

**Olmstead Consumer Taskforce Board of Directors Meeting
September 14, 2012
Pleasant Hill Public Library**

MINUTES

Handouts

Agenda

Minutes of the Previous Meeting – July 13, 2012

Executive Committee Minutes – August 7, 2012; August 29, 2012

Letter to Governor regarding expansion of Medicaid under the ACA – July 30, 2012

Email from Taskforce Chair to Gov. Gregoire *et al.* re *M.R. v. Dreyfus* – September 14, 2012

Understanding Olmstead & What It Means for Iowa: Power point presented at IFA

HousingIowa Conference – September 5, 2012

Draft Taskforce Position Statement on Direct Support Professional Workforce Development

Summary of Taskforce priorities from July strategic planning session

Taskforce comments on 2012 Qualified Allocation Plan – submitted at IFA public meeting on September

Proposed Change to Taskforce Bylaws limiting the number of Board member terms

2012 Voter Training Schedule

Voter Education Events & Candidate Forums 2012

Taskforce Members Present: Mark Block; Paula Connolly; Dawn Francis; Alice Holdiman; Teri Lynn Jorgenson; Jennie Salvato; Doug Sample; Bruce Teague; Casey Westhoff; Janie Woodhouse.

Members Present by Phone: Carrie England; Linda Moore; Teresa Robinson; Ingrid Wensel

State Agency Representatives Present: Theresa Armstrong (DHS - MHDS); Patrick Clancy (Board of Regents); Karin Ford (IDPH); Heidi Smith (DHR); Molly Hammer (DE), Sue Olson (IDA) Anne Turcotte (DOT), Kris Weitzel (DOC). **By Phone:** Ljerka Vasiljevic (DPS)

Staff: Bob Bacon; Terry Cunningham; Becky Flores; Liz O'Hara

Guests: Becky Moore; Jule Reynolds

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairperson Geoff Lauer was unable to attend. Vice Chair Dawn Francis brought the meeting order at 10:05 am. A quorum was declared. Dawn welcomed the new state agency representatives from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Doug Grove, and from the Department of Education, Molly Hammer.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Janie Woodhouse moved that the agenda be approved. Doug Sample supported the motion. Motion carried.

III. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting – July 13, 2012

Carrie England moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on July 13, 2012. Janie Woodhouse supported the motion. Motion carried.

IV. Executive Committee Report

A. Committee Correspondence

Action Items: Request for Taskforce endorsement of

(1) Letter to Governor Branstad (7/26/12) requesting support for expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Dawn stated that while the Governor's position is a great concern to advocates and many legislators, Taskforce advocacy will be limited to sending the letter, in the hopes that after the November Election the Governor may reconsider his opposition. Carrie England moved to endorse the letter to Governor Branstad dated 7/26/12. Alice Holdiman supported the motion. Motion carried.

(2) Draft Position Statement on Direct Support Professional Workforce Development. Dawn stated that the position statement was developed when the possibility arose for a meeting with Senator Hatch, who is spearheading the legislative effort to create a credentialing system for direct support workers. The meeting has not yet taken place, but the Executive Committee saw a need for an advocacy tool on this issue. Alice moved to approve the position statement on direct support professional workforce development. Janie supported the motion. Motion carried.

Dawn noted that the Direct Care Worker Advisory Council is holding public meetings throughout the state to obtain stakeholder input on the credentialing initiative, and encouraged Taskforce members to attend and use the position statement if they are able. Geoff Lauer plans to attend the meeting in Cedar Rapids on 9/19, and a number of other advocates are expected to be present. The Council has invited legislators to its meeting on 9/20 in Urbandale. Dawn and Casey plan to represent the Taskforce at that meeting.

Liz O'Hara was asked to provide Taskforce members with the name and address of a Council representative to whom comments can be sent, and to send out a finalized copy of the position statement.

