

DISABLED PERSONS PROTECTION COMMISSION

Commissioners' Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2018

Commissioners Present: Honorable James Brett, Kacy Maitland, Mary Beth McMahon

Staff Present: Nancy Alterio, Susan Vickers, Julie Westwater, Anne Monti

Minutes Recorded By: Anne Monti

Handouts – The following materials were distributed to the Commissioners:

- Commissioners' Agenda of September 25, 2018
- Commissioners' Meeting Minutes of June 19, 2018
- FY2018 Year-End Budget Report
- DPPC Acknowledgement to Ways and Means for FY2019 Appropriation
- August FY2019 Monthly Budget Report
- Organizational Chart September 2018 Draft
- DPPC New Hire Introductions
- Hotline Activity Report August
- DPPC ACL Project Abstract
- Honorable James T. Brett Letter to Chair House Ways and Means in support of passage of legislation

The Honorable Chairperson Brett called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of June 19, 2018

MOTION: To accept the minutes of June 19, 2018 as received motioned by Commissioner McMahon and seconded by Commissioner Maitland

VOTE: Commissioner Maitland and Chairman Brett accepted the minutes of March 1, 2018 as received

2. Administration and Finance

- FY2018 Year-End Budget Summary: A copy of the FY18 Year-End Budget Summary was provided and reviewed with the Commissioners. Executive Director Alterio explained that \$413.00 was reverted back to the general funds.
- FY2019 Appropriation and FY2019 Summary Report: The FY2019 Appropriation and FY2019 Summary Report were provided for review. The FY2019 budget has been significantly increased by one million dollars requiring some restructuring, and an increase in staff. The FY2019 spending plan was completed and submitted on September 5, 2018. Plans for one-time spending opportunities for FY2019 were highlighted and discussed which included comprehensive training for the new staff. Executive Director Alterio provided the Commissioners with a sample letter of thanks for the FY2019 budget increase that was distributed to the members of Ways and Means. Chairman Brett recommended sending a follow up letter of thanks to the House / Senate Committee on Ways and Means, at a later date, outlining spending,

the positive impacts of the increase in funding, and highlighting the rise in the numbers of persons served.

- **Agency Restructuring:** The DPPC Organizational Chart draft of September 2018 and New Hire introductions were distributed to the Commissioners for review and discussion. New positions and reorganization were discussed as depicted by the DPPC Organizational Chart. Increased staffing includes a Director of Investigations, Investigations Manager, seven additional Investigators, three Oversight Officers, an Intake Specialist, and a Director of Information and Technology. Sabrina Cazeau-Class accepted the Director of Investigations position effective October 1, 2018. She has worked closely with DPPC over many years making for a smooth transition into her new position. A DPPC Investigator will step into one of the investigations manager positions, leaving one Investigations Manager position open. Investigations Managers will each supervise five investigators. The goal is to have investigators in each region across the Commonwealth. An additional person will be hired for intake/hotline. Two new oversight officers have been hired, leaving one position open. Due to the increasing number of staff, and in anticipation of the DPPC database rebuild, the position of Director of Information and Technology was created and will be posted. Outreach and Training Specialist, Jennefer Raymond, was hired to backfill the open position recently vacated due to retirement. Due to the increased number of staff, additional space is needed. Negotiations are underway to secure additional office space at 300 Granite Street through DCAMM.

3. Status Reports

The Hotline Activity Report of August 2018 was distributed for discussion. A significant increase in the number of calls in comparison to previous years was noted; attributed to increased awareness of abuse as a result of outreach, in-service training, police academy training and training for providers. Executive Director Alterio noted that the DPPC is the keeper of all Death Reports by statute which provides that any caregiver that is a state agency or subdivision of the Commonwealth or private agency contracting with the Commonwealth shall immediately notify the DPPC and local law enforcement of the death of any person under their care. Also noted, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has not had an abuse reporting number since Commissioner Morrissey's tenure. All DDS abuse reports come to the DPPC.

4. Legislation

General Counsel Westwater provided an update on pertinent legislation. An update on the status of DPPC bill H.1958 and S.52 Proposed Amendments to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission's Enabling Statute, M.G.L. c. 19C was provided. The bill did not pass in the formal session, but may pass in the informal session, although highly unlikely. If the bill does not pass, DPPC will refile in January. Also, Senate Bill 2213 – Disability Abuse Registry (S. 2606) did not pass in the formal session. It is anticipated that the bill will eventually pass, perhaps in the informal session, making the DPPC database rebuild critical. An appropriation for DPPC is attached to the bill. A copy of Chairman Brett's letter of support for S. 2606 and H.1958 was shared with the Commissioners. Lastly, on August 9, 2018, the Governor signed into law Senate Bill No. 2646, An Act to protect animal welfare and safety in cities and towns, now codified as Chapter 219 of the Acts of 2018. In addition to a number of provisions unrelated to the DPPC's operations, the new law amends Chapter 19C in several ways. Specifically, this bill allows animal abuse to

be reported by Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) and DPPC investigators. The law is effective as of November 7, 2018. It also creates a Special Legislative Commission to determine the feasibility, financial impact, training costs, and other factors impacting agencies by mandating that DPPC, DCF, and EOEA investigators report abuse. Based on the scope of the Special Commission's assignment, there may be more changes coming to the law. The Special Commission's report is due March 1, 2019. According to the new law the agency Commissioner needs to serve or appoint a designee to serve on the Special Commission. The Commissioners agreed to support the Executive Director in appointing the DPPC representative to serve on the Committee.

