

PAIMI Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

The PAIMI Advisory Council met at 11:00 a.m. on May 14, 2008 at the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.

Present: Carrie Czerwinski, Mark Griffin, Walt Wetmore, Josefa Correa and Elizabeth Larsen

Absent: Susan Aranoff and William Curtis Denton

Excused: Selina Welborn, Corrie Morse and Sandy Chapman

Guests: Lorna Grivois, Statewide Coordinator for Families United and Dan Hunt, Danbury

Staff: Susan Werboff, PAIMI Program Director, James McGaughey, Executive Director, Gretchen Knauff, Assistant Director and Nancy Alisberg, Managing Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

The PAIMI Advisory Council Meeting was called to order at 11:25 a.m. The minutes were reviewed from the March 12, 2008 meeting. Everyone voted in favor and the minutes were approved as written.

There was an introduction of the guests to the PAIMI Council. They were given nomination forms to submit if interested in becoming a member of the Council.

OLD BUSINESS

James McGaughey – Executive Director’s Report

- James McG. reported that the legislative session ended without adopting a budget and that has created a problem for OPA. About one third of OPA funding comes from federal funds. He reported that there are significant deficits in some of the federal accounts, most notably the Development Disabilities account. Lots of other state programs have been affected by the lack of a budget such as supported housing.

- James McG. reported on the status of OPA v CT, a lawsuit about persons with psychiatric disabilities in nursing homes and the lawsuit against New Horizons Village. In both cases our standing as a state agency to bring the lawsuit has been challenged. He stated that this lack of standing appears to be related to our location in the state government and the lack of a board of directors.

Nancy Alisberg – Managing Attorney’s Report

- Bolmer – No decision yet. Nancy described the case briefly for the guests and members.
- New Horizons – Case is against New Horizons Village, housing complex in Farmington for persons with physical disabilities. OPA claims New Horizons Village discriminates against persons with psychiatric disabilities which is a Fair Housing Act violation. New Horizons filed summary judgment against the named plaintiff, Denise Laflamme. Denise Laflamme also filed a summary judgment motion against New Horizons. OPA filed a motion to amend the complaint to add two new plaintiffs and four exemplars. This has not been granted yet. New Horizons Village filed a motion that OPA does not have standing as a state agency. We are responding and the response is due in about one month.
- OPA v Choinski – Settlement agreement ends September 26, 2008. There were questions raised by Council members about what is happening for prisoners transferred from Garner to Northern. Nancy A. explained those aspects of the settlement agreement.
- OPA v CT – Nancy A. stated that there is nothing new in the case. Named plaintiffs have been identified and now we are waiting for a meeting with the Judge.

Susan Werboff – Program Director’s Report

- Susan W. reported on the meeting with Riverview Hospital and CT Children’s Place to initiate self advocacy classes at these two facilities. Several meetings have been held with staff and administration at these two facilities. There has been lots of enthusiasm but very little follow-up.
- Susan W. received and reviewed two reports of injuries due to use of restraints. Susan W. stated that there are at least two more reports pending from the State Department of Education and Wheeler Clinic.
- Susan W. advised the Council of the three outreach events to obtain input on PAIMI program priorities: Veterans’ outreach at LOB in March 2008, Walt Wetmore’s outreach at AU open house and a presentation to residents at My Sister’s Place in Hartford.
- There have been no PAIMI grievances filed since the last Council meeting.
- She reviewed the progress of the DMHAS three year grant to reduce restraint and seclusion and some of the discussions of the committee.

- Reported on untimely death at Cedarcrest Hospital and that OPA plans to review the incident.
- Cemetery Ceremony – Elizabeth plans to speak on behalf of the PAIMI Council. Carrie and Josefa expressed an interest in attending.
- NDRN did not have a list of PAIMI Advisory Councils in the network.
- Death at Cedarcrest – steak choking.

NEW BUSINESS

Walt W. raised an issue that came up at the Advocacy Unlimited meeting in Torrington about Charlotte Hungerford. He described a letter from Charlotte Hungerford with a new policy that prevents refilling prescriptions if an appointment is missed. AU is addressing this with DMHAS and Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.

Power Point for NDRN was presented and comments were solicited from the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

The PAIMI Advisory Council Meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 9, 2008 from 11:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Werboff

c: James McGaughey
Gretchen Knauff
Nancy Alisberg