

**FAMILY CARE COUNCIL FLORIDA**  
**BETTY KAY CLEMENTS, CHAIRPERSON**  
**Holiday Inn Select Orlando Airport**  
**Orlando, Florida**  
**January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Betty Kay Clements, FCCF Chairperson  
Patty Houghland, Past FCCF Chairperson  
Lynn Carper, A1 Chair & FCCF Secretary  
Tracy Stewart, A2 Representative  
Susan Creek, A3 Chair  
Beverley DeStories, Suncoast West Region Rep.  
Pauline Lipps, Suncoast East Region Chair  
Donna Rauber, A7 Chair  
Sharon Berry, A8 Chair  
Jean Sherman, A10 Representative  
Phil Pearson, A12 Representative, FCCF Treasurer  
Isabel S de Martinez, A13 Chair  
Pete Wesley, A14 Representative  
Sonja Bielecki, A15 Representative

**STAFF & GUESTS**

Margaret Watkins, Suncoast West, Guest  
State Representative William Proctor, Guest  
Richard Stimson, Disabled and Alone, Guest  
Kathy Burton, Pgm. Specialist, FDOE, Guest

*The mission of the Family Care Council Florida is to advocate, educate, and empower individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, partnering with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, to bring quality services to individuals for dignity and choice.*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Clements called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She began by reviewing the FCCF information packet contents. Items include the following:

- FCCF January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Agenda
- FCCF November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Minutes
- FCC Schedule of Allotment Balance as of 1/9/2009
- FCCF letter to Representatives
- An Investigative Report on Abusive Restraint and Seclusion in Schools – National Disability Rights Network - Patty shared it is a must read
- Special Session Senate Bill 2-A – Health Services
- Contact information for State Senators and House Representatives on committees that include developmental disability legislation
- Updated 2009 Arc of Florida Priority Issues
- A fact sheet titled “A Tobacco Tax Loophole is Costing Florida Millions”

Stephanie asked Chair Clements to remind everyone to turn in any travel reimbursements on a timely basis. Also, the area FCC 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter expenditures and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter projections are due now. She will send a reminder notice.

**Review of Minutes** – Chair Clements asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. Isabelle makes a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Beverley seconds the motion. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved by consensus.

Chair Clements asked for introductions and asked that everyone share the area council they represent, any area FCC news, and a little about their loved one who is responsible for their involvement in developmental disabilities.

**II. APD UPDATE/CONFERENCE CALL** – Terri McGarrity, Sr. Mgt. Analyst Supervisor  
Chair Clements introduced Terri and asked everyone to give their name so she would know who is at the meeting. Terri shared APD has a new Deputy Director of Operations; Dave Robinson will be joining APD on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. She advised they received 2 Bureau Chief resignations, Linda Mabile and Becky McGuire.

**CDC+** – Terri shared the CDC program is doing very well. They have started a fairly detailed quality assurance initiative that will assist in assuring that peoples needs are being met and that the money is being used responsibly. Within the quality assurance workgroup they are reviewing purchasing plans and payment records. One of the key things used will be an annual participant satisfaction survey. There will be some monitoring tools focusing on how the family and individual are satisfied with the services they are receiving as well as how their outcomes are being met. That will be started in a pilot within the next few months. Terri shared they are also hoping to expand the CDC program, currently capped at a little less than 1,000. They are asking AHCA to help APD apply to CMS to remove the cap. They don't, at this time, know the number of expansion slots but she can assure us that it will be at least equal to what they have currently. They plan on piloting the enrollment in Area 2, to refine the new training enrollment approach and include the quality assurance initiative. She doesn't know how individuals will be selected for the CDC program. Jean mentioned to Terri that she hopes the program is opened up to more individuals than is on the list as more people have become informed about the program. Terri agreed and there has been talk of expanding the list or developing a lottery. Any suggestions from FCCF members would be helpful. Beverley asked who would not qualify for CDC+ program. Terri advised people living in a group home situation.

