

Family Care Council
Chris Dugan, Chairperson
August 18, 2010 Meeting Minutes
Marks Street Senior Center

In Attendance: Chris Dugan*, Rosalind King, Patti Jarrell, Sandra Soto, Don Faller*, Rose Casto, Sharon Spano, Lois Smith*, Dan McNutt, Maria Perkins, Donna Rauber*, Teri Doolittle, Maryann Sarra*, Representing APD – Merari Perez, Carol Solomon, Manuel Garay & Jackie Zuluaga (*Denotes FCC members)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chris Dugan called the meeting to order at 10:15 am and welcomed everyone. She asked for introductions to include if your family member is on the wait list.

II. SPECIAL PRESENTATION - Sharon Spano, Sunrise Community, Inc.

- Chris introduced Sharon to the audience.
- Sharon has her own consulting practice and specializes in human organizational development around the country.
- She has joined Sunrise Community, Inc., a provider of residential services throughout Florida, as Director of Communication and Development in Central Florida. They have been in business for 35 years providing services to 2500 individuals and have a solid infrastructure.
- She is currently devoting most of her time to expand services for people with disabilities in Seminole County.
- She asked to attend our meeting to share that Sunrise has purchased a home in Seminole County to be converted into a six bed group home for persons with developmental disabilities. It's a beautiful home on an acre lot in the country part of Seminole County off of Markham Woods Road in Mandarin Estates.
- Sunrise plans to expand in this area based on the need. Sharon has a vision to develop an Arts Center that would employ people with disabilities.
- She believes that we have reached a time in our country where we must realize that we cannot solely depend on state dollars for the needs of people with disabilities. She wants us to move towards the implementation of a model that will allow us, as a community, to take care of our own, in conjunction with the state support.
- Sharon will let Chris know when they will have an open house. Everyone is invited.
- The 3rd annual Michael Spano Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on October 25th at Heathrow Country Club. Proceeds will benefit the Sunrise group home.
- APD has indicated a need for residential placement within the aging population.
- Chris asked about accessibility. Sharon advised the bathrooms will need updating if accessibility is needed and will be easy to do.
- Sharon shared her role will continue to be speaking, outreach development, fund raising and helping with and advocating for individuals with disabilities and their families.
- Sunrise is very good at how they screen staffing. They understand the importance of good quality staffing in their group homes.

III. BUSINESS

- **Minutes** – There is a quorum. Lois moved that the minutes be approved as presented. Maryann seconds the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- **Treasurer's Report** – Maryann advised there was no report for the month of July. Chris mentioned a change in expenditure reporting. APD Central office has assigned Jennifer

Hart to oversee all Family Care Councils funding. The monthly expenditure reports will be processed and distributed from APD Central Office rather than the local area offices. All purchases will continue to be done at the local area offices. Our contact is Nancy Michael.

IV. APD WAITLIST OVERVIEW - Merari Perez, Area Administrator, Carol Solomon, Manuel Garay and Jackie Zuluaga

Merari reported she will be talking in general about the wait list statewide and focus on how that affects Area Seven Tri-County (Orange, Osceola & Seminole) and Brevard County.

- Wait List Statistics as of July, 2010 – Statewide over 19,000
Area Seven: Tri-County 1759, Brevard County 559 - Total: 2318
- Applications are still being taken to determine eligibility for APD
- To be eligible for the Medicaid Waiver a person must qualify for Medicaid
- To qualify for the Medicaid Waiver a person must have a developmental disability (Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation, Spina Bifida, Prader-Willi Syndrome)
- Medicaid falls under the Economic Self Sufficiency (ESS) office, a separate state agency managed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- Merari explained the criteria needed to be eligible for Medicaid. DCF, not APD determines a person's eligibility for Medicaid.
- Area Seven is averaging about 10 to 15 new applications a month, per county at times.
- Each client on the wait list is provided with a General Revenue Support Coordinator (caseworker). Annually they will make an effort to contact each applicant to update and make any changes to their information. Some may have moved out of the area, some may have passed away.
- The majority of the clients fall under the category of Mental Retardation. Second is Autism.
- Clients under the age of 22 fall under the federal IDEA program through the school systems. It's the responsibility of the school systems to provide services such as therapies.
- In Area Seven, as of May, 2010, 306 clients fall within the ages of 23 to 30; over 31 totaled 370. The remaining 1642 are under the age of 22.
- Merari explained one of the goals from Tallahassee is that Area APD's must start collaborating and partnering with community agencies.
- Merari provided statistics breaking down the number of clients on the wait list into categories based on where they live which include independent living, supported living, family homes, foster homes, small group homes, larger group home, cluster homes, intermediate care facilities, nursing homes, and mental health homes.
- Merari explained she has not received her appropriations for the current fiscal year budget for services for people on the wait list. In previous years they have allocated emergency funds in the event of a crisis situation.
- APD Central Office is looking at the whole state budget and the 19,000 person wait list to determine how they can allocate emergency appropriations, based on numbers per area, with enough money to offer everyone at least something. They can't promise it to be an ongoing commitment.
- Merari expressed the need to brainstorm to determine ways of connecting with individuals and/or organizations out there that are willing to do in-kind or volunteer activities to make sure that clients on the wait list get what they need. An example would be the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program. See if they would volunteer their time to become a big brother or big sister to individuals on the wait list. APD could provide in-kind training to make sure they understand the DD population.

