

MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES
February 4, 2015
Conway Human Development Center
Conway, Arkansas

A regular meeting of the Board of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) was held on February 4, 2015 at the Conway Human Development Center in Conway, Arkansas. The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m. pursuant to the call of the Vice Board Chair.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Sally Hardin, Ms. Suzann McCommon, Mr. Darrell Pickney, Ms. Artie Jones and Dr. Linda Selman. Board Chair David Rosegrant and Mr. Randy Laverty were absent.

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. Jim Brader, Mr. Jeff Gonyea, Ms. Linda Scales, Mr. Calvin Price, Mr. Forrest Steele, Mr. Steve Farmer, Ms. Tammy Benbrook, Mr. Dale Woodall, Ms. Melissa Stone, Ms. Sarah Murphy, Mr. Justin Nickels and Ms. Shelley Lee.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Sara Israel, Ms. Jan Fortney, Ms. Rita Hoover, Ms. Carole Sherman, Ms. Annette Matthews, Mr. Alexander Myers, Ms. Veronica Tess Myers, Ms. Earline Stoddard, Director Tom Masseur, Ms. Susan Pierce, Ms. Cassie Howell and Mr. Christian Adcock from Disability Rights Center and Mr. Brandon Robinson, Attorney General's Office.

Ms. Sally Hardin, Vice, Board Chair presiding, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Ms. Hardin called for a motion to approve the minutes (with the corrections included by Darrell Pickney) from the November 5th, 2014 regular meeting of the DDS Board.

Ms. Suzann McCommon made a motion that the minutes from the November 5th, 2014 regular meeting of the Board of DDS be approved. Mr. Darrell Pickney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

After approving the minutes, Ms. Sally Hardin stated that Ms. Suzann McCommon would like to present a statement to the Board and Consumers regarding the DDS Board's response to the Disability Rights Arkansas' report issued in January of this year on the Booneville Human Development Center. (Attachment 1:1) Also added to the response were comments made by Mr. Darrell Pickney. Mr. Pickney stated he would like: 1) DRA to withdraw their recommendation for the Booneville HDC to close; 2) DRA not to be biased against HDCs and ICFs; and 3) DRA, DDS Board and HDCs need to work together.

Ms. Suzann McCommon made a motion that the Board's response be included in the minutes for the record. Mr. Darrell Pickney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Sally Hardin, Vice Board Chair, invited consumers, advocates and guests to address the Board.

Ms. Carole Sherman, parent of an Arkadelphia HDC resident, thanked the DDS Board, HDC Superintendents, staff and other organizations that advocate for her son's care in a human development center. Ms. Sherman also addressed her concerns regarding money needed to keep the HDC facilities in compliance. (See attachment 1:2)

After the consumer comments, Ms. Sally Hardin presented the subcommittee reports from the Administrative Services.

The Administrative Services Subcommittee met Friday, January 23rd to discuss DDS Board Policy 1002. After lengthy discussion, it was recommended by the Administrative Services Subcommittee members to allow the DDS Board to decide whether DDS Board Policy 1002 needs to be reviewed further and possibly revamped. After discussing again at the DDS Board Meeting, Suzann McCommon made a motion the DDS Board vote to review DDS Board Policy 1002 further. Darrell Pickney seconded the motion. Two members opposed and three members voted for allowance. The Motion did not pass. Under state law and DDS Board policy, four votes are required for official board action. This discussion will be disposed of but may be brought back to the Board for further discussion in the future.

Next, Dr. Linda Selman presented the request from Pathfinders to amend and extend their lease of the property at the former Alexander HDC campus. Mr. Jim Brader presented a summary of Pathfinders' original two leases which have two and four years remaining and explained that if the Board granted this request it would combine the two leases in to one and will extend the new lease to a total of ten years ending in 2025.

Ms. Sally Hardin made a motion the DDS Board accepts the recommendation of the Administrative Services Subcommittee to extend the Pathfinders Lease to a total of ten years. Suzann McCommon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Physical Management Subcommittee met today and Ms. Sally Hardin presented the information on two easements: 1) Booneville HDC to give an easement to Magtel for their transmitter to be placed on BHDC property. In return, Magtel will provide cable services to the facility with no charge. 2) ARHDC will grant a utility easement to Entergy so utility lines can be installed.

Ms. Sally Hardin made a motion that the DDS Board accept the recommendations of the Physical Management Subcommittee to grant the easement/lease for Booneville HDC and Magtel and to grant the utility easement between Arkadelphia HDC and Entergy. Suzann McCommon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Jeff Gonyea, Superintendent at Booneville HDC, presented the report for the human development centers (HDCs) and reminded the Board that monthly reports for the HDCs were included in the Board packets. Mr. Gonyea presented items of interest about each HDC along with recent survey results provided to him by each Superintendent. One special announcement was made about the new volleyball court at Conway HDC which will be named after former DDS Board Member and longtime HDC supporter, Mr. Ron Carmack.