**Tier Programs** - Terri advised APD has started the hearings. To date they have had 3 hearings. They have an additional 22 scheduled. They are continuing to process and reporting to DOAH all the paperwork they receive. There have been about 1,000 denials. That is due to people not having their paperwork in order, etc. They are being sent a fairly detailed list of instructions on how to re-submit information. Once they receive the denial with instructions, they'll have 20 days to re-submit. Terri shared APD is doing everything possible to make sure the people have due process and to make sure they have followed all the procedural rules for due process. Chair Clements asked Terri if all the letters have been sent out as so many have received absolutely no notification of status. Terri was under the assumption that all those letters have been sent out. She will advise legal of this. Patty asked if the judge has a certain amount of time to make a decision. Terri advised yes, the judge has, she believes, 60 days to make a decision. She had heard from several people in the office who have been called as witnesses that the hearing officer is very knowledgeable and seemed to be sensitive to everyone's needs. She mentioned that Kathy Bedell indicated they should be hearing some outcomes in about a month. That is a recommended order, not the final order. Patty asked to clarify the order process. According to her, they issue a recommended order and that order goes to APD. 99% of the time, APD will go with that order but APD has the option not to, is that correct? Terri advised they do have the option but she doesn't know of any instance where they haven't followed the recommended orders.

**Cost Rebasing** - Terri advised they are continuing with the cost rebasing. The letters were sent around Christmas time and those efforts are proceeding. She shared if anyone has or hears of any questions to contact her and she'll get answers for us. Several indicated there are issues with the math and timeframe not adding up to make the issue very confusing. The confusion appears to be in the letter that has been written. Terri advised she would get clarification and pass on to Chair Clements. Jean asked Terri about the 5% reduction proposed by the legislature during special session. Will it result in new cost plans for everyone once the rate cut goes through. Terri advised APD will be operating as if this 5% reduction is going to go through. However, until the Governor either signs or vetoes, they will not be taking action on it. The other piece that may figure into this is some of the federal stimulus package that is happening may assist APD to be able to adjust the state's FMAP, the % they receive from the Federal Government. Therefore, it may offset so they don't have to take any action on this.

**FCCF Budget** - Phil Pearson had some questions for Stephanie regarding the FCCF expenditure report. He shared them with Terri who will pass along to Stephanie, as she was not on the line. He asked that Stephanie provide answers via E-mail. Terri advised they are continuing to request Stephanie's participation in person at the meetings but so far have been unsuccessful. Chair Clements emphasized how important it is for FCCFlorida participants to have direct contact with APD Central Office staff. The bond between FCC's and APD is what helps us to go out and support the agency. Terri shared how important she believes it is to have APD representation at the table. Terri mentioned that she would discuss this with Dave Robinson when he takes on the Director of Operations position.

**Family CAFÉ** - Beverley expressed her concerns with regards to APD contributing a lot of dollars to support Family CAFÉ. She shared that Family CAFÉ has done a wonderful job over the years of educating families but its success is being abused by families accepting scholarship monies but attending theme parks in the area instead of CAFÉ workshops. With all of the cuts consumers and families have to endure at this time, the APD fiscal support of CAFÉ needs to end, especially in these hard times. Terri advised she would pass this along to Director Debeaugrine.

Chair Clements thanked Terri for calling in and sharing important information with the council. Terri shared how much she misses everyone. She will provide Chair Clements with answers to questions raised during the meeting. She suggested that when Dave Robinson takes over, maybe they can arrange for him to meet with FCCF.

**III. 2009-10 LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION** - State Representative William L. Proctor  
Chair Clements asked Phil Pearson to introduce the Guest Speaker, Representative Proctor. Phil advised that several months ago Area 12 FCC decided to contact their area legislators, both Senators and House Representatives. He had the opportunity to meet with Rep. Proctor and was very pleased with their discussion which included talk about the wait list, funding and service cuts. Rep. Proctor shared the importance of creating a united message, we need to form a legislative committee and then we need to mobilize the masses. There are 50,000 people either receiving services or on the wait list for services in the state of Florida. If they all descended on the legislature and demanded it, they'd get it. Phil invited Rep. Proctor and he agreed to speak to our council. Phil asked Rep. Proctor to give the council an update on the state budget as the special session just ended. What can we expect and how do we more effectively advocate for individuals with developmental disabilities so they can receive the services they need? It's of

utmost importance to all parents and family members caring for their loved one that when they die their loved one is taken care of. Phil turned the meeting over to Rep. Proctor.

