

Community Alliance of Sarasota County

www.sarasotaalliance.net

Developmental Disabilities Committee

May 12, 2009

Meeting Summary

Members present:

Margie Genter	Goodwill Industries - Manasota
Joann Gepfert	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Ellen Hepner	Children's Medical Services
Sarah Hickey	Sarasota County School Board
Carmen Hill	Vocational Rehabilitation (for Laurel White)
Deborah Hobson	Family Network on Disabilities
Andrea King	Sarasota County Parks and Recreation
Susan Magers	Sarasota County School Board Parent Liaison
Jamie Mahadeo	Sarasota County Health and Human Services (for Chip Taylor)
Carol Burmeister Prichard	Community Member – Special Education Professional
Myriam Reyes	Parent Representative for Manasota ARC
Marlene Ruggiero	United Cerebral Palsy
Mary Smith	Family Network on Disabilities
Ryan Stoyles	Community Haven
Caitlin M. Trask	United Cerebral Palsy
Diane Weiner	Manasota ARC
Kim Williams	The Florida Center
Mary Ann Zyla-Smith	Easter Seals (for Kameron Partridge)

Members not present:

Sue Firestone	Senior Friendship Centers
Irania Graterol	Goodwill Industries – Manasota
Teresa Johnson	Parent
Keith Kitchens	Suncoast Center for Independent Living
Richard Montemagno	Sarasota County Sheriff's Department
Benny Weaver	Loveland Center

Others present:

Cain Blackwell	YMCA/Safe Children Coalition
Judi Martin	Community Haven

Staff:

Kathleen Marie Hall	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
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Welcome and Introductions

Chair Susan Magers welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Legislative Issues and Statement

Susan Magers reported that the legislation session has ended and a preliminary budget has been sent to Governor Crist for signature. Members noted several legislative updates and comments:

- The stimulus funding does not include a long-term solution.
- Autism health insurance coverage was approved for this coming year.
- A broader developmental disability health care coverage bill passed in the Senate but then died in the House.

Susan mentioned that there was a handout in the members' packets on several versions of a developmental disabilities [legislative statement](#). Susan asked members to review the statements.

Margie Genter moved, Mary Smith seconded that the Developmental Disabilities Committee adopt the following legislative statement:

The Sarasota Developmental Disabilities Committee supports a recommendation to increase funding for people with disabilities so they can afford to purchase appropriate services that are necessary to provide support and safety, to ensure a quality life. Increased funding will allow community providers to continue to offer services provided by well trained personnel. The continuing trend of reducing reimbursement rates for providers has the potential to increase the risk of abuse and neglect of people with disabilities.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mission and Purpose Brochure

Susan Magers asked members to brainstorm on ideas in creating a brochure for the Developmental Disabilities Committee. The purpose behind the brochure is to get the word out to the local community on their mission and to advocate for more family member participation. It was decided that the brochure should be a tri-fold type consisting of six panels. Members brainstormed on ideas for the brochure:

- Mission and Vision Statements
- Definition of Developmental Disabilities
- A statement about the Community Alliance
- List of activities (in bullet format)
- Priorities (county, state, and national issues)
- Legislative statement
- A statement to encourage families to attend, share their needs, and to be part of the process.
- Statistics on developmental disabilities
- Accomplishments
- Q&A section
- Monthly meeting information such as dates, time, and place

- List of current agencies

A discussion ensued on the cost of printing and the continual need to update the information. It was agreed that this brochure could be placed on the Community Alliance Developmental Disabilities webpage and printable whenever needed. Kathleen Hall agreed to discuss the brochure with Pauline Tracy for approval. Andrea King volunteered to create a draft of the brochure and to email it to Kathleen prior to the next meeting.

Old Business

Composition of Committee

Susan Magers reported that there were several handouts in the members' packets for review: [voting members by category](#) and a [listing of members](#). Susan discussed the vacant seats and the members' assistance in filling these seats. Other discussions were on the attendance record, appointing a proxy, and the provider's second seat for constituent in order for families to have a voice.

SCAT Discussion

Transportation Model

Ryan Stoyles reported that there was a brainstorming session at the last meeting on identifying solutions for the developmental disabilities transportation issue. The consensus was that an agency should not be penalized if they are doing their part (eliminate the \$2.50 trip fee). On the other hand, if an agency chooses not to participate, the agency should be charged the \$2.50 fee. Susan Magers requested that Jamie Mahadeo email the most recent summary to the full committee. It was also suggested that Jamie contact Paula Dumas to set the next meeting to discuss their suggestions.

