

WV Developmental Disabilities Council
Meeting Minutes
Ramada Inn
October 25, 2005

Members Present: Jerri Stephens, Clint Martin, Christy Bishop, Christy Black, Bob Cain, Richard Covert, Ronald Dean, Kim Farley, Ginny Gattlieb, Sandy Haberbosch, Clarice Hausch, Mary Ann Jenkins, Jane McCallister, Pat Moss, Parul Shah, Julie Shelton, Christina Smith, John David Smith, Kevin Smith, LuAnn Summers Cheryl Vega, Pat Winston

Members Absent: Craig Curtis, Ulissa Dowell, Frank Kirkland, Jeff Marr, Libby Nester, Mary Nunn, Karen Robinson, Terri Rodighiero, Jennifer Waybright, Mary Ellen Zeppuhar

Staff Present: Steve Wiseman, Linda Higgs, Betsy Southall

Guests: John Hunneshagen, Jeannie Elkins, Karen Ruddle (WV DOE), Kay Johnston (WV DOE), Martha Minter (Community Access Inc.)

Welcome, Introductions and Announcements:

The meeting was called to order at 9:44 am by Jerri Stephens.

Jerri introduced the new gubernatorial appointees and guests.

Members of the Council introduced themselves.

Richard Covert read the Mission Statement of the Council.

Steve made the following announcements: The Olmstead Order was signed by the Governor. The Order adopts a State Plan to implement the Olmstead Decision;

The Executive Committee allocated \$2,000 to WV Advocates for hurricane relief work;

Disability Advocates Day will be on January 25, 2006 at the State Capitol.

Linda announced that the Executive Committee approved funding for designated stipends for the ARC of Wood County in the amount of \$2,750 for the People First Conference and for the SILC in the amount of \$2,000 for the Disability Caucus.

Public Comments:

No comments offered.

Approval of the July 26, 2005 Minutes:

Steve announced that Staff found an error in a committee report to the Council at the July 26, 2005 meeting. The correct amount approved for the grant to WVPTI/MSPA should have been \$22,500 for the first six months of FY 2006.

Christina made and Kevin seconded a motion to accept the Minutes as they read with clarification and correction of the error.

Motion carried.

Old Business:

Education Committee Grant – REM Employment Transition Training Program

Steve stated that it was one of the grants that had been carried over from the last meeting. The Committee decided to grant a prorated amount based on the grant from last year. The Committee recommends funding at \$22,146.

Kevin made and Sandy seconded a motion to accept Committee recommendation for funding in the amount of \$22,146.

LuAnn began a discussion regarding which agency would pick up funding after the grant ends.

Motion carried.

Employment Committee Grants – The ARC of Three Rivers and Burlington United Methodist Family Services

Steve stated that these were also carried over from the last meeting. He said that the ARC of Three Rivers withdrew its application. He said that Jan spoke with Burlington United Methodist Family Services and discussed the target populations and project goals. The Committee recommends not funding the program. The Committee felt the project addressed issues which were the responsibility of the school system.

Clint made and Kevin seconded a motion to accept the committee report and recommendation not to fund Burlington United Methodist Family Services.

Motion carried.

New Business

Department of Education Building Plan for Children with Autism

Kay Johnston gave a brief presentation to the Council addressing the new Handbook on Facility Policy (Policy 6200) which outlines new guidelines for designing separate classrooms for children with autism and other disabilities.

Steve stated that he was concerned about some statements made in the newspaper regarding the continued segregation of children in special education.

Kay stated that the Department of Education felt that the Handbook was an opportunity to address some long neglected needs and correct some very outdated language. She said that the rise in autism as quoted in the paper was not an issue which precipitated the changes in the Handbook. The intent was to provide quality space for children with autism.

Christina asked if those classrooms outlined in the Handbook would be specific to only children with autism. Kay stated that there are specific sections which address specific disabilities and a discussion ensued.

Christy Bishop stated that she appreciated the intent of the policy to create quality classrooms for children, but expressed concern for the segregation of children with autism. She asked if there was a safeguard, besides the IEP process, which many parents find confusing, to ensure that children are not segregated in the public school system. A discussion ensued regarding the current trend to further segregation of children in special education. Many members felt if dedicated and labeled space is created, children will be placed in those classrooms whether or not it is in the best interest of the children.

Jeannie Elkins began a discussion on the mutual benefits of children, regardless of disability, being educated together in inclusive classrooms. She stated that she feels that her son is flourishing in his job and community because of his experiences in an inclusive education setting.

Karen Ruddle suggested that Members look at both policies. She stated that all Department of Education policies are available for comment and review on the Department's website at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/>.

