

# DISABLED PERSONS PROTECTION COMMISSION

## Commissioners' Meeting Minutes September 15, 2020

Commissioners Present: Honorable James Brett, Mary Beth McMahon, Kacy Maitland

DPPC Staff Present: Nancy Alterio, Julie Westwater, Jean Frejuste, Kathy Barthe

Minutes Recorded By: Kathy Barthe

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Handouts – The following materials were distributed to the Commissioners:

- Commissioners' Agenda of September 15, 2020
- Commissioners' Meeting Minutes of June 30, 2020
- DPPC Annual Report FY2020
- Strategic Plan FY2021
- Budget Report Year End June 2020
- Budget Narrative Year End June 2020
- Budget Report August 2020
- Budget Narrative August 2020

The Honorable Chairperson Brett called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

### 1. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of June 30, 2020

**MOTION:** To accept the minutes of June 30, 2020 as received motioned by Commissioner Kacy Maitland, seconded by Commissioner Mary Beth McMahon.

**VOTE:** Unanimous to accept the minutes of June 30, 2020 as received.

### 2. Operations and COVID-19 Updates

The state is currently in Phase 3 of the Governor's reopening. Late communication was received from HRD advising staff to continue to work from home when there is an option. Staff will continue to work remotely, unless given permission from their Supervisor to go into the office for a specific essential need. DPPC staff will likely not be returning to the office in calendar year 2020.

### 3. FY2020 Annual Report

DPPC's FY2020 Annual Report was distributed to the Commissioners. The report highlights DPPC's work and milestones over the year. The report is distributed to the legislature and the Administration. As a direct result of the pandemic, the initially projected double digit increase in abuse reports abruptly shifted, and for the first time in the history of the DPPC, we experienced a net decrease, ever so slight (1%), in our reports from the prior year. This is likely due to the closing of the state and individuals with disabilities out of the public and mandated reporters view. As the state has been

opening up some, DPPC has seen a slight rise in reports.

#### 4. **Strategic Planning and ACES FY2021 – Planning Stage**

A copy of the DPPC's FY2021 Strategic Plan was submitted to the Commissioners. The plan focuses on seven priority areas:

- **Database Rebuild:** Complete Phase II of the Database Rebuild Project
- **Assignment and Workflow:** Enhance assignment and workflow process leveraging technological improvements
- **Training:** Create online training modules from the newly established Adult Protective Services (APS) On-Boarding Training Curriculum in partnership with and financial assistance from BPI
- **Abuser Registry:** Prepare DPPC for the implementation of an Abuser Registry to the extent possible, pending a required appropriation
- **SARU Peer Support Workbook and Training Manual:** Design and create a Peer Support Workbook and Training
- **Human Resources and Finance:** Enhance Human Resources and Finance operations
- **Diversity:** Create an inclusive work environment that supports creativity and encourages staff engagement through awareness, staff participation and training

Strategic planning goals and objectives were incorporated into the Leadership Team's FY2021 ACES. The goals of the Leadership Team were reviewed and discussed with the Commissioners.

**MOTION:** To accept DPPC Leadership Team ACES 2021 Goals as received motioned by Commissioner Kacy Maitland, seconded by Commissioner Mary Beth McMahon.

**VOTE:** Unanimous to accept DPPC Leadership Team ACES 2021 Goals as received.

#### 5. **Administration and Finance**

- **FY2020 Year End Summary Report:** June 30, 2020 concluded spending for FY2020. DPPC spent over 99% out of 100% of its budget with approximately \$1,000 reverted back to the general fund.
- **FY2021 Appropriation:** DPPC will operate on a 1/12 Budget based on the Governor's recommendation for FY2021 of \$4,884,207 – DPPC's maintenance number.

#### 6. **Legal**

- **Abuse Registry Implementation, Funding and Advisory Council:** Communication is continuing from DPPC to ANF and Ways and Means on the necessity to fund the implementation of the Abuse Registry. There has been indication of receiving funding for the Registry beginning November 1, 2020. Secretary Heffernan has affirmed that FY21 funding is available for DPPC to engage in the implementation work of the Abuse Registry. DPPC is estimating the cost of Nicky's Law implementation at approximately \$909,000 which is DPPC's prorated budget for the Abuser Registry (AR) effective for 11/01/2020-06/30/21. DPPC has projected hiring 10 staff members (investigators, investigator manager, attorneys and support staff). The Commissioners will be notified of postings.