(3) Remarks on IFA's Draft 2013 Qualified Allocation Plan. Liz briefly summarized Terri Rosonke's efforts to align this year's Qualified Allocation Plan for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) with *Olmstead* principles. Incentive points in the Iowa Finance Authority's ranking system for applications for the highly sought after LIHTCs would be awarded to projects that included various percentages of accessible or visitable units, had set-aside units for people with disabilities receiving units (consistent with

proposed CMS and HUD rules on integrated settings), and other components that support *Olmstead* compliance. IFA held a public meeting to obtain input on the draft Qualified Allocation Plan on September 11th, and Dawn presented the position statement. The statement supports the new *Olmstead*-related incentives but also suggests that IFA look at the proximity of proposed projects to fixed route public transit since this is such a big disability issue.

Liz noted that one element in the scoring system was attendance by project management staff at either Mental Health First Aid or at an OCTF-approved disability awareness training. She said that while MHFA is available currently, there is no disability awareness training tailored to people who run housing projects, and that the Taskforce will have to make sure one is available by the spring of 2013. Mark Block expressed support for this kind of training. Ljerka Vasiljevic noted that she has prepared information on universal design that is easily understood. She will send the material to Liz for distribution to the Taskforce.

Mark Block moved to endorse the position statement on the Qualified Allocation Plan. Alice Holdiman supported the motion. Motion carried.

- (4) Correspondence from OCTF Chair to Washington State Governor's Office and other officials on *M.R. v. Dreyfus*.** Governor Gregoire's cuts to home and community based services due to state budget difficulties were challenged in court as a violation of *Olmstead*. The Appeals Court has ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, but apparently the Governor may appeal to the Supreme Court. This has resulted in advocacy alerts at the national level, and Taskforce Chair Geoff Lauer responded with an email to the Governor and other officials. Doug Sample moved to endorse the email communication to Governor Gregoire. Casey Westhoff supported the motion. Motion carried.

Jule Reynolds noted that Senator Harkin has become personally involved in this case, and has had on-going conversations with the Governor.

- B. Report on IFA HousingIowa panel presentation (9/5) on the importance of housing in *Olmstead* implementation.** Dawn reported that she represented the Taskforce on a panel at the Iowa Finance Authority's 2012 HousingIowa Conference on 9/5. The panel was intended to raise awareness and understanding among developers, property managers, realtors and housing advocates of the importance of affordable and accessible housing in promoting *Olmstead* compliance. Dawn's presentation focused on the *Olmstead* decision, its broad impact on state service systems, and the importance of inter-agency partnerships. Theresa Armstrong (MHDS – Bureau Chief, Community Services and Planning) picked up this theme and spoke about the DHS *Olmstead* Plan. Brooke Lovelace talked about housing issues in the Money Follows the Person Program and Deb Johnson (IME – Bureau Chief, Long Term Care) talked about the proposed CMS

rule defining integrated settings and its potential impact on housing developments in Iowa.

C. Other:

- (1) Iowa representation at Region VII Olmstead meetings.** The Executive Committee recommends that the Taskforce send a representative to the Region VII interstate meetings on progress in Olmstead implementation. Geoff Lauer is willing to attend the next meeting in Kansas City in late October or early November, but would like other Executive Committee members to attend future meetings. Geoff is requesting approval to reimburse his expenses for gas, one night's motel stay and meals. Janie Woodhouse moved to approve reimbursement for travel expenses to attend the next Region VII meeting. Doug Sample supported the motion. Alice commented that in the past DHS has helped consumers attend such meetings. She believes participation in these multi-state meetings is important. Motion carried. Doug asked that Taskforce members be notified if it is possible for people to participate via teleconference.
- (2) Request for participation in Olmstead Real Choices website update.** Liz explained CDD has secured the assistance of web technicians in redesigning and updating the Olmstead Real Choices Iowa website. CDD staff discussed the central focus of the website with MHDS, in light of the state's website for the Olmstead Plan (and the MHDS Redesign website). It was agreed that the focus should be on the Taskforce and the history of Olmstead compliance efforts in Iowa, with links to the other websites. CDD would like input from a Taskforce working group; the time commitment would be to a few webinars to look at the current site, identify necessary content, and review alternative designs. Volunteers for the workgroup were Alice, Carrie England, Dawn, Jennie Salvato, and Doug. Becky Flores will also participate in the review.