Ginny made and Clarice seconded a motion to write a letter of concern to Mr. Elswick, Dr. Boyer, and Dr. Paine regarding the policies outlined in the Department of Education Facilities Handbook.

Motion carried. LuAnn Summers, Pat Winston, and Jane McCallister abstained.

Pat Moss suggested incorporating healthy dialog and stakeholder input in the Department of Education website.

Legislative Priorities

Steve reviewed the draft copy of the proposed legislative priorities for 2006 and the reasoning behind the changes from 2005. For the most part, changes were made to more accurately reflect data and statistics as well as the change in calendar year.

More significant changes include:

- Advocating against the creation of segregated or congregate living and educational facilities for children and adults.

- Advocating for the full implementation of the newly approved Olmstead Plan.
- Advocating for legislation which strengthens safeguards for people with developmental disabilities who do not qualify for waiver services and other relevant publicly funded community supports.
- Advocating for legislation that promotes a healthier environment including the removal or elimination of toxins that are linked to poorer health and the onset of disabilities.
- Advocating for the protection of the lives of individuals who are perceived to have a lower social status by upholding the principle of applying excellent standards of care for these individuals. The Council will not support any legislation which seeks to hasten death by medical professionals who would be in a position to judge the value of a person's life by invoking "quality of life" concerns.

Pat Moss made and Kevin seconded a motion to accept the 2006 Legislative Priorities as presented.

Motion carried. LuAnn Summers and Pat Winston abstained.

Christina asked if the Council would develop talking points on each of the topics addressed and distribute them to other disability groups.

Retreat Follow-Up

Steve said that one of the key issues at the retreat was the structure of committees. He said that there is no official recommendation from the staff and Executive Committee, but they are considering the importance of a strong committee structure as we go into the next Five Year Plan.

He said that staff and the Executive Committee are considering having workgroups as opposed to having set committees. Council members would be given the opportunity to participate on a workgroup which focuses on something they find interesting. He said that staff would be sending out a survey to identify Member interests. He said that one of the first committees will focus on By-Laws, and that committee will be expected to bring a report to the full Council meeting in January.

Because there will be no longer be the same standing program committees, the Executive Committee will have to be restructured as well. Steve said

that they are suggesting that the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, a State representative, and 2 or 3 elected from membership.

He stated that the Council is in the last year of the Five Year Plan and that a major focus over the next several months will be to re-write the Plan. He said that there will be several open meetings held throughout the State in the coming months to get public comment on Plan development. It will be important that all Council Members attend at least one of those meetings.

Crisis Services for Children with DD

Martha Minter, Investigator, Community Access, Inc., gave a presentation on the ongoing “Study on the Quality of Crisis Services for Children with Developmental Disabilities.” The purpose of the project is to study the availability and quality of crisis services for WV children with developmental disabilities. A cross-cutting group of stakeholders has been active in working on this study. Martha distributed a copy of her Power Point slides to all Council Members.

Update on Council Activities

Medicaid redesign, MR/DD Waiver, A/D Waiver: Staff participated in the Governor’s Medicaid Redesign Initiative. Staff pushed for person-centered, self directed options and also pushed to exclude Waivers from this initiative. CMS gave the State guidance to remove them, and the Waivers were removed.

Steve provided initial training in self-determination to MR/DD Waiver staff and statewide providers on October 18. The Council will bring in and fund a consultant for the Quality Assurance and Improvement Advisory Councils and State staff of both Waiver programs. This person will provide training on self-determination and person centered planning and how to reshape the Waiver programs to include those principles.

Family Support Study: Council staff have worked with the Chair of the State Family Support Council and a cross-cutting group to assess they 14 year old program’s status and make recommendations. Steve recruited Jeannie Elkins to conduct several of the activities. A report is due to the DHHR on December 15.

Emergency Responders Training: Jim remains active with a related group at WVU. Critical Focus of California has presented a proposal to the workgroup on this initiative. They have provided similar training through a Council grant before. The intent is for segments of fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical personnel to “own” the training and sustain the effort without on-going DD Council funding. That commitment is required.

Social Role Valorization Training: This training by the Safeguards Initiative has been rescheduled for March 28-31, 2006 (after the legislative session).

Informational Sessions

Pat Moss, Director of the Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health, gave an overview of the responsibilities and operations of the health services and the Birth to Three program it manages. Pat distributed an organizational chart and folders with information outlining her presentation.

Announcements

Steve said that Staff would be mailing the meeting feedback forms as well as stamped/addressed envelopes to Council Members in the near future so Members can submit their expenses.

Jerri asked Council Members to note a preference between Glade Springs and Stonewall Jackson for the July 2006 Council Meeting on their meeting feedback form.

Adjournment

Ron made and Clint seconded a motion to adjourn.

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.