

**FAMILY CARE COUNCIL
APD AREA 13
APRIL 11, 2011 Meeting Minutes**

IN ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS: Isabel S deMartinez, Sandy Dayton, Betty Kay Clements, Don Taylor, Phyllis Novak, Shawn Mims, Eileen Reidy, Karen Huscher, Tina Renwick, Sandy Shorey,

MEMBERS ON PHONE:

MEMBERS ABSENT: Caryn Jones, Anna Brynild, Michael Payne

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: Stephanie Hopper, Virginia Taylor, Caroline Short,

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS ABSENT:

APD STAFF: Brenda Stevens, Clarence Lewis

VISITORS: Grant Harris, Everett Short-family, John and Joan Verity-family, Sue Lamb-family, Jacqueline Delfin-family, Judy Carlton-CCSB, Dominic Christofaro-family

MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL: Review of March 14, 2011 minutes, with a motion to accept as written by Tina Renwick, seconded by Shawn Mims. Minutes approved by consensus.

BUDGET REPORT/BUDGET REVIEW: Clarence Lewis reported the budget balance as \$3,191.59 with an encumbered amount for the new laptop of \$927.99. Monthly expenses were \$600.43. At first questioned as to postage for Citrus Forum, it was confirmed that it was spent and shows to be \$429.60. Printer should show up in next month report. Don Taylor noted that it is expected that there will be some money for CAFE available. Determination to be made at the May meeting regarding CAFE stipends.

AREA ADMINISTRATOR REPORT/UPDATE: Clarence handed out a worksheet of the most asked questions for rate provider rate reductions affected by the Emergency Rule Reducing Provider Rates by 15%.

Questions ensued as to what occurs if services are stopped by an Agency and it is difficult to find a replacement. It has a potential to affect next years cost plan it was speculated, or an exception could be made. Impact unknown. Clarence said that every area is tracking those closing, reducing, or eliminating a service etc. He shared that 1 group home affecting 3 individuals was to be closed, but rescinded as someone came forth donating resources. He acknowledged that though only one closure had been documented, it is expected there are others who are meeting to make decisions with their boards etc. Concerns and potentials he has been advised about, affect mostly Respite, Companion and Supported Employment. There have been some layoffs of personnel.

Explanation of why cuts are more than 15% involves reducing Rate structures of an Agency to Solo Rates. Analysis shows that cuts can be as high as 35-40 %. Respite may be as low as \$5/hr. Minimum wage is affected and in Supported Living it goes beyond minimum wage.

Some Agencies hit as high as \$80,000. Asked if they can fund raise the answer is yes, but issue is in real time and not feasible to make it up soon enough. Issue of when cuts may end is also a real concern.

Asked what is expected 90 days from now, Clarence said it is up to the legislature. They would need to fund the deficit. House and Senate vary now, but will need to go into conference and make decisions. If funded by legislature, 15% should revert back. Concern with timing expressed and whether Scott will accept is unknown. Betty Kay offered that this year's deficit may be one thing, but questioned the projected deficit next year and its affect on cost plans. Asked about iBudget, Clarence said the Governor has told APD to start by Oct. 2011, so he expects something sooner than had previously been planned for start. Betty Kay said there is an iBudget meeting tomorrow and they are starting with a couple of families in the Tally Area soon.

Caroline Short explained that there had been a mistake on her son's cost plan cutting it and then a 15% on top of it is making it very difficult to meet his needs. She was concerned, as others had the same mistake on their cost plans. Clarence will meet personally with Caroline and research this issue.

Concern also expressed by members that CDC+ getting hit directly and questioning where this stands for appeal/due process. Clarence had to leave for a phone call with Central Office and said he would ask that question on the call and let group know the answer. Upon return he expressed that it is believed that it is a provider reduction and therefore not subject to due process.

FCCF REPORT and DISCUSSION: Betty Kay reported that Stakeholders continue to meet by phone or in the DDCouncil office in Tally each Friday, to collaborate and keep each other informed on activities at the capitol, for reporting to their respective members. Stakeholders have put together information to assist reporting impacts to individuals regarding services affected by cuts. Handouts provided to attendees with contact information to assist tracking providers and consumers issues, and reporting to Disability Rights, (former Advocacy Center). Each case is to be looked at from standpoint of health and safety being compromised. There is a link on the FCCF website www.FCCFlorida.org and you just hit 2011 rate cuts button for information. Isabel added this link to the Area 13 FCC section. Person must be close to harm, cannot be speculation. For instance, if in group home, there must be no family and 30 day closure has been given and individual will be homeless.

Disability Rights has a lawsuit on the waitlist, as well as seeking input on impacts from current crisis cuts. DD day attendance was good, some disappointed in responses from their legislators. Governor Scott was there for a very short time.