V. Legislative Study Committee: Opportunities to promote awareness of disability issues this Election Year

There were two handouts on voter education events and candidate forums across the state. The DD Council is funding disability organizations to organize voter education events. They want the Taskforce to know that a small amount of funds are still available if anyone would like to put such an event together in their community before the Election. Dawn encouraged Taskforce members to attend candidate forums and raise awareness of disability issues. Bruce Teague stated that he would like to make providers aware of these events. Mark Block asked if Taskforce members should speak to the issues as representatives of the Taskforce. Dawn stated that OCTF position statements might be used. She also asked Liz to draw up a list of questions that Taskforce members might ask about key issues such as redesign. Mark stated that in November the Brain Injury Alliance and NAMI are also having "awareness walks." Alice commented on the importance of the Taskforce speaking to the issues facing people with invisible disabilities as well as aging Iowans, and of the need to get rid of factionalism in the pursuit of funding for services.

Casey Westhoff said that the DD Council is developing the Iowa Disability Vote Coalition, which can be found at the ID Action website. The Coalition is intended to encourage participation by people with disabilities, and offers three questions that voters can ask of Congressional candidates.

Jule Reynolds told the Taskforce that Senator Harkin is willing to help the disability community in Iowa forward questions to be considered for use in the national presidential debates. Senator Harkin is also willing to help arrange group meetings or conference calls with the candidates or their campaigns. Jule will contact the Voter Coalition about crafting questions, and about getting the word out of the Senator's offer of assistance. Bob Bacon mentioned the National Disability Forum on 9/28 in Columbus Ohio. Fifty national disability organizations have organized a webinar for the presidential candidates to present their positions on disability issues. Liz was asked to send out the registration information. The candidates have not yet confirmed that they will attend, and may send proxies. Disability advocates are being encouraged to contact the two campaigns and urge attendance by the candidates themselves. Mark Block moved that the Executive Committee contact the campaigns to encourage such attendance at the National Disability Forum, and to submit a list of questions to be asked of the candidates. Janie Woodhouse supported the motion. Motion carried. Doug said that the questions should be framed to focus on the benefits of positively addressing the needs of people with disabilities.

VI. Nominations Committee: Recruitment of new OCTF members

Carrie England reported that there are two vacancies created because of the death of Ray Gerke and the resignation of Amelia Marchant. In addition, the terms of seven Taskforce members are expiring, and of those, three members (Ingrid Wensel, Doug Sample and Janie Woodhouse) are not eligible to reapply. Carrie asked that **all** Taskforce members (not just those whose terms are expiring) submit new applications so that contact information can be updated and so that it's clear what category the member represents under the bylaws. Geoff Lauer is updating the application, which will be available through an online survey. Carrie said the Taskforce needs good advocates who are committed to *Olmstead* principles. Liz will work with Carrie to set up a Nominations Committee teleconference and to send out information on the application process.

VII. Proposed Revision to Bylaws Regarding Member Term Limits

Before the matter of the revision of term limit language was taken up, Dawn raised another issue about membership. Some turnover is a good thing for the Taskforce, but Dawn said that it would be a real loss if the terms of members from certain small organizations end, and there is no one else who could reasonably represent that organization. She cited the SILC, the DD Council and the Arc as examples, and asked if the Taskforce should consider changing the bylaws to ensure a permanent position for these organizations. Applications from them could be reviewed annually

to ensure the representation was still effective. Alice asked if those representatives would be voting members, or advisory like the state agency representatives. She pointed out that the three people from those organizations were chosen as individuals, not as representatives of their organizations. Carrie supported the importance of that fact, because of the possibility that staff or leadership changes might lessen the value of a particular organization's participation. Casey asked how a limit could be put on the number of organizations with this status, especially if they have a vote on the Taskforce. He cited NAMI as another strong partner but there are others. Mark Block mentioned Easter Seals, the Brain Injury Alliance, and the Spinal Cord Association. Carrie said that she is on the Taskforce as an advocate and not a staff member of a center for independent living, but the bylaws could call for a representative from Iowa's CILs.

