

West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council
Quarterly Meeting
April 21, 2009

Minutes

Members Present: Christy Black, Bob Cain, Joyce Church, Ronald Dean, Jeannie Elkins, Virginia Gattlieb, Amber Hinkle, Betty Holliday, Clarice Hausch, Stephanie Jackson, Carlos Lucero, M.D., Jeff Marr, Clint Martin, Jane McCallister, Julie McClanahan, Libby Nester, Richard Perry, Jerry Ramsey, Karen Robinson, Karen Ruddle, Zila Shemel, Donald Thrailkill.

Members Absent: Richard Covert, Sandy Haberbosch, Janice Holland, Shannon Landrum, Pat Moss, Parul Shah, John David Smith, LuAnn Summers, Pat Winston.

Staff Present: Steve Wiseman, Jim Cremeans, Linda Higgs (morning only) and Tiffany Wiseman.

Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements

Jeannie called the meeting to order and announced Richard Perry's birthday. A new Council Member was announced and welcomed, Betty Holliday. Betty has a daughter with a developmental disability and is from Oak Hill, WV. Everyone present introduced themselves.

Steve announced a new Council staff person, Diana Ranson, Administrative Assistant. Also announced was the Families Conference which will take place at the Marriott in Charleston, WV on October 9 – 11, 2009 and the Partners in Policymaking series beginning in September. Steve asked Members to take two to three brochures and applications to give to interested and eligible individuals.

Linda announced that a training on Wills and Trusts will be held three times this year. The first will take place at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in South Charleston, WV on May 22, 2009. The second training will take place at Mountaineer Conference Center in Beckley, WV on September 16, 2009. The third training will be provided in the Clarksburg area and will be announced at a later time.

Mission Statement Reminder

Zila read the Council's Mission Statement.

Public Comments

None.

Approval of October 28, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Jeannie asked Members to review the October 2008 Council Meeting Minutes to determine if any corrections need to be made. Linda pointed out three misspellings – one word and two names. No other recommendations were made.

Jane moved the Minutes be approved with the changes suggested. Ron seconded. Motion carried.

New Business

State Plan

Jim reported the 2009 – 2010 State Plan goals and objectives. He gave a review of current areas of emphasis and the goals and objectives of each area of emphasis. He also explained that areas of emphasis are determined by the ADD (Health, Education, Employment, Transportation, Quality Assurance and Community Support, Recreation, General Management. Priorities were chosen by the Council through public input to determine what areas are of the highest priority in WV (Recreation, Employment, Education, and Quality Assurance). Jim encouraged Council Members to share feedback on the State Plan goals and objectives strategies and activities and new ideas. He will distribute an announcement broadly to solicit the public's comments.

FY 2010 Call for Investments

Tiffany reviewed the draft copy of the Call for Investment (CFI) targeted mailing for Quality Assurance. She explained a targeted mailing will be sent in addition to the current Call for Investment document. The targeted mailings will correspond with the current State Plan areas of emphasis as well as Formal and Informal Supports.

Steve encouraged Council Members to brainstorm methods to generate new and beneficial grant proposals. Jane suggested use of the WVU list serve and will provide contact information. Joyce suggested the

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UpsNDowns/> List Serve as a way to post DD Council information. Betty has a blog with about 25 recipients.

Partners in Policymaking

Steve spoke about the Partners in Policymaking (PIP) program. He reminded Council Members that the PIP program has not been provided for the last two years due to insufficient number of applicants. A discussion took place concerning the big commitment that parents and others have to make to participate. Alternative ideas such as web based conferencing were discussed. A concern was raised by some members who are PIP graduates that there needs to be some face-to-face interaction as well. These ideas will be explored further.

FY 2010 Budget and Designated Stipends

Steve stated the Council needed to determine the amount to make available for 2010 training stipends for people with developmental disabilities and family members. The Council will vote at the July meeting on how much each group that applies will receive. In recent years, \$30,000 was approved for this fund. The amount was raised to \$35,000 last year to help more individuals attend the Wright's Law training provided by the West Virginia Advocates.

Steve also provided an update on the Council budget. In July of last year, the Council budgeted \$1,005,500 for Fiscal Year 2009. At the midpoint of the fiscal year, roughly one third of the budget had been spent. Steve said the Council was under budget partly because the Council did not fund the amount in grants that had been budgeted. The Council used about 45% of the \$325,000 dollars budgeted for new grants. The Council has also not filled the Advocacy Specialist position. Steve hopes to fill the position soon. The current State hiring freeze should not keep the Council from filling the position as it is federally funded.

The Council is in need of new office furniture and equipment. Steve reported that the Council will continue current grant initiatives and have about \$350,000 dollars to allot for new grant initiatives.

Steve recommended the Council dedicate \$30,000 for in-state training stipends and \$350,000 for new grant initiatives. Steve said the Council needs to set amounts at today's meeting. Council Staff will then advertise the availability of those funds for stipends and new grant applications.