Representative Proctor shared there are many ways to approach the role of advocacy but his suggestion has been tried and worked on a number of occasions. He shared his personal experience when he was first appointed President of Florida College. They had an informally organized independent college organization. They were struggling to make some changes in state higher education policy. He began as their legislative chairman in 1974 and stayed in that capacity until he went to the State Board of Education in 2001. He was lobbying long before being elected to the state legislature. Following are his suggestions:

- Establish a legislative committee. The larger the group, the wider dispersed it is the more critical it is that you have a legislative committee. He recommends five to seven people on the committee but it's really up to the organization. The key element is they must have the time to commit. He shared his committee met once a month and even more often during the session. If the legislative committee isn't active, the lobbying isn't going to work. Rep. Proctor shared the session ends in early May. The committee should meet by mid to late May and assess what was done wrong during the session. Most often you'll not accomplish all your objectives. If you accomplish say one out of three you did very well. It's important to do a re-appraisal of the session to determine what was done right and what was done wrong. Then you need to adopt your goals for the upcoming session. He recommends no more than three and put in priority order.
- Determine who the KEY legislators are that focus on your issues. It's not hard to do unless it's after an election when committees haven't been determined yet. It's very important to keep in contact with the key legislators on a regular basis. His suggestion since FCCF is a statewide organization that every House Representative and Senator should be contacted. Phil asked how to determine who the key legislators are. Rep. Proctor advised it would be anyone involved on healthcare and appropriations committees. Leadership is always key, Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, appropriations chairman, ways and means in the Senate.
- Assign one person to each legislator. Make sure each legislator has at least one person assigned to him/her.
- Personally visit with the legislator in the summer. Most important is to get a pledge of their support. If you wait until legislative committees begin meeting in October or November, it's too late.
- Create a one page sheet that includes name of committee person, name of organization and brief description naming importance of the 3 priorities.
- Share outcome of visit with Legislative Committee. Did you get a pledge of support unqualified, did you get a tentative pledge of support, or did you get brushed off. That is critical information as you go into the next session. He advised not to get disappointed if a legislator states, "he will support if he can". That's better than a no. Basically it means that the legislator may not be on a healthcare committee or appropriations committee but is interested. If he/she has a chance to talk to legislators on those committees will do so.
- Determine if your priorities require appropriation action or statutory change. Appropriations action requires someone on the committee to lead that action for you. Statutory change requires a legislative bill and a Senate and House sponsor. Those sponsors are key and more effective if with the majority party. Once you have a sponsor

then you must follow up with every legislator you've contacted asking them to be a co-sponsor. Co-sponsorships are important as they are obligated to vote for it. The work done in the summer is the most important and where you win or lose a lot of times. It's important to know how many legislators going into the session are on your side and who they are.

- Testify before committees working on developmental disability issues. Committee appearances are very important. When testifying, talk to the committee, don't read to them. Speak from your heart, speak from your commitment is more effective.
- The legislative committee and anyone else who would join them need to call on the Senators and House Representatives early in the session. Ask for their pledge of support. Include a brief explanation of bill or appropriation, name of sponsor and list of co-sponsors.
- Need to monitor the legislative process. You must know when your bill is going before a committee. This is where a lobbyist can be of assistance.
- It is very important to be represented at committee hearings. It is too late to wait for the session. Monitor the committee meetings as they go through. If it's a bill, it must be heard by all the committees of reference. Once it has passed all the committees it goes on the special order agenda to be heard on the floor.
- Both House and Senate bills must be identical when passed. If one has an amendment then the two bills have to be reconciled. Timing is of utmost importance. Monitoring of the bills must be done to make sure they are compatible through the whole process.
- If going for appropriations, don't forget the Governor's office. The Governor builds his budget based on the revenue estimating conference in November. It's important to contact the Governor early if you're going for appropriations because you want it in his budget.
- At election time, it's important to support any legislator who has been of assistance in your efforts or has someone within their family with a disability. You can campaign for him by making phone calls, walk the neighborhood for him, etc. If you know of a real champion then support him.
- It can be very effective to take your loved one with a disability with you as long as he/she can be reasonably calm and allow you the chance to make your point. It's important the legislator see the person with a disability but depending on behaviors a picture can be just as effective.