Dawn said that in her view, whether disability organizations had a vote or not was less important than that they be partnering with the Taskforce. Representatives from all disability organizations could be invited to participate as non-voting members. Alice repeated the concern about the number of organizations to be invited, and also asked if there might be a divisive effect if a particular representative did not share the Olmstead philosophy. Doug said additional burdens on the Taskforce Chair might result. Alice suggested we needed weighted criteria for selection of prospective organizations, such as whether they were statewide or local. Jennie Salvato said that organizations should go through the same application process as individuals. Mark said that the idea could strengthen the Taskforce, lessening the need to do outreach to other organizations to get support on issues. Dawn said that although efforts have been made to bring other organizations in for presentations, she did not believe this was sufficient—that what is needed is to find ways to create a united voice. Bob Bacon agreed that a forum to air issues is important because they are often so complicated; he cited housing and direct care workforce issues as examples.

Carrie said that the issue would be discussed at the Nominations Committee. Mark Block moved that disability organizations be invited to apply to the Taskforce as non-voting members. Alice moved to offer a friendly amendment that the issue be studied by the Ad Hoc Bylaws Workgroup and the Nominations Committee, and that recommendations be brought to the Taskforce. Mark agreed to the amendment. Doug offered a second friendly amendment that both disability and aging organizations be considered. Mark and Alice agreed. Janie Woodhouse supported the motion as amended. Bruce Teague asked if non-voting meant that they served ex officio and this was confirmed. Motion carried.

Second Reading of Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws to Limit the Terms of Taskforce Members – Dawn noted that Alexandra Bomhoff was ill and that Alice had temporarily stepped in as Chair of the Workgroup. Alice performed a second reading of the proposed amendment, and moved that it be accepted. Jennie Salvato supported the motion. Motion carried. The final reading will be at the November meeting. Dawn asked if there were additional volunteers to serve on the Workgroup. Jennie volunteered. Dawn suggested that at some point the Workgroup might want a joint

teleconference with the Nominations Committee. She noted that the Workgroup also has to consider the proposed amendment that would delete all references to committees other than the Executive and Nominations Committee.

Doug asked whether travel expenses of Taskforce members would no longer be eligible for reimbursement upon expiration of their terms. Dawn affirmed this but said anyone is welcome to call in to Taskforce meetings.

Agenda Item XI. State Agency Reports

As MHDS representatives were not yet present, the Chair called for state agency reports.

Iowa Department on Aging – Susie Paulson introduced herself as a stand-in for Joe Sample, who is out of town. She reported that IDA was unsuccessful in securing a large grant for expansion of options counseling services in Iowa, though they received a smaller Part B grant that will be used as seed money for additional Aging and Disability Resource Centers. IDA is working with IME to make options counseling billable under Medicaid. Susie had accompanied a case manager on a home visit to a 75-year-old woman with advanced dementia, and was struck by how much more limited her service options seemed to be than Susie's own daughter's, who has Down syndrome. She also commented on how expensive nursing home care will be for this individual. Navigation services (options counseling) are very important in helping people stay at home.

Bob asked what the implications were for Iowa's Balancing Incentive Payments Program of not getting the larger grant, since Iowa committed itself to development of a network of No Wrong Doors/Single Entry Point/ADRCs. Susie said Joe will be looking at options when he returns. Paula Connolly commented on the difficulty of getting these kinds of services qualified for Medicaid reimbursement. Funding up to \$2,000 can be made available in Georgia for community integration assistance. Dawn said that Rosalyn Carter had spoken at Drake University about the Carter Center's work on mental illness in Georgia, and asked staff to research this.

