Autism Commission

Housing Sub-Committee meeting Minutes

April 11, 2018, 11:00am–1:00pm

500 Harrison Avenue – Boston, MA

Members present: Dan Burke (chair), Ayana Gonzalez (co-chair), Carolyn Kain, Nan Leonard, Dianne Lescinskas, Victor Hernandez, Kevin Barrett, Karen Mariscal and Lea Hill

Members accessing the meeting remotely: Leo Sarkissian

Dan Burke, the Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed the members to the meeting of this Sub-Committee. Mr. Burke stated that the meeting was subject to the Open Meeting Law and that the Sub-Committee members present would need to vote to approve the remote participation of some members because of their geographic location, whenever any members were utilizing video and/or tele-conferencing. Remote access was approved unanimously. The minutes from the last meeting in December were reviewed and approved unanimously.

**MassHousing Update**

Ms. Kain, Ms. Lescinskas, Ms. Ursitti, Ms. Boyle and Ms. Hill met with MassHousing to discuss the opportunity to do training on ASD for property managers. The training will be presented to property managers in June and it will be a 4 hour training that will cover different topics that will include: Autism 101, how individuals can connect with state agencies and Adults with autism, and housing accommodations and needs. The presentations are being developed currently and MassHousing does the outreach for the training. There are typically over 50 people that attend these trainings.

**DHCD Overview of Affordable Housing Options**

Ms. Gonzalez from DHCD had previously presented *Supportive Housing Options for Persons with ASD* at an Autism Commission meeting about a year ago. The Housing Sub-Committee members were not all present at that meeting so Ms. Gonzalez gave a shortened version of the PowerPoint presentation to this sub-committee.

* Reviewed the definition of Supportive Housing and how the state thinks about funding and creating housing
* Affordable housing is not an entitlement program but based on availability of funding
* Fair Housing Laws cannot discriminate – cannot build housing and prioritize one disability over another
* Services are voluntary and not a condition of the lease
* Supportive Housing – 3 legs of the stool 1. Brick and mortar 2. Operational 3. Service dollars (do not come from housing)
* Facilities Consolidation Fund (FCF) – provides funding for the development of community-based housing for clients of DMH and DDS
* DMH and DDS use the housing differently: DDS – more congregate living (5 bedroom home) DMH – integrated stand-alone apartments within a larger multi-family development
* If a family chooses to build a home and uses 50% FCF and 50% of their own money they still have to hold a lottery for entrance
* National Housing Trust Fund (HTF) – Generic housing and DDS clients are eligible
* Set Asides cannot be used for just ASD but can be used for DDS
* SCF funding allows state agencies to be the referral agency – you don’t have to have the lottery; it is up to the agency and typically is priority 1
* Design Guidelines determine the type of home that is built – this sub-committee to look into Design Guidelines for ASD population – features of the unit will allow you to prioritize
* 5% of units built have to be physically accessible
* 811 Project Based Assistance funded specifically for non-elderly with disabilities – project based attached to the unit – many property owners do not want 811 – it is not as established as section 8 – large scale property owners are encouraged to adopt 811 at their site
* Design guidelines for ASD are important to get a project certified by DDS
* There is language in design guidelines around accessibility – create language for ASD design

**Review of New Suggested Housing Recommendations**

This sub-committee reviewed the suggested recommendations related to Housing that were put forth by Autism Commission members. Individual commission members proposed the new recommendations and the recommendations went back to the related sub-committee for vetting and to decide what should be put forth as a new recommendation to the Commission.

1. Rec. by Michelle Brait to expand affordable housing and housing options for those with ASD – individual supports fall under residential per DDS (in waiver) – Falls into priority 1 or 2 and is for non-24 hour support. There is no waiver for the newly eligible and many do not fall under residential.
* *Long term plan* – DDS to create a new waiver – it could be in the mindset of shared living. Individual support could take place in an individual’s home and include skill development to support independent living. Start with the supports in the home with the family with a goal of live more independently.
1. Rec. by Judith and Cathy – chapter 40B (affordable housing) – this suggested rec. will be tabled and discussed at the next meeting when Judith and Cathy are present.

We will discuss AFC at the next meeting which will take place on June 13th.

With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.