Dave Robinson from APD attended the March FCCF meeting and told of some reductions etc. that might be in play due to deficit, but the crisis that has since occurred was not forewarned. FCCF now has a lobbyist working with them and this person is not paid with State money. It has been accomplished as part of the non profit that was originally set up for FCC's activities.

AMERICORP UPDATE: Isabel reported on the Disability Expo May 14, 2011. She is meeting with Clarence on details, and invitations being prepared. Her press release will be going out to the media. Invitation is looking for participants at no cost to them. Individuals for profit or not for profit that need volunteers wanted. She is sending home flyers at ADT's, signs posted in libraries, educational facilities with classes for the disabled etc. Some have to go before their boards. It is posted on the Area 13 FCC website. She requested attendees to send her information, as she has 500 invitations. Looking forward to fashion show highlighting individuals with developmental disabilities. In July a cookout is planned. Trying to get Dade Battlefield. She also mentioned Senior Corps, and suggested going to AmeriCorp.gov to find out what is available in volunteers for respite etc.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES/DISCUSSION: Concerns were addressed about the future of FCC's. It is legislatively supported and in Statute. As far as travel reimbursement, it is in statute that authorized travel is reimbursed. That means APD needs to approve. The need to return to grassroots was stressed. Isabel stressed the need to build on the strengths that have gotten us to this day. She explained that fundraising could be available for Area 13 etc., with no State approval needed. Grants need to be written for instance, for services or programs that Area 13 FCC might want to do.

WAITLIST & FCC FORUM: Isabel said that an in depth analysis is to be done regarding concerns raised about the Citrus Forum. She said that issues should be addressed in writing. Isabel assigned a committee to research issues raised and in particular the reasons for so many Citrus families not receiving an invitation to the Forum, for instance. It has been reported that mailings were not received by many families either waitlist and waiver. Isabel will share the concerns related to her with those assigned. Don Taylor, Karen Huscher and Eileen Reidy to serve on the committee. Some discussion with Clarence surrounding # of invitations sent and concern that numbers are not reflective of actual persons that either receive services or on the waitlist. He is to explore further and report back to FCC.

MEMBERS/VISITOR INPUT: Don Taylor emphasized writing legislators and expressing concerns so they know how people are affected. Members agreed that rallies are needed to keep pressure on about the cuts, going to APD and legislators offices with respectful positive signs, talking to their aides if needed. Urged to watch emails for talking points, updating every day in order to get strategies etc. out there. Demonstrations starting and ongoing.

Former FCC member, Dom Christofaro addressed those present saying that our children are getting shortchanged He said it is a sad commentary that he needs to be re energized now, following 55 years of activity. He said that those we vote for should be our friends, so we need to be politically active, know your legislators, know them well and call them, because they are the ones that can get us the money to serve our individuals.

A visitor brought an article from the Citrus Chronicle with a strong emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable and addressing the crisis the Governor created April 1 with the provider cuts without warning.

In response to a statement that the only entitlement is an ICF/DD, Stephanie reminded that up until the age of 22 education system is an entitlement. This is part of the reason families do not realize the need to advocate until transition occurs and services are no longer available.

In response to a handout on 10 steps of Advocacy, Everett Short requested information on outreach issues in each County by the FCC members in that County. The extent of HIPPA privacy laws that restrict FCC members from getting names and contact through APD explained. Sign in sheets and every opportunity that is available is needed to reach individuals and families, even on the Waiver. APD can send mail etc. for FCC, but not release the names. Suggestions for writing a guest column in the paper, and to publicize as much as possible with flyers at libraries etc. In response to questions about FCC, Karen Huscher gave a brief history of FCC and its charge in Statute. She reminded all that FCC's are not part of APD, but a watchdog, to advise the Agency as well as the rest of the mission.

Some of the members planning to gather for a rally. Betty Kay will send as much info as possible to assist with talking points for activities.

Stephanie remarked that so much information is brought forth that it is sometimes difficult to focus on what can be done. Sending impacts to Disability Rights an action she plans to do, and others agreed.

NEW BUSINESS: Isabel reminded that the Annual Election of Officers is due soon. She appointed a Nominating Committee. Karen Huscher will Chair and Tina Renwick will assist her to put together a slate for consideration to be presented at the May meeting. Election will be at the June meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

No further business, meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm. The next FCC meeting is scheduled for May 9, 2011 at the APD office from 10:00 am–12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Betty Kay Clements
Area 13 FCC Secretary**

Area 13 FCC Mission:

**To Promote the Welfare & Dignity of the
Individual with a Developmental Disability,
Allowing Each Person to Achieve
His/Her Full Potential, while Preserving the
Family's Ability to Function As A Unit**