Department of Education – Molly Hammer referred to her remarks at the last Taskforce meeting about the redesign of her department. It is now complete. A cross-division team is looking at IEPs with an eye to how they might be strengthened so that each year sees a year's worth of growth in the student. DoE will be hiring someone to help teachers work with data for more rigorous measurements. There is a Special Education Advisory Council working on goal-setting. A grant request has been made (\$700,000 a year for five years) to raise achievement among students with disabilities. Bob asked where in the department the responsibility for students with disabilities resides. Molly said responsibilities are being carried out in many offices in such areas as teacher quality, learning supports, school improvement, etc. She will send Liz a table of organization for distribution to the Taskforce.

Iowa Department of Public Health – Karin Ford reported that IDPH is using an online survey to learn if people with disabilities, their family members and providers are accessing public health services. IDPH wants input on how to improve their outreach and marketing to people with disabilities, and Karin would like the Taskforce to be engaged with the effort. Dawn suggested she send Liz more information for the Taskforce. Karin said that this would be a lengthy process. Paula said she was confused about what disability issues IDPH is concerned about in this effort. Karin offered Section 508 compliance as an example. In general, the department wants to know whether its programs are reaching people. For example, a public health event can be completely accessible and yet not marketed effectively to people with disabilities, or can fail to take into account that some people are incapable of standing in line for a long time. IDPH is trying to cast its net broadly to as much information as possible, which is why she wants the Taskforce involved. Karin is working with Disability Rights Iowa to develop a coordinated approach to their site visits to facilities, so that they can look at such things as disaster preparedness. Work is also underway to implement the new Disability and Health grant.

The meeting was recessed for lunch.

VIII. MHDS/Redesign Update

Theresa Armstrong reported that a lot of work is being done by the various workgroups. The Children’s Disability Services Workgroup is trying to design a children’s system of care that will reduce the effects of siloed systems (criminal justice, education, mental health, etc.). The vehicle for supporting the system of care will be the health home model. The Judicial Branch/DHS Workgroup is in its third year, trying to update and standardize the different committal processes for mental illness, substance abuse and intellectual disability. The Workgroup is looking at how other states handle such matters as the role of mental health advocates.

The Workforce Workgroup is to be supported by IDPH, which hopes to begin meetings by early October. They will post agendas and materials on the DHS redesign web site. The Outcomes and Performance Measures Workgroup is trying to answer the question of how we will know the system is working, by identifying outcomes for individuals and families, providers and the system as a whole (e.g., access, health and wellness, person-centeredness, etc.). Indicators will be obtained from such sources as individual and family surveys. Theresa recommended that the Taskforce pay close attention to the outcomes being developed in employment and housing, and to support them if they are consistent with Olmstead principles. Teresa Bomhoff commented that she thought the process was going well, and that it was good that both the regions and the system as a whole are subject to performance measures.

The Service System Data and Statistical Information Integration Workgroup works on technical issues related to data collection and developing reports such as the “data dashboard.” It requires collaboration with IDPH, the Department on Aging, counties,

etc., and will need to work closely with the Outcomes Workgroup. Confidentiality issue will need to be addressed.

The Transition Committee is working on transition issues in consultation with DHS and the MHDS Commission. The Legislature established a Transition Fund to assist counties with fiscal difficulties this fiscal year. Rules for the fund were just approved by the Administrative Rules Committee; they follow the legislation closely. DHS will collaborate with ISAC on training for counties on how to access funds to maintain current levels of core services called for in their management plans. Robyn Wilson and Julie Jetter have visited 85 to 90 counties at this point, to review their accounts. They believe that 60 of the 99 counties have sufficient funds to sustain service levels through FY 2013. Four counties have short term cash flow issues, pending receipt of the first property tax revenues. They are allowed to borrow county funds from other sources, if necessary. 29 counties have long term fiscal issues, for a variety of reasons. They are discussing the causes of the problem with the Transition Committee. Paula Connolly asked if the Legislature was shocked about the number of counties with serious issues. Theresa said the Legislature was aware that many counties were experiencing difficulty. Based on the identified need, DHS will make a recommendation to the Legislature by 12/1/12 on the amount of money to be appropriated to the Fund; \$20 million in CHIP funds have been reserved. Applications for Transition funds are also to provide estimates of funding needs for FY 2014-2015, developed using set procedures. These estimates will help determine if the new \$47.28/person levy is adequate to maintain the service system. Doug Sample raised a concern about the Low income property tax credit, but Theresa said this topic has not come up.

