

BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS
1804 OLD SHELL ROAD
PORT ROYAL, SC 29935

March 16, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Brown, Grace Dennis, Beverly Smith-Dore, Margaret Gatch, Helene Gruber Jim Mathews Elizabeth Santagati and Ann Wirz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Carol Myers and Nancy Pinkerton are picking up proclamations
Gardenia Simmons-White and Morris Campbell (Ex-Officio)

STAFF PRESENT: Mitzi Wagner, Cathy Randel and Joe Anne King

GUESTS PRESENT: No guests present

I. CALL TO ORDER – Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m.

II. WELCOMING GUESTS

Ms. Santagati welcomed Cathy Randel, Day Program Planning Specialist

III. MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 2010 BOARD MEETING

Ms. Wirz stated Jonathan Brown, Helene Gruber and Ann Wirz were not mentioned as attending the meeting with Shannon Erickson. This correction will be reflected in the permanent record. Ms. Gruber mentioned that the Director of PEP was listed as Howard Watson in the minutes and will be corrected to Harold Watson in the permanent record.

MOTION WAS MADE BY BEVERLY SMITH-DORE AND SECONDED BY MARGARET ANN GATCH TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 16, 2010 BOARD MINUTES AS CORRECTED. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MARCH 16, 2010 AGENDA

Ms. Santagati said she would like to add to her report the following items: Congratulations to those re-appointed for board membership and to talk about a little about the board.

MOTION WAS MADE BY GRACE DENNIS AND SECONDED BY BEVERLY DORE TO ADOPT THE MARCH 16, 2010 AGENDA AS AMENDED. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

Ms. Santagati said the proclamation from Beaufort County Council was picked up on March 15, 2010 Beverly Dore, Jim Mathews, Jonathan Brown and Liz Santagati. She said it was a very nice opportunity to thank County Council for their interest and commitment to our organization in past years. She said Carol Myers would be picking up the proclamation from the Hilton Head Town

Council this evening and Nancy Pinkerton will be picking up the proclamation from the Bluffton Town Council. Ms. Santagati also mentioned that Ann Wirz, Margaret Ann Gatch and Mikel Swinton attended the Port Royal Town Hall to pick up their proclamation and Grace Dennis attended the City of Beaufort Council meeting. She thanked all those who participated in the March Disabilities Awareness month activity.

Ms. Santagati congratulated Helen Gruber, Margaret Ann Gatch, Beverly Dore and Grace Dennis for re-appointment to the Advisory Board.

Ms. Santagati said she believes in strong boards and that a board that works together can do many things. She said we need to be honest about who we are and what we are about. She said since she has been on the board we have not taken the time to look at what we do as board members and whether what we are doing is really effective. She said we need to do that and over the next couple of months we need to ask ourselves some hard questions, how are we performing, what are our strengths and weaknesses. If we don't know what our strengths and weaknesses are we can't work on them. She asked if board members are getting what they need serving on committees and are we focused on the right things as a board. Have we reviewed our bylaws in the past couple of years to know what is required of us and are we doing it? She asked for feedback from board members. Some comments of members are as follows: Ms. Gruber said we are an advisory board. She said we have no budget and can make no big changes; we can only give an opinion and show our support Ms. Dore said she felt we are heading in the right direction by showing our support for the programs and meeting with council members. Several board members were present to pick up the proclamation and thanked council members for their support. Mr. Brown said at the last retreat we were told that the role of the advisory board is to get information from the organization and assist the administrator in doing their job. If we just come in once a month and talk about the same thing it is just a waste of time. Mr. Mathews, as well as some other board members, felt that county council members were satisfied and seemed to like the buffer between them and the administration and for that reason we serve an important role. He said we were all here to fulfill a need or we wouldn't be here and Ms. Wagner keeps us well informed on matters of the department.

It was suggested that we review the Bylaws. A copy of the most recent updated version of the Bylaws will be sent to board members for review. Ms. Santagati said we should review them and see if we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. Please review and make suggestions on what should be changed. Ms. Dore suggested we review the Bylaws during the regular board meeting and all work together on it.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Mitzi Wagner

Ms. Wagner introduced Cathy Randel as the Day Program Planning Specialist for DSN. She said we are very fortunate to have her. She said we felt we needed more focus on what the needs of the individuals we serve and needed an organized plan on what would be done on a daily basis. Ms. Wagner said sometimes you get twice what you asked for and feels that's what we have in Ms. Randel. She said Ms. Randel has done a great job in the creativity that we didn't have before. She has made the Day Program a fun place to be.

