



STATE OF DELAWARE

Division of Development Disabilities Services Task Force

Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2020

1 Senator Stephanie L. Hansen, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Those present
2 were, Co-Chair Representative Kendra Johnson, Marissa Catalon, Deputy Director for the
3 Division of Development Disabilities Service (DDDS), Laura Strmel, Director of Employment
4 Services at St. John’s, Bianca Allegro, Director of Delaware Mentor, LJ Thomas for Allan R.
5 Zaback Wilmington University, Donnia Melton for Gary Cassedy, Vice-President of Programs
6 with Easter Seals, Terry Olson for Michele Mirabella, Director of Residential Services for Chimes
7 Delaware, Theresa Hancharick, Chair of the Advisory Council for DDDS and parent, Kyle
8 Hodges, Policy Director for the State Council for Persons with Disabilities, and Rita M. Landgraf,
9 via telephone, University of Delaware and former Cabinet Secretary for Department of Health and
10 Social Services. Representative Kevin S. Hensley, and Senator Anthony Delcollo were absent. A
11 quorum was met.

12 Co-Chair Hansen asked for introductions of those in attendance and the organizations they
13 represent.

14 The meeting started with the approval of the minutes. Theresa Hancharick made a motion to
15 approve the February 18, 2020 minutes with the necessary corrections. Laura Strmel seconded the
16 motion. All in favor, no opposed, the motion carried, 10-0. Rita M. Landgraf, Senator Anthony
17 Delcollo, and Representative Kevin S. Hensley were not present for the vote.

18 Co-Chair Hansen moved to the updates from the subcommittees.

19 Representative Kendra Johnson, the chair of the DSP subcommittee stated that the subcommittee
20 has not met in the last week but wished to submit two draft recommendations. Kyle Hodges
21 suggested adding language to the first recommendation referencing the impact to service recipients
22 while Laura Strmel suggested the term workforce. The first recommendation read, “The State of
23 Delaware must increase funding of the DDDS service system so that the acknowledged
24 underfunding is eliminated. The underfunding is the root cause of the direct service workforce
25 crisis current in the DDDS system, which negatively impacts service recipients and the broader
26 community.” A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Kyle Hodges and seconded
27 by Bianca Allegro. All in favor, no opposed, the recommendation was approved 9-0 with Marissa
28 Catalon abstaining. Rita M. Landgraf, Senator Anthony Delcollo, and Representative Kevin S.
29 Hensley were not present for the vote.

30 The second draft recommendation read, “The State of Delaware must ensure that every contract is

31 adequately funded to support employee wages that are in keeping with the current minimum wage
32 standards.” After much discussion surrounding what the appropriate reference to wages should be,
33 the second recommendation will return to the DSP subcommittee for further review. The
34 committee will meet prior to the next task force meeting on March 10.

35 Next was the update on the Substantiated Incidents Subcommittee chaired by Laura Strmel. The
36 subcommittee last met on December 18, 2019. The next meeting has been scheduled for February
37 25, 2020 from 1pm – 3pm in the Delaware Public Archives Delaware Room, 121 Martin Luther
38 King, Jr. Blvd. N, Dover Delaware 19901. The goal would be to present recommendations at the
39 next task force meeting.

40 Co-Chair Hansen requested that future task force meeting dates, times, and locations be placed at
41 the bottom of agendas.

42 The Structure/Leadership subcommittee emailed a copy of the 2007-2010 DDDS strategic plan to
43 the Task Force. In the current climate, with DHSS undergoing a strategic planning process, there
44 was concern surrounding DDDS undertaking that process and conflicting with DHSS’ plan.

45 Co-Chair Hansen asked Rita M. Landgraf how the strategic planning process changed since 2010
46 and is there a report that shows what happened in the interim?

47 Rita M. Landgraf stated that there will have to be a cross-reference based on information available
48 from the Department since 2010.

49 Co-Chair Hansen would like information on what aspects of the strategic plan were a successful
50 and which were problematic and if budgetary and organizational issues were factors.

51 Terry Olsen stated that DDDS has had four Directors and one interim Director since the last
52 strategic plan and possibly played a factor in its continued implementation.

53 Marissa Catalon stated that is the recession in 2008 was another factor in the Department’s
54 budgetary and organizational planning processes.

55 LJ Thomas stated that Dr. LaFontaine was an expert in this area and would be able to provide
56 insight.

57 Laura Strmel stated that most of the items on the strategic plan were accomplished at one point in
58 time, but after 2010 there is a great deal that remains unknown.

59 Co-Chair Hansen suggested that someone from DHSS attend the next meeting to explain the
60 strategic planning process, provide any updates in that process since 2010, and what the plan
61 DDDS has going forward.

62 Senator Delcollo’s Legislative Assistant, Connor Dunleavy, presented the update from the
63 Regulations Subcommittee. The subcommittee is still working through a line-by-line review of the

64 draft regulations, which will be broken out into two documents: one with the regulations requiring
65 a minor change with the other regulations requiring substantial changes. The next meeting will be
66 March 5, 2020 at 10 am in the Carvel Building's third floor conference room.

67 Co-Hansen moved to the Prevailing Service Delivery Issues Committee presented by Terry Olsen
68 for Michele Mirabella. Terry Olsen stated that Michele Mirabella has set a date of March 6, 2020,
69 in the Senate Hearing Room at 1pm. Following that meeting, there will be revised
70 recommendations to present to the Task Force.

71 Co-Chair Hansen asked for an update of the DHSS Reorganizational Committee, which had not
72 met since the last task force meeting, so there was no update at this time.

73 Co-Chair Hansen moved on to the report from DDDS on the approval of outstanding Behavioral
74 Support Plans and the progress on remaining plans. There is no update this week.

75 Co-Chair Hansen would like to have all recommendations in the next 4-8 weeks. There will a
76 process where the approved recommendations will be organized based on content as well as
77 studied to establish if any overlap in their intent or conflict with each other.

78 Co-Chair Hansen asked Mark Brainard to compile a list of the Advisory Councils, Boards, and
79 Commissions that interact with DDDS and provide it to the members at the last meeting in March.

80 The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 9am in the House Hearing Room.

81 Mark Brainard confirmed the task force meeting dates through June: March 10, March 24, April
82 14, April 28, May 12, May 26, June 9, and June 23. All meetings will begin at 9am with locations
83 to be announced as soon as possible.

84 Co-Chair Hansen adjourned the meeting at 10:09am.

85 Respectfully prepared by:

86 Amanda McAtee and Mark Brainard, Jr., JLOSC Analysts, Joint Legislative Oversight and Sunset
87 Committee.

88 *Access to the audio recording of this proceeding is available upon request.*