

**The Southbury Training School Board of Trustees
Met in Person and on Teams, Monday, November 20, 2023.**

Present: Eileen Lemay, Chair
Ann Dougherty, Vice Chair
Diana Mennone
Kathryn Hanewicz, STS Director
Sandy O'Neil
Lee Ellen Chontos

Eileen Lemay, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:10pm. The Board received a tour of the STS day programs prior to the meeting by Donna Munson.

COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES report to STS BOT 11-20-2023

A report was given by Diana Mennone, STS Board of Trustees representative for the DDS Council on Developmental Services covering Council meetings held virtually via Microsoft Teams on July 20, 2023 and September 26, 2023. No meeting was scheduled in August according to the Council's calendar.

Commissioner Scheff gave the Council an update on the department's review of the Abuse & Neglect Subcommittee recommendations. He indicated that he has assigned staff to begin working on a "family guide" outlining information related to the general processes and timelines associated with Abuse & Neglect investigations. They will look into developing a modernized, comprehensive case management solution and alternative reporting measures, as the new system does not allow for a new reporting category.

The DDS Council sub-committee on Abuse and Neglect shared that they have completed a report and have submitted it to DDS for review. They brought a suggestion that a third-party category be created for determination of the investigations in addition to substantiated and unsubstantiated claims that would bring more clarity to investigations.

The Commissioner also discussed Supportive Housing and IDASH (Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder Housing). The DDS providers facilitate the transition into the new setting and provide ongoing services as needed to support these individuals in living as independently as possible. Assistive technology plays a significant role in the program.

There was a discussion around employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Efforts to work alongside other state agencies help bolster and streamline opportunities for individuals served by the department. This helps employ, train, and equip folks to be successful in the workplace and lead more independent lives.

The Commissioner continues to speak with people around the state about the benefits of the STEP initiative (Supporting Transformation to Empower People). One Council member shared concerns about this program not including individuals in group homes which isolates those who are not able to meet the guidelines. Also, a DDS Council member was appointed to a transportation subcommittee due to concerns about transportation difficulties especially in the quiet corners of the state.

Shannon Jacovino, DDS Ombudsperson reviewed her 2022 Annual Report and Monthly Report. Questions about Self-Direction of supports, ethics, individual rights were discussed. Also, there was a discussion about how DDS works with individuals who are or have been incarcerated. See minutes on DDS website for more details.

To view complete Council on Developmental Services minutes, go to the State of CT DDS website. <https://www.ct.gov/dds> - click on BOARDS and COUNCILS, click on COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES, scroll down & click on Upcoming and Past MEETING SCHEDULE (AGENDA & MINUTES / VIDEOS). 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 and/or VIDEO RECORDINGS.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Our current population is 118.
- STS Remembrance Day was held on September 14th to gather and celebrate the lives of those who had passed this year. A visit to our Memorial Garden where bricks were presented for those who have passed. Cakes were delivered to each cottage to help celebrate the memories of their friends.

- Halloween Party was a success. The golf cart was turned into an ice cream cart delivering ice cream or pudding to each cottage. Individuals dressed up and came outside to participate. Each cottage participated in a pumpkin decorating contest and the award certificates were presented.
- Oil tank removal continues.
- STS Fire Department has closed, all fire personnel have been transferred to the DDS Strategic Planning & Emergency Services serving all DDS sites statewide. The transition went well with the coordination with the Town of Southbury.
- The Department of Public Health's last survey was in August. The cottages that have been surveyed have received excellent reviews. We anticipate surveys in Cottages 40, 7 and 34 in the next few months.
- Physical Plant still needs positions filled. OT position has been challenging but we have chosen an applicant that will begin the end of December. Head Nurse position has been posted. Residential staffing is good. Obtaining permission to post our own request for a dentist in addition to collaborating with UCONN. TWRs will be completing their two-year temporary service at the end of this year.
- Open house for Linkfield Road Group Home was held on October 15, 2023. A six-bedroom home with a private provider. Two individuals are requesting a move to this home and there is interest from 1 -2 additional people.
- McDonnell Road Group Home has three individuals scheduled to move at the end of the month. Several of the staff will be from STS. It is a public group home.

OLD BUSINESS

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board discussed the need to fill the vacant position on the Board. Eileen Lemay would like to step down as Chair but will continue until a replacement is found. Anthony Mennone was recommended as a candidate for joining the Board. Eileen Lemay will review the procedure for filling this position through the DDS Commissioner and the Governor's Office. Diana Mennone asked to step down as the STS Board of Trustees representative for the DDS Council on Developmental Services. She will continue until a replacement is found. Sandy O'Neil agreed to attend the next meeting of the DDS Council on Developmental Services.

Proposed 2024 meeting schedule was approved as presented:

January 22, 2024
 April 22, 2024
 July 22, 2024
 October 21, 2024

The next STS Board of Trustees meeting will be an in person and Teams meeting on January 22, 2024 at 1:00pm.

There being no further business, Sandy O'Neil called to adjourn the meeting at 2:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,
 Janice Boccardi, Recording Secretary
 Mark A. R. Cooper, Secretary

Approved by the STS Board of Trustees