Massachusetts Autism Commission

Adult Subcommittee

July 25, 2023

Via Zoom

**Participants**

Co- Chairs: Christine Hubbard and Kathy Sanders, Dianne Lescinskas, Carolyn Kain, Cynthia Berkowitz, Chris Peltier, AJ Cullen, Rita Gardner, Maria Stefano, Danielle Sheehan, Neil Papamechail, Carol Gracia and Janet Barbieri

**Meeting Minutes** – Dianne Lescinskas

**Guest Presenter**: Kerry Mahoney

**Welcome and Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 16, 2023**

Ms. Hubbard welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the newest member of the subcommittee, Neil Papamechail – he is a self-advocate and looking forward to hearing the work being done and having a voice on the committee. The meeting minutes from May 16th were reviewed and Ms. Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes and Neil Papamechail seconded the motion. There was no discussion or opposition; the meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**Future Planning for Families of Adults with ASD: Special Considerations**

Kerry Mahoney from the ARC joined the meeting and shared a presentation on future planning for autistic adults and their caregivers.

* Presentation discussed Charting the Life Course and the tools used – can be helpful to plan for the future.
* It is important to find out all the supports needed, including natural supports and what services are in place.
* Over 54% of caregivers reported they did not have a plan for the future (ARC survey – 2017)
* Best Practices for Planning – The ARC had received grants to support seniors in Lexington area – they were able to identify family members with disabilities and used person centered planning – they tried connecting them to the community and senior services.
* Family members should do a “letter of intent” – it would include everything a caregiver knows about an individual and what others would need to know to support that individual.
* A Letter of Intent is not a legal document but will contain vital information that could include living arrangements, education history, physician numbers, financial documents, the individual’s daily routine etc.

*Questions:*

* Start a dialogue with senior services – they typically do not know a lot about disability.
* It can be difficult for someone to take over guardianship.
* Individuals with more support needs – more difficult to get help as they age.
* Ms. Hubbard asked about pushing this conversation forward and what we should recommend for the Autism Commission

**Next Autism Commission Meeting**

Ms. Kain is still waiting on a date to hold the meeting of the Autism Commission. She feels that we will meet in September and that this subcommittee will be able to submit any new recommendations one week prior to the meeting.

Ms. Hubbard would like to work on a recommendation that has clear intentions and suggested another meeting prior to the meeting of the Autism Commission. It was agreed that a doodle poll will go out to the members of the subcommittee, and we will meet in early September to discuss a recommendation to move forward.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.