**Legislative Special Session** - Rep. Proctor shared there was a text published by the Leroy Collins Institute at Florida State University in 2004 titled "Tough Choices" that predicted the bust in the housing market. Included in the report was a survey with questions such as if there was going to be new taxes dedicated to education, what would be the level of support. It was about 28% statewide. Another question dealt with new taxes dedicated to healthcare. The level of support was about the same. Since then state/county amendments that were to lower taxes passed but those that would have increased taxes failed. The report was updated a year ago. The most profound statement made by Sen. Kaiser was that historically Florida is a low tax state. The question is do we want to stay a low tax state and if so will we be satisfied with the services that will be purchased. Rep Proctor shared that when the regular session begins in March, 2009 it has been estimated the legislature will have to cut an additional 3 to 6 billion dollars over and above the 2.3 billion cut during special session. Rep. Proctor's opinion is that the cigarette tax will pass. He believes most of that will go to healthcare. There is talk and research on an

internet sales tax but nothing confirmed to date. He would favor one as it's not a new tax but a tax loophole. His opinion is that eliminating the tax exemptions doesn't amount to that much. Rep. Proctor advised there is no good news with regards to the budget. The last report he received indicated the economy would begin to change in April 2010.

Phil asked about term limits. A major problem is when new legislators are elected they have no clue about developmental disabilities. He asked Rep. Proctor what he would recommend as the best way to approach this problem. Rep. Proctor advised to appear before the committees that work on developmental disability issues and bring the person who is manageable but is a clear example of the problem. Phil asked Rep. Proctor before he met with him, how many people had come to him advocating for persons with developmental disabilities. Rep. Proctor replied 2. He shared we are not aggressive. Susan shared this has been one of the most helpful talks. It's great for everyone in attendance to have some direction because we are not making any progress with the legislature.

Chair Clements thanked Rep. Proctor for attending the meeting and giving the audience some much appreciated advice. Everyone agreed with their applause. Chair Clements thanked Phil for contacting Rep. Proctor and inviting him to attend our meeting. Everyone agreed with their applause.

#### **IV. DISABLED AND ALONE – Richard Stimson, Southeast Regional Director**

Phil shared his families concerns and fears with regards to the question that lingers on the minds of most that have children or family members with developmental disabilities. The question being, "Who will take over the care of my loved one when I die". The state of the APD program and the waiting list for services doesn't provide much comfort with regards to long term, permanent care/planning for our loved ones when parents/family members are gone. Phil did some research and found an organization known as "Disabled and Alone". He contacted Richard Stimson, its Southeast Regional Director. Disabled and Alone is a New York Corporation whose total function is to act like a parent/advocate when parents have died. Phil did a great deal of research on the corporation and it met his criteria so they have signed on with the them. Phil introduced Richard. Richard began by providing some background information on his journey and how he became involved with Disabled and Alone. He is a minister for an organization known as The Special Gathering. It's a church sponsored ministry for mentally challenged persons of all faiths. It also provides social activities, pastoral care and third part advocacy for its members. There are eight similar organizations up and down the Florida Coastline serving 400-450 people. He shared how he would meet with parents who were planning their loved ones future when they would no longer be around by establishing a will and to learn that if any money were left to the child, he/she would lose their state funded benefits. They would then contact their lawyer who would advise them the need to establish a special needs trust. The problem might arise that there was no one within the family who could be named the trustee. The advice from the lawyer would be to name a bank as trustee. A bank is not going to provide the kind of love and care the family expects for their loved one. Many families would contact Richard asking him if he would be their loved one's trustee. He, for several reasons, thought this not a good idea. In doing some research he found Disabled and Alone which provided the perfect solution for families in need of a trustee or advocate who would look out for the individuals needs. He advised the organization does have pooled trusts. They welcome already established Special Needs Trusts. They are not financial planners. Disabled and Alone proved to be for many families a more stable organization with regards to their loved ones future. The family