Ms. Randel thanked board members for the opportunity to speak today. She said she has been with the department for almost two years and it has been an absolutely great pleasure to do this. She said this job and Mitzi has allowed her to grow and be creative. She said she started off with the idea that she would be doing a little of this and a bit of that and find now she has a lot of this and a lot of that and sort of a shifting budget which makes us think more and more out of the box. The focus of our activities is to make them functional. We really stress doing things that are authentic; a good example of that would be simply hand washing; you don't learn to wash your hands unless you wash your hands. She said we practice, practice and practice. We are also doing healthy eating and bring in real food. Consumers will go to the grocery store and see those foods. She said the big picture in a nut shell is we are constantly moving and doing activities. Our services changed this year which was a great challenge for all us. All new paperwork, new definitions, everything was new but glad to report that we are in great shape and ahead of most boards. She said the garden area has been a huge success. She said we will focus on one or two things this year in pottery and have started a rotation process so all will have the opportunity to go through this. She said we have some wonderful volunteers from the community and our first project will be wall plaques. We go through cycles on holidays and had Irish singers come in for St. Patrick's Day to entertain us. She mentioned that she has great expectations for our folks. She said Broomfield is going well. The consumers are very happy. Their days are less chaotic and staff is doing a fine job. We are taking small groups out to visit them and are planning a bar-b-que as one of their social activities. She said things have improved here in the day program also. She answered several questions from board members. Board members thanked her for her presentation. Ms. Dore suggested that we look into some horticulture or gardening projects at the Broomfield site.

Ms Wagner said she received an email yesterday indicating an agreement from SCDDSN to restore all the funding they had planned to cut which was great news. She said they are counting on congress extending the Medicaid match cards with the higher rate of match for another six-months. She said she believes this will happen but if not, there are some commitments from the SC Legislature to continue staying on the same level. She said there will probably still be some cuts previously discussed with the suggestions made by the commissioners. She is hopeful that if any residential homes are closed that we would be able to fill it and hopeful that if someone no longer needs the waiver that others will be added to the waiver. She also said she was hopeful that the "at risk" children in early intervention, that was cut out completely, would be restored. She said by the next board meeting she would have a better idea of what would be cut. She said there would be no increase in county funding this year but will maintain the level of funding they provided last year. That doesn't mean we will have the same thing next year because things have been cut through this year. The cuts in residential this year will now be annual cuts. Ms. Wagner said she has proposed some things that have not yet been approved. There will be some diminished number of staff. We have asked permission from county to have staff drive a van home, which would eliminate two trips a day. Staff is now driving to work, pick up the vans, go pick up the consumers to come to day program and at the end of the taking consumers' home, drive back to leave the van and go home. She also mentioned talking to all the local grocery stores asking if they would provide some sort of reduced rate because of the quantity of food we purchase. We contacted Publix, Bi-Lo, and Food Lion without success. Piggly Wiggly said they would give us their cost on food, package it together for us, that would help to eliminate the amount of time spent at the store shopping. That money would stay in the community.

Ms. Wagner mentioned our day program licensing review went very well. There were only a couple of issues. The personnel file they pulled was on an employee that was hired prior to 2003. Prior to 2003 we were not required to do the sexual offender research and had begun doing so from that point forward, however did not go back and run reports on prior employees. After notification that this was required we have completed sexual offender reports on all staff and are in good shape. The other issue was at Broomfield. There were some minor things they asked us to do and were cited for not having a locked place for the chemicals, having no exit sign and removing a bookcase that blocked a doorway. The CTH homes did not have proof that the sprinkler system had been checked. They had been checked but we did not have the paperwork supporting it.

Ms. Wagner said we had a cleanup day on Friday and cleaned out things that have been here forever. She said all staff worked together and when they completed their tasks went on to help others. She said it was really a team effort and was very proud of our staff. We all shared pizza and the management staff each brought a 2 liter soft drink.

VII. FOUNDATION REPORT – Grace Dennis

Ms. Dennis said the focus is to get the foundation moving. She said there are committees working in several areas. Currently we are updating the Bylaws. Mr. Brown said they are ready for the first reading. One group is working on fundraisers and another on Branding. Ms. Dennis reminded everyone to email Marks Heating and Air monthly and vote for the ABLE Foundation.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

~Personnel Committee, Jonathan Brown, Chair

- Nothing to report

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

- Tabled until the April Meeting.

~Public Relations Committee, Ann Wirz, Chair

- Ms. Wirz said she would like to set a date for the get acquainted social for the ABLE Foundation, Human Rights Committee and the Advisory Board. She distributed a form for all to sign up to bring something. It was determined that a Saturday was a better day for the social and would probably get better attendance. Board members agreed on April 10th and would be held in the Day Program Activity Center at DSN.
- Ms. Dore thanked all board members that attended the meeting with Shannon Erickson in council chambers. She felt the meeting was well facilitated all items on the agenda were discussed and received input from all participants and very good recommendations from Ms. Erickson. She said, as a follow-up, several items were forwarded by Ms. Wagner and Ms. Dore would like to schedule a meeting to look at the items and recommendations and look at whether they are feasible to do as a board. Ms. Dore scheduled a meeting on March 29th at 3:00 p.m.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Brown had some questions regarding the duties of the Personnel Committee. He asked about input into the performance evaluation of the executive director. Ms. Wagner informed him

that the board would provide input to Beaufort County Deputy Director of Community Services when he requests information. That has not occurred because Ms. Wagner mentioned she has not been reviewed in seven or eight years. Mrs. Dore indicated that heretofore, the Advisory Board provided comments relative to the performance of the Executive Director on the evaluation instruments provided by the County and this assessment was shared with Morris Campbell, Deputy Director of Community Services. Ms. Santagati suggested as we review the bylaws we can make changes that no longer apply.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION WAS MADE BY BEVERLY DORE AND SECONDED BY JIM MATHEWS TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 16, 2010 MEETING. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

Date

Beverly Smith-Dore, Secretary

Date