Teresa Bomhoff noted that a half dozen counties will be ineligible for these funds because they are not levying up to the maximum level allowed. These counties also tend to be the ones who do not wish to regionalize. Carroll County will be seeking a waiver. However, 96 counties are in talks about regionalization. One group of counties has sent in a letter of intent; another group is expected to make a public announcement next week. Proposed regions under discussion range from three to eighteen counties. The rules for seeking waivers are under development; waiver requests must be submitted by 5/1/13.

**IX. Review and Refinement of Updated Legislative and Policy Priorities/
X. Discussion of Taskforce Committee Structure and Function, and Invitation to Join Committees**

Dawn briefly reviewed the one page summary of Taskforce priorities developed during the July planning session. Under the general heading of MHDS redesign the Taskforce includes expansion of Medicaid (which would support a redesigned system), expansion of current Medicaid services, especially the waiver, the need for monitoring redesign, and encouraging integration and coordination of services. Paula suggested that in the redesign process the situation will change quickly, and the Taskforce has to have a clear sense of what it would like the redesigned system to

look like. She wondered if the Taskforce should split the issues among workgroups. Dawn commented that the “disability” in MHDS redesign does not refer to all disability groups. Teresa Bomhoff agreed that all disability groups should benefit. She also said that while everyone’s basic premise seems to be that present services would be a starting point from which the new system would be built, it appears that the system is eroding—services are being lost and people are being put on waiting lists. She also expressed concern that the wording of SF 2315 will create winners and losers: People earning over 150% of poverty level will have a lower priority than those making less than 150%, and people with DD/non-ID and BI will have a lower priority than people with ID and MI. If enough funds are not appropriated to cover all populations, there will be further reductions in service.

Bob pointed to the first three categories of priorities set in July (redesign, employment, housing), which are all important components of community integration, whereas the public information priority has to do with process. The Olmstead Real Choices website could become a primary tool to accomplish the public information priority. It could post information on the other priorities and suggest action steps for users.

Liz asked the Taskforce to consider establishing a housing workgroup. Dawn suggested the same for employment. Bob commented that there are already a great number of employment-related initiatives under way. Dawn said that the Taskforce needs to develop a position statement on employment. The Executive Committee can work with staff on this. It was agreed that the position paper on direct care workforce development is sufficient at present, but Paula felt that the Taskforce should try to put a human face on the issue, making the potential consequences of credentialing for individuals and families more clear. Bob agreed that stories make issues more concrete. Mark Block asked if the Taskforce should be working with the Iowa Caregivers Association on the issue. Bob said that ICA’s position was very different. For ICA, credentialing should come first, before training. The ICA started primarily to address the needs of its CNA membership, who tend to work in healthcare environments. The Taskforce tends to focus on the world of home and community based services, where 35-40% of workers are part time and make less than CNAs.

The Taskforce has taken positions on certain housing issues but not others such as the HCBS Rent Subsidy program. Taskforce members volunteering to serve on a housing workgroup included: Bruce Teague, Teresa Robinson, and Becky Flores. The ad hoc group reviewing the Olmstead web site will serve as the public information workgroup for now. The Executive Committee will monitor employment issues and work with staff to develop a position paper, and the committee will also monitor the direct care workforce issues. The Legislative Study Committee will take responsibility for the redesign issue.

There was a brief discussion of possible actions under the transportation priority. Three people had voted for expansion of options for accessible and affordable transportation as a priority and one person voted to work on accessible gas pumps.

Dawn said that she and Terry Cunningham will bring a report and recommendations on the gas pump issue to the Taskforce. Bob predicted that transportation will get increasing attention as a subdomain of employment and community living outcomes. He asked if the Taskforce could invite IDOT representatives to present their perspectives on transportation as a facilitator of community inclusion. Alice said that this has been done in the past; Terry Cunningham thought some of these same individuals should be brought back to a Taskforce meeting. Bruce thought that providers would be very interested in a discussion of transportation. Karin Ford said that IDPH is presenting to parks and recreation officials on establishing community access boards. Liz was directed to work with Bruce to set up a meeting with IDOT staff. This workgroup could also work on housing issues. Linda Moore and Ljerka Vasiljevic agreed to join the housing/transportation workgroup.

