Covid buildings.
- A meeting was held on November 23, 2020 that included medical, nursing and managerial staff. It was decided that we would go back to our March shut down protocols. There will no longer be on or off grounds day programs, no outside or family visitations, no music therapy or religious services.
- We are currently trying to get weekly testing for our staff. Nursing homes are getting tested weekly and we feel it would benefit our campus. Hoping to get assistance from the Health Department and Unions to get this approved.
- Southbury Training School has a contract with CVS for staff that need to make outside appointments for Covid testing 444
- Eight temporary staff that will be starting on Friday, November 27th and we hope to hire another 10 to 12 staff soon.
- We have a good supply of PPE's including N95 and K95 masks, shields, booties, gowns and gloves.
- Day Programs have been put on hold for the next couple of months.

- It is anticipated that our population may be first to be given vaccines. Medical and nursing staff are currently doing research on the side effects of the vaccines.
- Home and School has 10-12 boxes of gifts to be delivered in December. We will be offering to send a driver to pick them up.
- Almost all of our individuals received a stimulus check. We are currently working on ways to spend the funds on things our individuals want and need.

OLD BUSINESS

Waiting to get approval from the Governor's Office officially placing Sandy O'Neil on the Board of Trustees.

NEW BUSINESS

Eugene Harvey, Director will contact Eileen Lemay as things develop at Southbury Training School.

Eileen Lemay will follow up on who is responsible for making updates to membership and other important information on the Board of Trustee's website.

Ann Dougherty made a motion for current Board of Trustees members to continue to hold their titles. The motion was seconded and approved. Eileen Lemay will send email to Mark Cooper regarding motion to approve Eileen Lemay as Chair, Ann Dougherty as Vice Chair, Diana Mennone as Representative to the DDS Council on Developmental Services and to approve his own seat on the board as Secretary.

Motion was made for the approval of the following 2021 meeting schedule.

Monday, March 22, 2021 at 1:00pm

Monday, June 28, 2021 at 1:00pm

Monday, September 27, 2021 at 1:00pm

Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at 1:00pm

The next meeting of the STS Board of Trustees will be held on Monday, March 22, 2021 at 1:00pm via conference call.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Wodjenski, Recording Secretary

Mark A. R. Cooper, Secretary

Approved by the STS Board of Trustees

