

Advisory Council Meeting
May 16, 2019
4:00 pm
Ella Grasso Center, Stratford, CT

Minutes

Members Present

Charles Bergamo (Chair), Lori Chiappiniello, Marina Derman (Vice Chair), Mickey Herbst, Gil Kellersman, Roger McNealy, Karen Simon, Arlene Steinfeld, Cindy Stramandinoli

Public Present

Orv Karan, Douglas Lavery, Kim McGrath, Lauren Woolf

1. CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETINGS MINUTES –

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the Minutes.

3. NEW BUSINESS –

- Chairman Bergamo shared that he will be contacting the Easter Seals family committee to host a meeting at their Waterbury location. These family members have adopted consumers with developmental disabilities. Their meeting is at the same time on the same day so it's difficult for them to come to the Stratford meeting location. Chairman Bergamo will try to schedule for the WR RAC to go to Waterbury on 6/20 or 9/19. This will be the regular WR RAC meeting. More information to follow.
- Mr. Bergamo went to a conference in Chicago which covered topics like Special Needs Trusts, Able Accounts, etc. He shared a bit about what is happening with Able Accounts and the changes that are happening.
- State Developmental Disabilities Council (Federal Council) – The next 5 Year Plan is being put together. Any RAC members interested in providing their input can do so now. The 5 Year Plan includes steps to close the Southbury Training School.

4. OLD BUSINESS – none

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Fritz shared how he had three PARs in recent days for families who are elder care givers (77, 83 and 79). These families have been providing care for their loved ones and are now requesting placement through DDS. He explained how the Department is trying to assist these families by addressing the elder care list with the allocations available.
- Bill 393 is a proposal to redo the Level of Need (LON) Tool. This bill has not gone to a committee yet. A task force may review. It will cost \$5-7 million to do a study. Families are concerned that the current LON doesn't give a true picture of the individual.

DDS is opposing the bill. The Department feels that the LON works.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT –

- Comment made from a member of the public indicating that he has concerns about the transition from a group home to the model described above. Will there be training so that individuals could transition with ease into the new setting.
- Members of the public were also CCH providers and joined the meeting to express that CCH should be promoted. They were concerned that CCH is not being discussed at the RAC meetings.
- Another comment was made stating that CCH is struggling due to the LON. They feel that there is not enough funding for CCH providers.

7. OTHER BUSINESS -

- Presentation from FAVAR. Steve Morris, Tricia Nadeau and Penny Philips came to present on the "Specialty Housing" that their agency is developing with the expected completion date of February 2020. Copy of handout in file. One setting is in the city (Bloomfield) and the other setting is more rural in Canton.
 - Key features were highlighted: inclusive setting, clustering, affordability, enhanced accessibility feature, new smart home tech, new healthy prepared meal delivery
 - An inclusive setting: 72/25 resident mix (w/o and with IDD), common gathering/activity spaces, planned & integrated activities.
 - Clustering: large peer group, staffing efficiencies, transportation efficiencies, customized recreation
 - Affordability: more cost effective than group homes, affordable rents with RAPs
 - Enhanced Accessibility Features: barrier free apartment, extra bathroom features, extra kitchen features
 - Smart Home Tech: smart apartment management system, customizable base system, add on system

- Structuring the Food environment: Healthy prepared meal delivery, small plates & bowls, educating staff, online grocery shopping

Mr. Morris explained how the funding for this project was acquired.

Rent for the apartment will be 30% of an individuals adjusted gross income. Referrals will go through DDS. The agency will make the decision on the best match. Once the homes are ready, more information will be sent out to solicit applications from individuals. The sense is that there will be a lot of interest in this model, but not enough apartments to accommodate the number of individuals interested in these apartments.

8. ADJOURNMENT -

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council adjourned the meeting at 6:05pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Eunice B. Rivera
Executive Secretary
DDS West Region