pays for Disabled and Alone services. They pay up front \$3,000 to join which pays for the entire planning process. Then, at the death of the parents, the allocated monies to Disabled and Alone will pay for the services of an advocate.

The primary selling point of Disabled and Alone is that they don't have case managers, they have a personal advocate. A case manager has a case load of clients. A personal advocate is one person for each individual with a disability. The family goes through an involved decision making process to find the advocate most suitable for their loved one. Richard provided an example of how the organization works with establishing a personal advocate to take over when parent dies. They do arrange for a temporary back up person in case the advocate is ill, out of town, etc. He emphasized how important it is for everyone to establish a special needs trust and do financial planning. Not everyone needs the services of Disabled and Alone. But, if you do, it's probably one of the things you need most. Richard shared his twin brother is disabled. He lives in a group home and will more than likely outlive him. Richard is a member of Disabled and Alone because he wants a personal advocate there for his brother, especially when he is older, needs more medical attention and is placed in a nursing home. Richard shared that because the Florida part of the organization has grown so much, he is unable to continue in his role as Southeast Regional Director. He mentioned the importance of the planning process taken on by the family once they decide to go with Disabled and Alone. This process gives a voice to what the dead parent would have said if they were still alive. The personal advocate needs to learn the Mom's heart and must learn about and become loved by the person with the disability. Richard was asked about the process of finding a personal advocate. He advised they take their time in finding the right person. They stress the need for compatibility and work hard to find the right match. Phil shared the age of the personal advocate is also important as you want someone younger than the parents so they will be around when parents die. They chose a personal advocate a few years younger than Phil but he could die before the son and so they know now they will have a transition later on from him to a younger person. Disabled and Alone requires the Special Needs Trust amount to be at least \$100,000. The trust can be any amount over that and the monies would be used for the purposes approved by the parents. There are three payment options to consider after the initial \$3,000 down payment. They are:

- Establish the Special Needs Trust with \$100,000 when the contract is signed.
- Payment of an annual fee which currently is about \$4,000. The fee can be increased over time due to inflation.
- Keep connected which doesn't cost anything. The personal advocate will visit twice a year. Richard suggests the visits be at the support plan meeting and a family event.

Richard shared Disabled and Alone in many circumstances does lose money during the time period they are involved with the disabled person. One thing asked is at the death of the disabled person, parents include Disabled and Alone as a beneficiary in their will. The upfront request based on the original \$100,000 is \$50,000. Any amount over that is welcomed. Richard was asked about accountability. Who monitors the personal advocate to make sure he/she is doing there job. Richard advised there are regional directors responsible for doing that.

Richard thanked everyone for allowing him to speak on behalf of Disabled and Alone. It's an organization needed by many parents/family members because it provides a solution to a subject that keeps many of us awake at nights. Everyone thanked Richard with their applause.

## **V. FCCF BUSINESS**

**Treasurer's Report** – Phil reviewed the list of councils who have and have not seen their transfers to FCCF documented. For those councils who have not made their transfer as yet, please contact your area FCC Liaison. Chair Clements advised the council does not have any budget reports to share from Central Office.

## **VI. FLORIDA BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SERVICES**

Kathy Burton – Program Specialist with Florida Dept. of Education  
Chair Clements introduced Kathy. Kathy provided everyone with a packet of information that includes:

- A pamphlet titled “Understanding the Florida Alternate Assessment
- Summary of updated BEESS Rule Changes
- A booklet titled “Disability History and Awareness” – A Resource Guide
- A copy of the Family Care Council powerpoint presentation titled “Highlights from Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services”.
- A copy of an upcoming parents survey conducted by the BEESS
- The Department of Education Administrative Rule language
- A list with contact names of the BEESS Federal and State General Revenue 2008-2009 Discretionary Projects.