Mr. Jim Brader, Interim DDS Director, began his report by recognizing and extending appreciation to the Board for their continued service and thanked Calvin Price and Conway HDC

for hosting the DDS Board Meeting. Mr. Brader also thanked Vice Chair, Sally Hardin, for stepping in for Chair David Rosegrant, who was unable to attend.

Mr. Brader recognized Dr. Charlie Green who was present. Dr. Green stated a national search will be conducted for a new DDS Director and a DDS Board Member will be included on the committee along with Mr. John Selig, parent and a community provider representative.

Next item, Mr. Brader thanked Linda Scales, Asst. Superintendent at SEAHDC, for accepting the position of Interim Superintendent until a new Superintendent is hired. Ms. Judy Adams' retirement will be effective February 28, 2015.

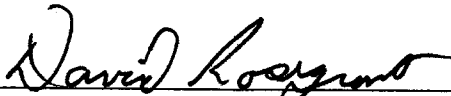
Mr. Brader continued with his report about the concerns of the freeze requests on positions and the freeze relief due to everyone's hard work and cooperation. He updated the DDS Board on Task Force data, report timelines from Arkansas Building Authority and the status of Senate Bill #175, sponsored by Senator Jason Rapert. Mr. Brader expressed his appreciation for the support given to the HDCs and reminded the parents and members of the Board that they are the best advocates for the centers. Other items discussed were staffing numbers and working day to day budgets in the human development centers.

Following Mr. Brader's report, Vice Chair Sally Hardin reminded everyone it is the time of year that the DDS Board reviews the Travel Methodology so that Board Members can be reimbursed for their services through the state system. Ms. Suzann McCommon made a motion to accept the Travel Methodology rates for 2015. Mr. Darrell Pickney seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.


Mr. Sally Hardin called for a motion the meeting be adjourned. Darrell Pickney made a motion the meeting be adjourned. Suzann McCommon seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

ATTEST:



Mr. David Rosegrant, Chair
Board of Developmental Disabilities Services



Executive Secretary

DDS Board Response to the DRA report on Booneville HDC

In January, the DRA issued a report criticizing the Booneville Human Development Center and calling for its' closure. Individual board members, parents, and advocates responded to the bias and inaccuracies found in the report. The Board was grateful to see that Ms. Amy Webb with the Department of Human Services gave a thoughtful and factually accurate response and the Board adopts her statement.

The Board would like to add some additional comments in this formal response. The Board feels that many characterizations found in the DRA report were designed to intentionally mislead the public. These mischaracterizations are found throughout the wording of the report and are blatantly apparent in the choice of pictures. For example, what the DRA refers to as "trash" in one photo is, in reality, bags of materials used to make rugs in the supported employment workshop located on the Booneville campus. These materials are stored in bags in a locked room with no unaccompanied access by the residents. Further, the DRA deliberately chose areas to photograph where residents do not live or access. Even the cover photograph on the report was designed and selected to mislead. The building in the cover photo has never been occupied by residents or used since the campus became the HDC in the 1970's.

The Board wants to emphasize that they have confidence in the staff at the Booneville HDC and know that the residents are safe and well cared for. As a Board we strongly object to the misleading report and want to make the public aware that the DRA has an obvious and conflicting agenda to the Board's mission. The Board fully supports the Human Development Centers, including Booneville.

OF ARKANSAS

From: Carole L. Sherman [<mailto:carolelsherman@sbcglobal.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 3:48 PM
To: Tammy Benbrook
Subject: Re: Reminder

I am Carole Sherman, of Little Rock. I am the mother and co-guardian of John, age 46, whose safe home has been the Arkadelphia HDC for 30 years. John, a large, mobile, non-verbal man functions on the level of a young toddler, less than a 2 year old to be exact. He has little to no awareness of danger. The HDC model of care is best for him. We are grateful that our great state has accepted responsibility for John and his peers.

I want to express my thanks to the superintendents and for the leadership they provide HDC staff in their important work. I want to wish the Acting-Supt. of the Warren HDC well in her new responsibilities.

I want to say to the Board that we appreciate you and to say that we need your help in working to assure DHS policies that work for the HDCs. DHS policies are not working for the centers.

DHS policies do not translate into the needed support from the Administration and from the General Assembly. HDC physical plants are heavily used campuses. Replacement and repairs of HDC buildings and upgrade of their infrastructures in thoughtful, regular, steady increments must be included in the HDC budgets. Our Division director needs to be free to go to bat for this support. He should be given the support he needs to work with the Governor, with the legislature and with community leaders to understand the vulnerable people in our centers and the conditions of the centers.

HDC superintendents should be encouraged in their role of spokespersons for their centers to area legislators, and to area leaders.

The Division director should be free to call on the support of our parent-guardian association when critical issues such as hiring freezes or budget issues arise.

Carole L. Sherman