**Ligas Class Member/Family Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**July 21, 2015**

Committee Member and Staff Attendees:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **First Name** | **Last Name** | | Dave | Adden | | Silvia | Campone | | Ronnie | Cohn | | Jim | Eddings | | Donna | Frownfelter | | Toni | Howard | | Missy | Kichline | | Stephanie | Leach | | Troy | Markert | | Elizabeth | Miller | | Laura | Miller | | Kendra | Moses | | Tony | Records | | Ruthann | Sikora | |

Other Attendees:

Kathy Carmody, Ed McManus, Tamar Heller, Lieke van Heumen

The meeting began at 1:00 pm as a video conference from locations in the Harris Building, Springfield and the Clinton Building, Chicago.

See attached meeting agenda.

The minutes from the April 21, 2015 meeting were accepted without comment or correction.

**INTRODUCTIONS**: Donna Frownfelter, chairperson, began by asking that attendees introduce themselves briefly. See attendance list above.

**OPENING REMARKS:** Donna thanked Tony Records for his help, his thoroughness, and his fairness in his tenure as court monitor. She said she has always appreciated his willingness to meet with any and all parties involved in Ligas and listen impartially to their point-of-view.

Tony Records responded with his own thanks to many people he has met with for their concern and hard work. He stated that he has learned a lot during the process and learned a lot from all the people he has encountered. He credited the Department of Human Services for improving the response time for individuals who are determined to be in crisis. He also stated that Ligas had resulted in other significant benefits including allowing an additional 6,000 individuals able to receive services. He also stated that more work needed to be done including addressing inadequate rates and recognized the difficulty of doing so in the current State budget environment.

He also expressed confidence that his successor – Ronnie Cohn, newly appointed court monitor – had the experience and expertise to navigate the challenges ahead.

Ronnie Cohn then addressed the council by saying she had the difficult task of being Tony’s replacement and living up to the high standards and excellent work he had performed. But she said she was also grateful for the opportunity to be the court monitor and looked forward to meeting as many people as possible as quickly as possible to understand the Ligas dynamics. Due to her recent appointment, she said she will not be able to issue her first report in September.

If anyone has questions or concerns for Ronnie, her phone number is: (914) 649-1856. Her email address is: [ligas.monitor@gmail.com](mailto:ligas.monitor@gmail.com).

**LIGAS FAMILY ADOCATES UPDATE:** Missy Kichline read the following prepared remarks.

The Ligas Family Advocate Program (LFAP) of the Arc of Illinois is a relatively small and extremely cost-effective family-to-family outreach to Ligas Class Members, their guardians and families that has a giant impact on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) system. In fact, it was created because there were unmet needs of Ligas class members and their families, especially those new to the system. As a result of the LFAP, we are able to provide consistent information about ALL options available; as well as provide support connecting with other families; and share creative ways to utilize funding for Home Based and CILA services.

Though we are making forward strides, it is incredibly frustrating to be caught in this budget debacle. At a time where we should be talking about expanding our program in order to reach more class members, our current budget situation has forced the program to downsize. We are concerned about the impact this could have on the relationships that have been developed with class members and providers.

In FY15 we conducted/participated in over twenty-one state-wide events designed specifically to connect Ligas class members with other class members. We created a Ligas Family Advocate website, and shared information about all options available, with seven hundred and twenty three individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who have been recently selected through the Division’s PUNS process as a result of the Ligas Consent Decree.

These individuals include two hundred and seventy five class members in the pilot area served by Community Service Option Inc., Metro East and Suburban Access. In addition we have connected with and shared information with four hundred and forty-eight class members served by the remaining fifteen Individual Services Coordination agencies

As word of this program continue to spread family to family and self-advocate to self-advocate, we are finding ourselves receiving more and more requests for general advocacy, information and referral calls. This is encouraging as we will continue to share information about ALL options in FY16 with Ligas class members and their families!

The Ligas Family Advocate Program welcomes and looks forward to working with the new court monitor Ronnie Cohn.

**CLASS COUNSEL UPDATE**: Laura Miller, class counsel from Equip for Equality, opened her remarks by saying there is big news for Ligas with a new judge and a new court monitor, but counsel will continue to proceed with current initiatives. One current concern is that 500 members have award letters but have yet to find services. Counsel is working to develop categories for obstacles to services including accessibility and behavioral issues. Counsel is also making it a priority to have new CILAs structured to accommodate individuals with medical needs.

**DDD LIGAS UPDATE:** Jim Eddings announced that 1,154 ICF/DD Ligas individuals are receiving services as of June 30, 2015, with 44 ICF/DD Ligas individuals who have received award letters. As part of the required benchmarks, DDD reports a total 1399 ICF/DD class membership as of June 15, 2015.

Stephanie Leach announced that as of June 30, 2015, there were 2,328 Ligas PUNS individuals receiving services. Ligas milestones include having 2,500 individuals selected from PUNS in services by June 30, 2016.

**LIGAS SURVEY RESULTS:** Tamar Heller and Lieke van Heumen from the University of Illinois at Chicago, shared the results of their Ligas survey. See attachment. Results of the survey are still being compiled and further updates to the Ligas Member/Family Advisory Council may be forthcoming.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be from 1 to 3 p.m. on October 21, 2015 in Conference Room 2B in the Harris Building and the 6th Floor MIS Conference Room in the Clinton Building.

**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS:** For questions or comments, please contact Dave Adden: (217) 524-0848 or Dave.Adden@Illinois.gov.