Kathy began her presentation by sharing there has been an explosion of Administrative Rule changes. Most are a result of updating languages with regards to IDEA regulations. A list of the rules is included in the copy of her powerpoint presentation and the handout in the packet of information. Phil asked if they have anything to do with or impact with regards to adult education. Kathy advised they have workforce education for that purpose. They work with workforce education in planning the transition to colleges and community colleges and accessibility issues. Phil's concern is if anyone within the department oversees or monitors the adult education programs within the counties. Kathy advised that would be a different department. She will find out who is the contact person and give to Chair Clements who will pass along to her FCCF E-list. She reviewed the rule change that changes the rule title from “Special Programs for Students Who Are Mentally Handicapped” to “Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Intellectual Disabilities”. She also reviewed the rule change titled “Exceptional Education Eligibility for Students with Specific Learning Disabilities”. They are moving away from the formula IQ discrepancy model to providing interventions via a problem-solving method and measure the student's response to those interventions in order to make decisions and match resources, services, and interventions to student needs. Another rule change pertains to removing the multiple choice writing requirements in the FCAT until 2012 while they redo the whole writing portion of the test. Kathy provided the audience with information pertaining to the newly developed program titled “Response to Intervention (RTI)”, a process designed to maximize student achievement. It also creates a method to deliver effective interventions earlier and efficiently. Its focus is on outcomes and student progress. It's a systematic, problem solving process. She shared the BEESS is now a part of the Next Generation SSS (Sunshine State Standards) which allows students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general education curriculum. When alternate assessments are done or they're looking at children, they are really trying to move them as much as possible into the general curriculum. She provided information on transition programming which includes family involvement as a very key component in trying to get information to parents about beginning the transition plan at age 14. Phil suggested that within

the transition process they need to be more realistic especially regarding the waiting list and lack of APD supports after the child has left the school system. A part of the transition process should be advising parents of the need to get involved in the Family Care Council. Susan mentioned that Vocational Rehabilitation is supposed to be taking on a responsibility while the child is in his/her last couple of years of high school. They are supposed to be doing assessments and helping with transition planning after high school. In many situations they consider individuals with developmental disabilities too low functioning but it's still their obligation to be involved in the process. Again a major problem is lack of funding. Jean mentioned that all these policies and procedures are developed on the state level but what assures that the individual school systems principals and teachers follow through with what they are supposed to be doing. Kathy mentioned they are a school and district based management system. She indicated DOE can tell the schools what they can't do as far as violating rules but they can't tell them they have to abide by these policies. Every one of these projects, the school has to invite them in. Kathy shared BEESS does a yearly survey which is sent to a selection of parents. Last year they sent out almost 200,000. They received a 9% return of surveys. Chair Clements asked if the results are compiled in a report and if so is it available to the public. Kathy advised yes and it should be released in the next few weeks. She shared Spanish and Creole languages will be included in the next survey. The survey will be available on the internet. She shared some future calendar events taking place in October and November, 2009. She advised its important for everyone to watch for the progress on the rule changes. Kathy mentioned upon receipt of their legislative platform she will E-mail it to Chair Clements. Chair Clements thanked Kathy for her presentation. Everyone agreed with their applause.

## **VII. FCCF NEW BUSINESS**

**Nominating Committee** – Chair Clements advised the need to name a nominating committee to select a slate of officers to be presented at the March meeting. Voting will take place at the May meeting. She is appointing to the nominating committee, Patty Houghland, Jean Sherman and Pauline Lipps. Each has agreed to participate on the committee.

## **VIII. WORKING GROUP REPORT**

Chair Clements shared what took place at the working group meeting. They try to do as much as possible during the working group meeting so that the business meeting will run smoothly and keep within time limits. Chair Clements indicated that most attendees were present at the working group meeting. She really encourages everyone to attend these meetings.

