DDS STATEWIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

**Location:** Remote

**Date:** March 18, 2022

## Attendance

Christine Shane, Susan Barber, Maital Levy, Diane Glennon, Maron Jacobs, Jose Costa , Alexandria N. Dunn, Bob Putnam and Lucie Chanskey. DDS: Commissioner Jane Ryder, Elizabeth Morse, Nick Dantzer, Tim Cahill, Chris Klaskin, Chris Thompson, Elizabeth Sandblom, & Victor Hernandez

## Agenda Items

1. December 2021 minutes were approved
2. Commissioner Ryder provided an update on The FY23budget. DDS has a total of $2.37 billion for the agency, which represents about a 3% increase from the current year budget and an increase of just over 70 and a half million dollars. The Turning 22 is fully funded and family support has an increase of $6 million which is a 7% increase. We are working with our trade organizations, with our providers with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services regarding the utilization of ARPA funds and staffing. We will initiate a type of campaign to show and demonstrate how human services can be a meaningful career and that we're promoting as a great career for people to enter. This will have promotional opportunities and educational opportunities. We are addressing the salaries of the direct care workers. This workforce crisis has such a ripple effect across all of our services. We're having such a hard time getting people back into services, because providers are just having a hard time hiring. We're trying to get people back into their group homes in their residences. We're trying to help families out who hire staff to come in to help them out to really try to help them address some of those, those issues. The Secretary testified before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means earlier, and she said we have to do a better job of setting a rate to put into direct care salaries. She also stated that we're at the point now to address a decent wage and decent hourly wage to offer.
3. Bob Putnam and Michelle Harris provided an update on recruitment efforts for new SAC members. They are assess the current professional criteria for SAC members to determine needed professions to fill. Their current action plan is to work with the CABs to recruit some more folks from. They are also looking posting on social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.
4. Dianne Glennon and Alex Dunn provided an update of the SAC By-Laws update. Compared with the SAC regulations there are outdated references, there are items in the bylaws that are not in the regulations, and there are some things that are not defined. Also the references on Terms of Service needs to be refreshed and membership needs to represent the services being provided.
5. Victor Hernandez took a moment to acknowledge that Christine Shane will be leaving to take her sabbatical from Fitchburg State College. She will stay on as a member of the SAC. He thanked her for her support and guidance as Chair of the SAC and for her unwavering commitment for those with IDD.
6. Commissioner Ryder acknowledged that for Christine working at Belchertown State School was her first job out of college. There she witnessed firsthand the conditions at Belchertown and how the state agency was supporting people with intellectual disabilities. There she saw how important it was to use her voice to make sure that a community system was built and that we had to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities were seen and heard in their communities across the Commonwealth. Through the years, Christina used her voice in every forum that she had available to her. The Commissioner wished her well on her sabbatical and thanked her for her voice to serve those with IDD.
7. Christine Shane that she has seen huge changes since Belchertown, but we have we do have a long way to go. She thanked all for their support to the SAC and to those with IDD.
8. Meeting was adjourned at 9:58am.