

The New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

Bureau of Developmental Services
105 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH
Prepared by Kirsten Murphy

Council Members Present: *Brian Balke, Matthew Ertas, Michelle Jarvis, Brian Huckins, Kathleen Murphy, Erik Riera, Susan Rockwell, Mary Schuh*

Council Members Absent: *Virginia Barry, Teresa Bolick, MaryAnn Cooney, Amy Freschette, Paul Leather, Mary Ellen Mackay, Dr. Debra McQuade, Jose Montero.*

Others: *Liz Collins, Audrey Knight, Cabrini Kulish, Lorene Reagan, Sheila Lambert*

Chair Michelle Jarvis called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. and welcomed all attending.

It was noted that a quorum would require eight members to be present. There is one vacant seat on the Council at this time, making the total membership 16.

Michelle read a list of Council appointees who, under the guidelines that the Council anticipates adopting today, will receive letters reconfirming their appointment to the Council. For our records, Kirsten will request a brief, written confirmation by the individual or group designated by RSA 171-A:32, section I, a-q to appoint a representative.

There was no public comment given.

OLD BUSINESS

MINUTES: Approval of minutes from May and July was tabled until the Council's November meeting.

COUNCIL GUIDELINES: Vote was moved until later in the meeting in order to wait for an eight member to arrive to the meeting. Two corrections were noted for the proposed text of the guidelines.

COUNCIL RETREAT: The Council's next meeting, Friday, November 6 is scheduled from 10 am to 2 pm in order to allow for more in depth discussion and planning. This "mini-retreat" will be held in the South Function Room. Full Council members and Chairs of Work Groups are invited to participate. As always, members of the public are welcome to attend.

By way of background, Kirsten Murphy reported that she recently submitted a concept letter to Jane's Trust proposing a grant of approximately \$750,000 over three years. Similar to the State Implementation Grant that the Council prepared a year ago, this proposal seeks funding for the Director and the creation of six regional autism collaboratives. Additionally, based on feedback from a group of parents who have been gathered by a Nashua area parent, the proposal includes six part-time family support specialists trained to assist parents new to a diagnosis of ASD or facing a crisis or transition period. If the concept letter is accepted at the end of September, the Council will be invited to submit a full grant proposal due by December 1, 2009. Matthew offered that if extra time were needed by the Director to prepare the full proposal, funds already pledged by BDS could be used for this purpose.

Michelle reported that the Coordinating Committee is recommending that the Council's retreat focus on crafting the specifics of our vision for regional collaboratives. In light of the possibility that we may be in the process of preparing a related grant proposal, this is all the more urgent.

Discussion followed as to the merit of selecting this focus for the retreat, and favorable consensus was reached. (NB See work group assignment below).

WORK GROUP UPDATES

WORK GROUP ASSIGNMENT: The Council agreed that all work groups should review their progress toward each assigned recommendation using the planning tool they prepared in March, 2009. Updated templates should be sent to Kirsten and Michelle. Kirsten stressed that this is meant to help keep the Council as a whole on track, not check on any one group.

1. EDUCATION: Mary Schuh reported that their group did not meet over the summer but will resume meeting this month. One focus this year will be identifying a common set of competencies needed by those working one-on-one with individuals with ASD.
2. HUMAN SERVICES: Brian Huckins reported this group is continuing work on developing materials and other mechanisms to insure families fully understand the consumer directed services option.
3. EARLY SCREENING AND DIAGNOSIS: Liz Collins reported that they will sponsor a second day long forum on universal screening on October 23 in Portsmouth. Based on feedback from the first forum, there will be additional technical assistance regarding the use of specific screening tools. Additionally, this work group is surveying providers statewide to learn which screening tools are being used most frequently. Thanks goes to Rae Sonnenmeier for crafting the survey.
4. INDEPENDENT LIVING AND EMPLOYMENT: Cabrini Kulish has agreed to co-chair group with Sheila Lambert this year.
5. PUBLIC AWARENESS: Michelle Jarvis reported that the group is making progress in identifying the specific message to be conveyed to each of 7 constituencies. The group is on track to submit a grant application to the NH Endowment for Health in late 2009.
6. SAFETY: Michelle reported that police academy training will continue and that Elizabeth Webster from Easter Seals has reached out to public school resource officers to discuss bullying as it affects individuals with ASD.
7. DATA: Matthew Ertas reported that the area agencies have agreed to use a common system to collect data on individuals they serve who have a diagnosis of ASD; BDS has offered to support the time needed to enter data at those agencies that have not tracked this information. He also noted that the NH Registry for ASD now has 74 cases; the group continues to work on strategies to encourage and facilitate compliance with this the requirement to register new diagnoses.
8. INSURANCE ISSUES: At the request of Rep. Suzie Nord and her subcommittee, representatives from the Insurance Work Group met recently with insurance industry lobbyists and members of the NH Department of Insurance to clarify questions posed by the lead analyst from Compass, Inc., Kirsten reported. Compass is preparing a cost-benefit analysis of HB 569, which is due Oct. 7, 2009. The work group

anticipates meeting frequently thereafter as they prepare for a committee vote on the bill at the end of Oct.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Brian Balke moved and Brian Huckins second that Michelle Jarvis serve as chair for the next year. Motion was passed unanimously.

Mary Schuh moved and Susan Rockwell second that Brian Huckins serve as vice chair for the next year. Motion was passed unanimously.

COUNCIL GUIDELINES

Brian Balke moved and Mary Schuh second that the Council adopt the Policies and Procedures as proposed, with corrections to section II (1) and II(3) noted. Motion was passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

On behalf of the work group on Insurance, Kirsten proposed that the Council join the NH Child Advocacy Network (NH CAN) as a partner. The work group would like to nominate HB 569 as NH CAN's focus issue for healthcare for the 2009-10 legislative session. Only partner organizations can nominate issues. Kirsten and Michelle Winchester met yesterday with NH CAN representatives at the first of three work sessions to discuss potential focus issues for healthcare. HB 569 is an actionable, current issue that stands a good chance of being selected for CAN's support. There would be no cost to the Council for joining as a NH CAN partner.

Discussion followed regarding the merits and potential liability of becoming a partner organization. NH CAN selects four issues a year representing four areas of concern to children and families (education, child safety and protection, economic security, and health and well being).

Mary Schuh moved that the Council join NH CAN as a partner organization and that the Council authorize Kirsten to nominate HB 569 as NH CAN's focus issue in healthcare and well being. Matthew Ertas second. The motion carried with 6 in favor, none opposed, and 2 abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kirsten Murphy, Administrative Director