Eligibility Component

Susan Magers reported that the Eligibility Component Work Group met with the Support Coordinators and created a checklist as a tool to assist in determining a person's eligibility for either fixed route or door-to-door transportation. This tool will be a clear mechanism used by Support Coordinators, teachers, families, and the agencies. SCAT will provide travel training to assist in the determination. It was suggested that the Support Coordinators ride the bus routes in order to understand the system better. Susan pointed out that by giving persons with developmental disabilities the opportunity to learn to ride the fixed route it will alleviate the issue at hand and increase independence for these individuals. It will also be a positive way to empower the clients.

A discussion ensued on the process, parents' right to refuse the decision for fixed route, utilizing a combination of both services, and the liability issues.

Priority Updates

Susan Magers suggested that a discussion on the Committee's priorities and accomplishments be set for the June meeting. Susan asked the members to also come prepared to identify one burning issue that the Committee should have accomplished or a new future priority.

Developmental Disabilities Strike Team

Barbara Kopp reported that the Developmental Disabilities Strike Teams currently has six agencies attending the meetings. The team is working on finalizing their mission statement and an idea to create a separate unit within a shelter for families with persons with Autism. The American Red Cross and the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) are invited to the next meeting on May 28. The team will inquire if the MRC can provide a volunteer behaviorist to be on call for the needs of the children at the shelters. A discussion ensued on behaviorists, behavioral assistants, supportive living coaches, and who would be willing to volunteer at the shelters. Barbara announced that all members are welcome to attend the strike team meetings. The next meeting will be on May 28 at the Health and Human Services building at 10:00 a.m.

18-30 Age Range Work Group

Diane Weiner reported that the 18 to 30 Age Range Work Group has been working with the school system in planning a bus trip for teachers to visit the local developmental disabilities agencies in the community. The work group is also working on a directory of resources for parents and caregivers, listing the local agencies and services. It will also include information on the Sarasota County's Parks and Recreation activities and their amenities. It was suggested that this tool could be used in all age groups for the community. Members requested that mental health services, dental services, respite, and services that are utilized in both Sarasota and in Manatee County be added to the spreadsheet. It was suggested to place this spreadsheet on the Developmental Disabilities Committee webpage. Andrea King stated that this would be the starting point for parents to locate resources. Sarah Hickey mentioned the "VIC" spreadsheet was similar and may give additional ideas on what was included in the past. It was noted that this spreadsheet could be distributed at local doctor's offices, the Sarasota County Health Department, and possibly the Chamber of Commerce.

New Business

Attendance Update

Susan Magers reminded the members that they are asked to maintain a 75% attendance rate while serving on the committee. The bylaws state that if a member misses three or more consecutive meetings, the member will be contacted to see if they are still interested in attending the meetings or if the committee should request a new candidate to attend the meetings. Susan pointed out that the Committee appreciates all who attend the meetings and participate in the discussions.

Election of Officers

Susan Magers discussed the election of officers within the bylaws. Andrea King stated that according to the bylaws elections should be held in the month of September. Susan noted that the current officers were placed in their positions on a temporary basis and she will need to step down in September. Susan suggested that a discussion should take place at the June 9 meeting on the election process.

Announcements

Mary Smith made several announcements:

- On May 19 there will be a Department of Education open hearing on a new rule: 6A-6.05271, F.A.C., "Standards for the Use of Reasonable Force" (restraint and restraint procedures) at the Hillsborough Community College in Tampa.
- On July 18 there will be a free Guardian Advocacy Training (www.guardianshiptraining.com) that will include special needs trust and the annual paperwork.

Andrea King made several announcements:

- On May 15 the Sarasota County Parks and Recreation will sponsor a free movie night under the stars at Phillippi Estates Park and on May 16 another free event, *Big Truck Day*.
- On June 4 through June 7, the *No Barriers Festival 2009* in Miami (www.nobarriersusa.org) will bring professionals together to aspire in breaking barriers within their fields and to assist individuals in overcoming their personal challenges and disabilities. There will be a special appearance of *Molley the Pony* who has a prosthetic leg and is used for children's therapy sessions.

Diane Weiner announced that on May 13 citizens are requested to contact area Senators regarding support for persons with disabilities and their constituents. Diane also thanked Sarah Hickey, Susan Magers and all who worked on the recent Agency Fair event. Sarah stated that there were 70 agencies and 150 parents who attended the event. Susan stated that they received great feedback from the families who came, especially the fact that all the agencies were together in one place. Many discovered many available programs at this event and were very thankful for the information.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 9, 1:00 p.m., Sarasota County Health and Human Services, Room 226