Clarice shared her gratitude for the stipend money to cover expenses for individuals with developmental disabilities and families. Without it, a huge negative impact would have been made to the number of people trained with developmental disabilities and families.

Jeannie requested Members decide on grant and stipend money amounts.

Don made motion to accept grant and stipend money amount as recommended. Libby seconded.

Motion carried.

Steve discussed the grant proposal process and asked all to brainstorm how to obtain new, good proposals.

Jim discussed the public forums process used last year. They were held to share information about the Council and what we do – advocacy, training, grant funding and collaboration. They also were held to explain the standards for grants and the CFI process.

Clarice shared that she has believed that the agency could not apply due to the unavailability of non-federal match funds. WVA has had a number of project ideas for which it would like to partner with the Council.

Steve explained that the 10% match is negotiable to an extent. Steve also explained that the Council is provided about \$760,000 a year from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD). The Council must collect about \$76,000 in match dollars. The way in which this is done is flexible.

Joyce brought up the issue of generation of grant proposals and suggested advertising in the newspaper. Steve stated this is done each year and has found it not to generate many responses. Ginny shared that many individuals associated with the Birth-to-Three program think DD Council funds are specifically for adult projects. Clarice suggested the creation of a structured, fill in the blank grant application to encourage those who do not typically apply for grant money. Jeannie stated the Council provides a technical assistance (TA) meeting to help explain how to apply and what is acceptable. Karen Ruddle suggested the TA meeting be held as a teleconference in the future. Clarice reported WVA is now expanding on

this format and using “gotomeeting” online. Clarice also suggested having a Face book and/or Google account for the DD Council.

Legislative Wrap-Up

Steve reviewed the handout supplied in the Council Members’ handout packet. The following Bills were briefly highlighted as they were of interest to the WV DD Council Members and Staff:

- SB 307 Creating Maternal Screening Act
- SB 321 Modifying certificate of need process
- SB 326 Mandating certain dental anesthesia insurance coverage
- SB 493 Transferring central registry for head injuries to Center for Excellence in Disabilities
- SB 632 Requiring insurers share certain information with Bureau for Medical Services
- SB 687 Relating to Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission
- SB 767 Relating to certain Medicaid program contracts
- SB 2309 Updating the law governing the practice of occupational therapy
- HB 2504 Establishing the Silver Alert Plan, an alert system for missing cognitively impaired persons
- HB 2788 Protecting incapacitated adults from abuse or neglect by a caregiver
- HB 2913 Relating to the Statewide Independent Living Council
- HB 3170 Clarifying the filing and review of the periodic accountings of conservators of incapacitated protected persons
- HB 3336 Continuing early intervention services to families with developmentally delayed infants and toddlers but eliminating the cost-free provision

The new sliding fee scale for Birth-to-Three services was briefly discussed and Steve proposed Pat Moss or Pam Roush discuss this at the next Council meeting. He expressed his interest in knowing that once the new payment policy is enacted, families whose children need the service will not drop out due to an inability to pay.

Carlos reported that many children are not being reached and many are still being missed through the early identification efforts.

Nominating Committee

Jeannie thanked the Nominating Committee members (Stephanie Jackson, Jeff Marr, and Jane McCallister) for their hard work.. She also reported that Parul Shah had indicated that she did not wish to seek a second term. Zila Schemel indicated that she wished to not complete her second term on the Council. Both individuals stated that other demands on their time caused them to depart. Jeannie expressed the Council's appreciation to these two members for their years of service. A more formal recognition will occur at the July meeting.

Stephanie explained that the Nominating Committee met on April 17, 2009 to select new Members to replace expiring terms and terms from which Members have resigned. Tina Tanner of Wood County was chosen to replace Kevin Smith for a four-year term. Tina is an individual with a developmental disability and is a great advocate for herself and others. Clark Queen of Wood County was chosen to replace Parul Shah for a four-year term. He is an individual with a developmental disability has experience with the People First program as well as the ROMP art program. Ann Hubbs of Monongalia County was chosen to replace Zila Schemel for the remaining two years of a four-year term. She is a mother of a child with a developmental disability. She is a veterinarian pathologist and wants to share her experience and help others.

Stephanie made a motion for Tina Tanner, Clark Queen, and Ann Hubbs to fill Council vacancies.

Ron seconded. Motion passed.

Steve stated that Zila and Parul will continue to be on the Council until the Governor appoints new members and welcomes them to continue attending Council meetings until those appointments are made.

Stephanie stated the Nominating Committee recommends Jeannie Elkins to serve as the Council Chairperson for another term. She then asked if there were any nominations from the floor for Council Chairperson. No nominations were made.

Libby made a motion to elect Jeannie Elkins as Chairperson. Karen seconded. Motion passed.

