

BEAUFORT COUNTY
DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS ADVISORY BOARD
Hilton Head Public Service Department
21 Oak Park Drive
Hilton Head Island, SC 29925
October 20, 2009

4:00 P. M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan W. Brown, Grace Dennis, Beverly Smith-Dore, Margaret Gatch, Helene Gruber, Nancy Pinkerton, Jim Mathews, Carol Myers, Elizabeth Santagati,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ann Wirz, Gardenia Simmons-White and Morris Campbell (Ex-Officio)

STAFF PRESENT: Mitzi Wagner, Beth Odom and Joe Anne King

GUESTS PRESENT: Ellen Mathews

I. CALL TO ORDER – Elizabeth Santagati, Vice Chair

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m.

II. WELCOMING GUESTS

Ms. Santagati welcomed Ms. Mathews, ABLE Foundation Board member.

III. MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 15, 2009 BOARD MEETING

MOTION WAS MADE BY HELENE GRUBER AND SECONDED BY NANCY PINKERTON TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 15, 2009 BOARD MINUTES AS WRITTEN. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE OCTOBER 20, 2009 AGENDA

MOTION WAS MADE BY NANCY PINKERTON AND SECONDED BY CAROL MYERS TO ADOPT THE OCTOBER 20, 2009 AGENDA AS WRITTEN. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, - Elizabeth Santagati, Vice Chair

Ms. Santagati distributed copies of the assignments for the 2009/2010 standing committees and asked each group to select their chair. Form will be updated and emailed to all members to include the chair.

Ms. Dore said the Retreat Committee met and selected October 30, 2009 as the date for the annual retreat. The retreat is to be held at the Golden Corral in Bluffton beginning at 9:30 p.m. A copy of the agenda was distributed to board members for review and discussion. Mr. Brown made a suggestion to have the DSN Program Directors attend the retreat to give a review and update of their programs. It was also mentioned that staff could benefit from the presentations

given by speakers Rufus Britt, SCDDSN, Bryan Hill and Ladson Howell, Beaufort County. Ms. Wagner will edit the agenda to include program directors.

Ms. Santagati reviewed the calendar dates for 2010 and the "Conflict of Interest" statement that Beaufort County Council requires each year. She asked members to sign the form and submit. She also stated that four members are due for reappointment in February 2010 and letters of reappointment are due by December 1, 2009. Those due for reappointment are: Beverly Dore, Helene Gruber, Grace Dennis and Margaret Ann Gatch. She asked that those be completed and submitted.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT, Mitzi Wagner

Ms. Wagner introduced Beth Odom, Early Intervention Supervisor. Ms. Odom stated she loved talking about the Early Intervention program. She said the program currently has a staff of five interventionists who serve children in Beaufort County. The current enrollment is approximately 120. She said she has been with the program over two years and in that period the program has doubled the number of children served and doubled the hours of service provided each month to the children. She said that has been managed by adding one new person to our staff. She said one of the issues is the need for interpreters. We are currently serving 16 to 20 families who need interpreters for their services. We previously had one interpreter in Beaufort County who worked part time, however currently we have four or five available making it much easier to match up someone when needed. She said we have two staff permanently located in the Hilton Head/Bluffton area and three in the Beaufort area. She spoke of funding issues and other challenges including changing the agency responsible for the operation of the BabyNet program. She said previously the program has been under DHEC and has now gone to First Steps. This transition is to be completed by January 1, 2010. Ms. Odom said she is participating in one of the teams that are part of the change process. She said she is proud to be a representative of five other staff in the program. Ms. Wagner said Ms. Odom does very well and to her credit, she not only supervises five staff but also carries a third of a caseload as well. Ms. Odom also said the early intervention program is also beginning a project required for the early intervention position to maintain credentials for South Carolina that will involve online testing and pre-testing in order to demonstrate that we have appropriate knowledge in that function for the position. The different modules, study and testing may require up to 100 hours. She said it is a huge commitment and hopes all participants will do well.

Ms. Wagner said there were 16 bids on the new Admin/Day Program building. The lowest being 5.7 million and the highest 7.1 million. The lowest bid has been verified and will be presented to the Planning Committee for approval to accept the bid. She said there are not enough funds in the Capital Improvement project to cover the full amount. She said there are two paths they can take to get the money needed; however, they are not sure which path to take at this point. When decided, information will be made available to the Advisory Board.

Ms. Wagner said it is time to renew the MR/RD Waiver and SCDDSN has added some changes to the waiver. One of the caps for the waiver is for respite services, however, it should not affect those who use it appropriately but for those who misuse it may have to plan their hours. They are also eliminating occupational, physical and speech therapy as Medicaid covers them.

The new Community Support Waiver (CSW) is very much in control because DSN has very good staff. Service Coordinators have done a great job. All of the paper work has been submitted and we have received about 35 out of 51 back. Day program staff has transitioned very well. She said the CSW has given us a little more revenue than anticipated when the 2010 budget was put together and we were fortunate that when most services are not expanding we have been able to work through the Regional Director and, with a lot of hard work, received some additional services for those who may not have been able to get them another way.

Ms. Wagner mentioned she is currently unable to give a budget update as she has four different versions, the last one received Monday and she is not 100% sure it is correct. It will be available by the next meeting. She says it appears we are in better shape than thought and may have additional \$82,000 more revenue than anticipated. She said the county sent out a memo to start thinking about what would happen if the county's contribution to DSN next year were exactly what it was this year or if there was a 5%, 7% or 10% reduction. Ms. Wagner said staff is to meet in the next couple of weeks to talk about where they think we could cut. Ms. Wagner reviewed staff to consumer requirements, caseloads per service coordinator requirements, residential staff requirements, and administrative staff currently serving 104 staff and asked Board Members what areas staff could be eliminated if we have these budget cuts.

VII. FOUNDATION REPORT – Grace Dennis

Ms. Dennis said the foundation is currently focusing on selling the new Shrimp Boat ornaments. Forty-two Shrimp Boat ornaments and 34 Lighthouse ornaments were sold at the Shrimp Festival and 26 Shrimp Boat ornaments and 15 Lighthouse ornaments were sold at the Lighthouse play and the Port Royal Oktoberfest. She asked each board member to take ten or more to sell. There will be note cards available soon. Ms. Dennis said there were two potential members that attended the last meeting. Steve Keeler, minister of the Presbyterian Church and Lauren Pearson with Merrill Lynch

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

~Personnel Committee, Jonathan Brown, Chair

- Nothing to report

~Policy/Directives Committee, Gardenia Simmons-White, Chair

- There were no policies presented for review.

~Public Relations Committee, Ann Wirz, Chair

- Nothing to report

~Legislative Committee – Beverly Smith-Dore, Chair

- Ms. Dore read the letter she received from Representative Shannon Erickson indicating she would like to meet to discuss our issues. Ms. Dore said she would set up a meeting with Rep. Shannon Erickson.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments noted.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION WAS MADE BY NANCY PINKERTON AND SECONDED BY GRACE DENNIS TO
ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 20, 2009 MEETING. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

Date

Beverly Smith-Dore Secretary

Date

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