- Chris asked if a person on the Home & Community Based Services waiver wait list is eligible to maintain that status and get services from another waiver such as the Children and Family Adult Services waiver. Merari advised a person can get on their wait list and if slots were available they could get services such as PCA or Companion for six months. However, if a slot opens for that person on the HCBS wait list, they must choose which waiver they want. A person can't be on more than one waiver.
- Merari advised they have a lot of requests for Adult Day Training (ADT). These are mainly for individuals who have graduated from high school and sitting at home with nothing to do. Also, Behavioral Analysis. Community employment is an initiative APD is working with Vocational Rehabilitation to make sure individuals requesting employment are forwarded on to them for screening and assistance. Also, a lot of requests are received for residential placement, personal care assistance, respite, supplies and equipment and transportation.
- Maria shared her experience a few years ago when she broke her leg and was unable to care for her son. Her son is on the wait list. She contacted his APD caseworker and received an OK for help. A worker from an agency came to help, only once. She called and called the caseworker but never got any additional help. She ended up caring for her son on crutches for 4 months. Merari offered her apologies and mentioned how important it is to keep in touch with the caseworker. There are over 900 providers. She should have been referred to another agency. There is a customer service process of contacting the caseworker, if that doesn't work contact the supervisor, if that doesn't work contact Merari.
- Merari explained the wait list crisis process which includes how slots become available, crisis consideration determined by APD Central Office, and how the wait list has been separated into categories based on certain criteria.
- Mr. Garay explained the wait list prioritization process. All clients on the wait list were given the QSI assessment survey. He has directed his GR support coordinators (caseworkers) to contact each of them and explain the various categories and determine through a series of questions which category best suits their criteria. Each client/family will receive a letter indicating the wait list category assigned to them. Merari mentioned the agency no longer assigns a number to each person on the wait list. The wait list prioritization process determines if you get moved up or down on the list.
- Jackie spoke about supported employment. If a person doesn't qualify through vocational rehabilitation, APD can refer them to Quest, a supported employment and residential provider
- Carol mentioned one of the goals of the agency is to get stakeholders involved in working on solutions to problems with the wait list. Also looking for resources to help families on the wait list. She would like to see the Family Care Council look at ways they could help provide some type of resources or activities.
- It was shared that numerous organizations want to help solve this problem. Everyone needs to get on the same page and work together. Merari mentioned the area office has applied for an AmeriCorps grant. Once approved, they hope to have an APD AmeriCorps vendor fulltime in the APD office. This person would help in connecting with community organizations. Also, part of the job description is to recruit volunteers. Merari's goal is to get at least 30 volunteers involved in working with the APD office, with FCC and the community to help provide some resources and activities to families on the wait list.
- The remainder of the meeting was spent brainstorming to come up with ideas on how to help clients and families on the wait list. Currently APD has quarterly meetings throughout the area specifically for wait list families. They are poorly attended. How can the agency get better attendance at these meetings? Some suggestions shared:

- Ask vendors and providers to attend wait list meetings and offer some in-kind assistance to families.
- Ask the media to announce meetings through Bi-lingual sources.
- Consider including in the mailings a survey asking families what their most important needs, compiling the results, and then focus on the most important at the following meeting.
- Consider offering a raffle for a respite weekend or a certain number of respite hours. Find respite providers willing to offer in kind service.
- Consider working to develop a provider fair with vendors who would be willing to offer in-kind services or pay for vendor space.
- Merari mentioned there is a suggestion box on the Area Seven website. Any suggestions come directly to her. She is very interested in feedback from families. She is working very hard on improving customer service with her staff and trying very hard to accommodate families. Patty complimented Merari on the improvement she has seen with customer service.
- Chris mentioned she has received several phone calls recently with families being upset with their Support Coordinator. What should they do? Merari explained that families have the right to change support coordinators. They should contact the area office and request a listing of available support coordinators. They can make an appointment to interview anyone on the list. Support coordinators are not APD employees, they are not supervised by APD, they are under contract with APD. Chris had mentioned earlier parent support groups. Sharing the good/bad support coordinators would be an excellent function of a support group, as well as FCC, as it would result in some accountability. Chris asked why there isn't an exit survey which could be sent to the family along with the list of support coordinators. Merari asked Chris to send that to the suggestion box.

Chris thanked Merari, Carol, Mr. Garay and Jackie for their time and input.

IV. BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Rosalind is requesting FCC funding dollars to cover travel expenses for her to attend a Summit on Alcohol Fetal Syndrome sponsored by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council in Tallahassee in October. Chris asked for a motion to approve Rosalind's request. Lois makes a motion. Donna seconds the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Rosalind was given an Authorization to Incur Travel form to be completed, include an agenda and deliver to Carol at APD program office.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chris adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm.

Chris Dugan, Chairperson

Donna Rauber, Secretary

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 15th, 2010

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 Noon

Location: Mark Street Senior Center, 99 Marks Street, Orlando – Magnolia Room