Stephanie stated the Nominating Committee recommends Bob Cain to serve as the Council Vice-Chairperson. She then asked if there were any nominations from the floor for Council Vice-Chairperson. No nominations were made.

Christy made the motion to elect Bob Cain as Vice-Chairperson. Donald seconded. Motion passed.

Steve expressed the Council's appreciation to Clint for his service. Clint thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve as Vice-Chair and expressed how much he has learned.

Jeannie then expressed that the Council needs to elect/re-elect four Executive Committee Members. Steve will send each member an email/letter to invite them to sign-up. The Council will vote in July. Steve explained Executive Committee Members typically meet the night prior to Council meetings and at least one time between each quarterly Council meeting. The terms will be staggered to ensure experienced Members remain on the Committee at each re-election. Chosen Members will draw straws to determine the length of their term.

Karen asked how many serve on the Executive Committee. Steve stated the Chair, Vice-Chair and four elected Members.

Adult Issues Workgroup

Christy compiled a list of questions for Pat Winston to answer at the January Council meeting, which was canceled due to bad weather. The workgroup met with Pat to get those questions answered. Christy gave an overview of the meeting notes contained in Council Members' packet.

Amber mentioned the huge spike in administrative costs for providers. The rates were raised and set prior to APS being included in the system. Many agencies had to hire additional administrative staff to cover the increase in paperwork.

Steve agreed and stated that much is also being taken away from services because of the increase in non-productive paperwork for parents and staff without increase in compensation.

Adult Issues Workgroup meeting notes are contained in the Council Members' packet.

WVUCED Direct Support Staff Study

Sherry Shuman and David Jarmolowicz presented the findings of the Direct Support Staff Study. They also asked Council Members to brainstorm ways to improve recruitment and retention of the Direct Support Worker (DSW).

Jeannie felt a Self Directed Option for recipients would be beneficial to the recipients and DSW. Steve mentioned having less staff that are paid higher wages and provided additional training would be helpful. Natural supports would also be utilized. Don stated there was an attempt to boost wages at a local agency through fundraisers, but has found that it is illegal. Sherry suggested using fundraiser dollars for rewards rather than wages.

Don expressed his appreciation for Eastridge workers as they could easily go to other local agencies and make more money.

Steve mentioned staff retention would be higher if DSW pay rates were similar to those of ICF/MR workers. This is just one example of institutional bias in the state of WV.

Clarice shared that taking administration costs out of the DSW wages is not a way to solve the problem.

Steve stated that closing institution settings would save the State money overall to provide more money for reimbursement rates. Also, less paperwork is needed. Institutional settings do not have the same amount of paperwork. Administration costs would be saved if less paperwork needed to be processed. Jeannie agreed. The paperwork is redundant. You write the same thing over and over. Don said the system gets more complicated every year. David agreed and said the research supports this theory. Clarice stated that if it is not a billable service, it is not completed. She said we need to investigate barriers to providing services as they would be through Self Directed Supports. Steve agreed and stated people need customized supports.

David asked, “How are we making the best training possible?” Don stated that Pat Winston said this is being worked on. Amber agreed that some work is being done on this for Service Coordinators (SC) and Therapeutic Consultants (TC), but not DSW. Steve said people need training to provide basic skills training. Amber stated SCs and TCs are receiving initial training but not continuous training. Joyce asked why DSW cannot take a day off to receive training like people who receive OSHA training. Amber explained that agencies are not reimbursed to provide group training. Steve stated that the service unit fee system is a driving force in keeping individuals from receiving quality training.

David asked, “Is there a way to help DSW gain skills and move up the career ladder?”

Clarice said staff may be encouraged to become more educated if there was a credentialing mechanism and a self directed option.

David also asked, “What can we do to strengthen the connection between consumers and DSW?”

Amber said staff are told to build relationships but cannot have friendships beyond a professional relationship. Clarice pointed out the power struggle between providers, DSW and recipients. Rules need to be individualized. Group rules do not work. Clint discussed his frustration with his lack of privacy due to rules created by those charged with regulating the MR/DD Waiver.

In response to the question, “If the pool of workers is shrinking, how do we keep them?” Zila said she has had difficulty keeping workers. The agency wants to provide them and then take them away to work with someone else. Steve expressed his concern with government officials tainting the status of DSW and those receiving services by pushing for welfare recipients to work as DSW to keep their benefits or having individuals provide community service, such as DSW, in lieu of jail.

Sherry stated that the WVUCED Direct Support Staff Study will be available on both the UCED and WVDDC website.

After completion of the WVUCED Direct Support Staff Study presentation, Jeannie explained the Legal Resources Project demonstration will be

postponed until the next Council meeting due to lack of time. She also requested all present to complete and turn in the Meeting Feedback Forms.

Adjournment: By acclamation.

Next Meeting: July 22, 2009 at the Blennerhassett Hotel, Parkersburg, WV.