It was agreed that consideration should be given to putting the ad hoc workgroup chairs on the Executive Committee as non-voting members. Paula Connolly moved to establish ad hoc workgroups on housing/transportation and website update/public information issues, and to assign redesign, employment and direct care workforce issues as agreed by the Taskforce, and to encourage members to join the workgroups and committees. Teresa Robinson supported the motion. Mark Block proposed a friendly amendment to add that the Taskforce should reach out to other disability groups to participate in the work of committees and workgroups. Paula and Teresa agreed to the amendment. Motion carried. Mark Block abstained.

XI. State Agency Reports (continued)

Department of Public Safety - Ljerka Vasiljevic stated that the DPS Building Code Commissioner has authority to enforce rules for accessible parking spaces. Further information is available on the DPS web site. She also announced that on September 28th she will be presenting at the convention of the Iowa branch of the American Institute of Architects on changes in the ADA and federal housing laws.

Department of Human Rights – Heidi Smith stated that the DHR has been restructured, and that the Division of Community Advocacy and Services has had its capacity reduced by a third. Since John TenPas retired from the department, Mike Williams has taken on responsibility for state government leasing.

Department of Human Services - MHDS – Becky Flores stated that DHS is redesigning its web site, and MHDS has a temporary new look. The menu on the left side of the screen attempts to provide more information on new activities. The overhaul of the web site is expected to be complete next summer, and Becky hopes it will be more user-friendly. Becky also said that Rick Shults is trying to encourage MHDS staff to develop areas of expertise, so as to become the “go-to” people in that area. Becky will be working on housing, and Lin Nibbelink has been working on employment.

Iowa Civil Rights Commission – Don Grove said that the ICRC is a law enforcement agency charged with enforcing Iowa’s Civil Rights Act. Protected populations include people with disabilities. The ICRC handles accessibility issues, housing discrimination, and many types of reasonable accommodations issues, and also conducts a housing testing program to test for discrimination by rental project management staff. This summer ICRC conducted reviews of the design and construction of 14 housing complexes. Don manages the ICRC screening and housing discrimination program.

XII. Taskforce Member Reports

Bruce Teague announced that his organization, Caring Hands and More, has Supported Community Living openings. Casey Westhoff announced that the Department on Aging got a Lifespan Respite grant to run respite services. It is hoped that the program will get underway in a few months. Mark Block announced the NAMI Annual Walk on October 6th at Farm Bureau Lake, and the Brain Injury walk at Des Moines Areas Community College, also on October 6th.

Paula Connolly announced that ASK Resource Center will also host a walk on 10/22/12 to raise awareness of bullying. The young man featured in a recent acclaimed documentary on bullying will be present. Paula also announced that ASK has received a one year Family to Family grant providing limited funding. Extension of funding for these grants at the federal level is not known yet.

Dawn reported that after the center for independent living in Waterloo closed, the federal Rehab Services Administration rescinded funding and held a competition for applicants to establish a new center in Waterloo. No suitable applicants were found, or could surmount technical difficulties in the application process. RSA consulted with Iowa SILC on what option should be pursued, and the SILC recommended that the Waterloo allocation be distributed proportionately among other CILS in Iowa. This will be permanent, and there will be no Waterloo CIL for the foreseeable future.

XIII. Public Comment

Teresa Bomhoff praised the candidate forum information that had been distributed. She encouraged Taskforce members to speak out at these forums on children’s system and other redesign issues.

Teresa Robinson told the story of her successful advocacy to get her children’s small rural school to serve them rather than having them bused out to other schools. They now go to the same school as their siblings. Their school had not served kids with disabilities since 1988. The story was warmly received by other Taskforce members.

XIV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.