**Legislative Platform draft** - Chair Clements passed out to everyone copies of the updated draft that Lynn worked on last evening. She asked everyone to review it. The council needs to vote on the platform at this time. Phil makes a motion to accept the platform as is. Pauline seconds the motion. Discussion follows. It was suggested to put a line at the bottom of the page. It was decided to change the first topic titled Wait List to End the Wait list. It was decided to change the third topic titled APD to Maintain APD. Changes were made to the first and third bullet items under the topic Protect Health and Safety. Chair Clements advised there will be “talking points” prepared to provide additional information per topic. It was decided to include a date of approval centered at the bottom of the page. Phil suggested the discussion has provided good input for Lynn, the writer to make any changes to format and dialogue. Beverley makes a motion to stop discussion. Sharon seconds the motion. The motion was approved by consensus. Phil makes a motion to accept the platform with changes. Pauline seconds the motion. The

motion was approved by consensus. Chair Clements mentioned FCC area councils have the option to approve the FCCF legislative platform and present as their area legislative platform. **ARC of Florida Legislative Platform** - Chair Clements asked everyone to look at the Talking points attached to the ARC Legislative Platform. Under Dedicated Revenue Streams they are planning on writing a bill that would create a study to be conducted where parents could buy into a prepaid services plan offered by the state in order to assist their children with developmental disabilities in the years after high school graduation. It would be similar to the current Florida Prepaid College Fund. Patty advised if the bill is passed it would be the FCCFlorida role to have representation on the committee looking at this study.

**Group Home Transition** - Chair Clements advised that FCCFlorida has been asked if we as family members can create some guidelines for a safe housing transition for individuals who may be moved from one group home to another. She shared APD is very concerned about this. They are faced with the issue right now as some group homes are closing. There needs to be a policy in place that puts as priority the needs and supports of the individual so the transition from one home to another becomes a smooth transition for the individual. FCCF has been asked to assist in providing to APD some guidance on how they should do this. This can be used to help the agency in establishing some policy and procedures. Chair Clements asked for ideas to be E-mailed to her. She will compile into a draft document for the councils review.

**Familycaregiver.org** – Isabel shared that she came across a website devoted to people who are caregivers. The membership is free. It is a national organization. They represent family caregivers in public forums and on Capitol Hill to educate policymakers about changes needed in healthcare and social support systems so they are more responsive to the needs of families.

**FCC and Wait List** - Tracy was concerned that people on the wait list are not learning about the Family Care councils. Chair Clements assured everyone that APD has seen to it that all intake coordinators mention FCC and provide to applicants the FCCF brochure. She will check with Central Office and asked that each area council chair check with their area program office to make sure this is being done.

**Working Group Meeting** - Tracy asked if there was any way the meeting could be moved to a later time such as a working dinner meeting. It's difficult for her to attend the meeting at 3:00. Chair Clements mentioned they could set up the spider phone for scheduling a conference call at the normal time of meeting. Chair Clements advised they would think about it. Phil mentioned the agenda is sent out prior to the meeting so any ideas from people who can't attend could be made a part of the meeting.

**Upcoming Events** - Pauline shared their region is having a Financial Fitness Expo on January 31<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 – 1:00 in St. Petersburg.. She would be happy to send the information to anyone interested. It includes learning about employment resources, SSA work incentives, earned income tax credit, financial educational tools and resources, pre-tax preparation, home ownership, foreclosure prevention services, etc.

She shared there will be a Wrights Law Seminar in Bradenton sponsored by FND of Manatee/Sarasota County.

Also, she mentioned that Paul and Debbie Wulf have created a CD on the importance of good hygiene. They want to share this with people living in group homes and any agencies providing residential services. They are available for speaking at local meetings.

Chair Clements mentioned that Richard Stimson had left some folders on Disabled and Alone for people to take and share with their council members.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the council, Chair Clements adjourned the meeting at 3:00.

The next meeting will be held on March 21st, 2009 at The Holiday Inn Select.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

**Donna Rauber,  
Florida Institute on Community and Disability (FICD)**