MOTION: To authorize Executive Director Alterio to appoint a DPPC representative to serve on the Special Commission motioned by Chairman Brett and seconded by Commissioner Maitland

VOTE: Unanimous to authorize Executive Director Alterio to appoint a DPPC representative to serve on the Special Commission

5. National

- NAPSA Conference: This year's National Adult Protective Service Association (NAPSA) Conference was held August 28-30, 2018 in Anaheim, California with approximately 600 people in attendance. Various members of the Building Partnerships Initiative (BPI) along with DPPC staff conducted five workshops to address Peer Support Leadership, APS Registries, Investigating and Prosecuting Crimes against Persons with Disabilities, and the Sexual Assault Response Unit, which were well received.
- Recognition of DPPC Assistant General Counsel: Mariah Freark, DPPC Assistant General Counsel, was recognized at this year's conference for her outstanding work on the NAPSA Adult Protective Services Abuse Registry National Report.
- Peer-Support National Network: Patty Quatieri, DPPC SARU Peer Support Leader, along with a self-advocate and survivor from California held the first ever, annual National Peer Support Network meeting for survivors with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) at the NAPSA conference. The NAPSA Executive Director is looking to include more workshops addressing abuses of persons with disabilities at next year's national conference.

6. New Initiatives

- ACL Grant Award Database: DPPC has been awarded the Administration for Community Living (ACL) grant. The grant abstract was distributed and reviewed. Funding totals approximately over one million to be utilized over a three year period. The project has two major components.
 - Rebuild – Year one priority is to rebuild the DPPC database. Improvements include the ability to feed information into the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS), and will include case components and other information it is currently unable to track. Overall the rebuild will increase the efficiency of DPPC's operations agency-wide. DPPC will draft a Request for Proposals (RFPs) to be made public through Commbuys to partner with a database firm to achieve grant outcomes.
 - R3 Technology – Funding for the development of assistive technology to improve the ability of persons with disabilities to recognize, report and/or respond to abuse will also be provided through the grant. DPPC will draft RFPs to be made public through Commbuys to partner with an academic

institution and a statewide self-advocacy organization for consultation needed to successfully complete project outcomes and products.

- **Financial Abuse Education:** Financial abuse training for DDS staff and providers has been completed. The training was essential as the Real Lives Law requires mandated reporters to report suspected financial abuse to DPPC. DPPC partnered with DDS, with input from the Office of the Inspector General, to develop training content and partnered with the Center for Developmental Disabilities Evaluation and Research (CDDER), E.K. Shriver Center/ University of Massachusetts Medical School to ensure the power point was accessible as well as to record the webinar. The webinar is posted on the DPPC website.
- **Guidelines for Administrators to Prevent Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence in Educational Settings** Violence: The Prevention and Education Working Group of the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assaults and Domestic Violence (GCASADV) drafted *Guidelines for Administrators to Prevent Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence in Education Settings*. The Guidelines are intended to provide educators and administrators in educational institutions ranging from pre-kindergarten through undergraduate education to prevent sexual assault and domestic violence. The Guidelines define what skills can and should be taught at the respective grade levels to address sexual assault and domestic violence in ways that are supported by educational standards and principles. The Guidelines also outlines a recommended list of competencies for educators, administrators, parents, and other professionals working to address issues of sexual assault and domestic violence in educational settings. It also includes a list of factors to consider and approaches meant to ensure the needs of a diverse population of students, including students with disabilities, are understood and prioritized when implementing the framework. The document is currently under review. The plan is to pilot the Guidelines in the near future.
- The Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence created a workgroup to address prevention of sexual assault and domestic violence against students from Pre-K through undergraduate. The workgroup developed Guidelines intended to provide educators and administrators in educational institutions ranging from pre-kindergarten through undergraduate level with skills-focused and interconnected frameworks for sexual assault and domestic violence prevention education. As described in the drafted Guidelines, the frameworks in the document are meant to be used by administrators and educators to easily understand what skills can and should be taught at the respective grade levels to address sexual assault and domestic violence in ways that are supported by educational standards and principles. Before laying out a framework of skills for students to learn, this document outlines a recommended list of competencies for educators, administrators, parents, and other professionals working to address issues of sexual assault and domestic violence in educational settings. It also includes a list of factors to consider and approaches meant to ensure the needs of a diverse population of students, including students with disabilities, are understood and prioritized when implementing the framework. Finally, this document maps out the information students should receive throughout their education experience related to sexual assault and domestic violence prevention and awareness skill development. Mastery of these skills increases students' protective factors that reduce likelihood of sexual assault and domestic violence. The document is currently under review. The plan is to pilot this in the near future.

- Guidelines for Attorneys in Massachusetts – Representing Sexual Assault Victims with Intellectual and developmental Disabilities: The Department of Public Health has provided funding to the Victims Rights Law Center (VRLC) to develop guidelines for attorneys in Massachusetts providing legal aid to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). DPPC is collaborating with VLRC on this project. Draft Guidelines are near completion.

7. New Business

No new business was discussed.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Commissioner Maitland motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6: 05 p.m.,
Commissioner McMahon seconded

VOTE: Unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m.