- **Advisory Council:** As a result of a suggestion by Leo Sarkissian, Executive Director, Arc of Massachusetts, DPPC is adding additional members to its Advisory Council. New members will consist of those invested in the implementation of the Registry including the Arc, DLC and family members.
- **Amending DPPC's Statute – H.4321 and S.2577:** House Bill 4231 and Senate Bill 2577 are Acts updating terminology and investigative practices related to the protection of persons with disabilities. This legislation will serve to strengthen and modify various aspects of DPPC's operations by amending the enabling statute. These amendments are necessary for the DPPC to implement Nicky's Law – the Abuse Registry. DPPC's bill has passed the Senate Ways and Means and now is in the House Ways and Means. The Bill is not moving as everyone's attention is on legislation related to COVID-19. However, Representative Garballey reached out to Executive Director Nancy Alterio to let her know that he is continuing to work toward getting DPPC's bill passed this year.
- **Policies – Language Access Plan and CORI:** Work continues on updating DPPC policies and procedures. In preparation of the Registry, the Language Access Plan and CORI policies and procedures have been updated.

## 7. Organizational Updates

- **ACL Final Year, Database Rebuild, Related Projects and Supplemental Funding Requests:** DPPC is in the third and final year of the ACL federally funded program. Funding was used to complete the phase one rebuild of the database and will be used to complete phase II of the database. The ACL grant is also funding the R3 Technology project. Across the country, ACL cut 10% from grantees. As a result, DPPC's year-three budget is being cut by 10%. However, ACL notified DPPC that \$25,000 in supplemental funding is available if DPPC is interested in applying for the funds. If awarded, the \$25,000 would almost offset the 10% cut.
- **IT:** Jean Frejuste, Director IT reported that he is working on three main technological focuses: the database rebuild, digitizing workflow and Office 365 implementation. Work continues for the new database identifying bugs and additional changes which are being addressed, prioritized and tested. Database communication is sent out at least weekly. Digitizing workflow is in development to streamline business processes with outside agencies as a one-stop (all communications and documents can be found within the database, eliminating emails and multiple places for document placement). There is a delay in the implementation of Office 365 modern workplace for the DPPC as Executive Branch employees are the priority at this time.
- **MOVA Expansion and Audit:** As of May 1, 2020, SARU received an expansion in funding from MOVA allowing for expanded services with the hiring of additional staff, including a full-time regional navigator, Peer Support Specialist and three Peer Support leaders. A new central navigator has been hired and is starting September 14, 2020. Hiring is underway for the new metro navigator position. These additional staff hires allow SARU to have a navigator and peer support leader in each of the five regions.

- **MOVA Audit:** Programmatic and Fiscal Monitoring Worksheets and documentation are being compiled in preparation for the VOCA programmatic and fiscal review in October.
- **SSTA:** Self-Service Time and Attendance (SSTA) reporting through the Commonwealth has been implemented for all staff.
- **BPI Funding and On-Line Training:** Department of Developmental Services is funding BPI once again. BPI funds are managed by the Hampton DA's office for BPI to develop and conduct training for adult protective services staff of DPPC, DDS, DMH and MRC across the Commonwealth. Some of the funding received will be used to develop the on-line onboarding APS training. Commissioner Maitland has been especially instrumental in the development of DMH portion of the on-boarding.

6. **Audit Review – July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019**

The Office of the State Auditor is continuing their DPPC performance audit review of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019. DPPC was assigned a new audit team, a third team. The third Audit team continues to ask for additional information. Ann Murray continues to oversee the needs of the Audit Team.

7. **New Business**

No new business was discussed.

8. **Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Kacy Maitland motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 p.m., Commissioner Mary Beth McMahan seconded.

**VOTE:** Unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 p.m.