Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

**Quarterly Council Meeting**

**January 15-16, 2015**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

Present: Marcey Alter, Katie Chandler, Dan Crimmins, Pam Hunter Dempsey, Teresa Heard, Debbie Hibben, Carol Britton Law, Geneice McCoy, Darlene Meador, Eren Niederhoffer, Evan Nodvin, Ron Pound, Mitzi Proffitt, Debi Reagin, Marcia Singson, Zo Stoneman, Jodie Wren

1. Mitzi Proffitt made the following announcements:
   * April Council meeting is April 16-17
   * 17th Annual Disability Day at the Capitol on March 5 and on 5 advocacy days leading up to March 5.

Mitzi Proffitt announced that there is a new issue for the agenda. The GCDD has been approached about receiving public comment and this will take place at the end of the day. It was suggested that the Executive Committee discuss how public comment might be a regular part of the GCDD meeting agenda.

1. Election of Executive Committee Member

Mitzi Proffitt announced that there is a vacant seat on the Executive Committee because Lisa Newbern’s term on the Council ended. She indicated that two advisory members had expressed interest in filling this seat: Pam Hunter Dempsey and Marcia Singson.

**The Council voted and elected Pam Hunter Dempsey to fill the seat on the Executive Committee.**

1. Legislative Update and Capitol Visit

Dawn Alford updated members on the GCDD legislative agenda. Members then went to the Georgia Capitol to speak with their legislators about these issues. While several members were unable to speak with their senator or representative in person, many had the opportunity to speak with them. Among the feedback received:

* It was a great experience sitting with my representative and the meeting was very positive.
* The letter sent about the GCDD legislative agenda was confusing.
* Getting children out of nursing homes should be the top priority.
* GCDD needs to use colored paper to make their materials stand out.

When the members returned they discussed two new issues for consideration of support by GCDD. The first is legislation related to legalizing cannabis for medical purposes. Many of the children that would benefit from cannabis oil are children with developmental disabilities. It is a complex issue and legislation.

The second issue concerns physician assisted suicide. This is an extremely concerning and dangerous issue as it relates to people with disabilities. No legislation has been introduced at this point, however, there are national efforts to overturn bans to physician assisted suicide.

1. Frank Kirkland

Frank Kirkland from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities provided an update on the Pioneer Project that is taking place in Region 2. Two individuals transitioned from Gracewood hospital before the Christmas holidays. In total 105 individuals from Region 2 have transitioned out of the hospital.

The Department is beginning the process to renew the Medicaid Waivers. Six regional forums and webinars will be hosted to gather input from stakeholders. The Waiver amendments submitted in August have been approved by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services.

1. Public Comment 4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Public Comment is an opportunity for members of the community to express opinions or bring issues of concerns related to the delivery of services or other issues. It may include, but is not limited to opportunities for improvements to the service provided through the Departments of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Human Services, Community Health, Labor or other state and local agencies, specific issues about the Council’s services or our strategic plan.

Ms. Proffitt informed Kellie Roberts that she would have five minutes to present comments and issues. The Council’s Executive Committee will review and discuss comments at their next meeting and that information will be used by the Council as it plans future activities.

See attached for Ms. Roberts comments.

Friday January 16, 2015

1. Old Business
   1. Consent Agenda

It was decided that because materials for the consent agenda were sent out late, staff will ask for members to approve on line after sufficient time to review the materials. The items on the consent agenda are:

* Minutes from the October meeting,
* Program Update Report,
* Budget Report,
* 2013-2014 Program Performance Report submitted to the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
  1. Legislation Concerning the use of cannabis oil

Debbie Hibben made a motion that GCDD support access to cannabis oil for medical purposes. Geneice McCoy seconded the motion.

It was suggested that GCDD should be concerned about families that have to transport cannabis across stateliness.

**The Council unanimously adopted the motion to support access to cannabis oil for medical purposes.**

* 1. Legislation concerning physician assisted suicide

After much discussion and debate, it was decided to table discussions about physician assisted suicide until a later time.

1. Strategic Planning

.Mitzi Proffitt reported that many members have been asking when about opportunities to leave a mark on the work of the Council. Beginning this morning GCDD will begin working on the next strategic plan which is due August 15, 2016.

Ms. Proffitt introduced Diane Schlacter who will facilitate the strategic planning process. Dr. Schlacter presented on strategic planning and engaged members in discussion about what they hope to get out of the process.

1. Adjourn