



Terri Cantrell
State Ombudsman

STATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 23, 2024
10:00 am – 12:00 pm EST

STATE COUNCIL MEMBERS			
Vacant, Northwest (1)	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Wanda Harrison, South Central (17)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marshall Kapp, Panhandle (2) CHAIR	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jane Horowitz, Pinellas (6)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sharon Lauter, North Central (3)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Patrick Cannan, Palm Beach (11)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vacant, Withlacoochee (4)	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Valerie Collins, Treasure Coast (16)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Terry Lonczak, North Central (7)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rita Duncan, Southwest (10)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vacant, Brevard (18)	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Paul Wilson, Broward	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diane Mongelli, First Coast South (15)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Louis L.I. Grossman, North Dade	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vacant, First Coast (5)	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Charles Garavaglia, South Dade (14)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vacant, East Central (9)	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Mary Darling, At-Large Member	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jan White, West Central (8)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kevin Cronin, At-Large Member	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

OTHER OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES	
Terri Cantrell	State Ombudsman
Renee Harkins	Legal Advocate, Central Office
Alice Terry	Government Operations Consultant II / Central
Audra Peoples	Staff Director / Public Relations Coordinator
Angela Andrews	State Council Liaison / Legal Assistant/Central
Deborah Gerrell	Panhandle District Ombudsman Manager
Lisa Dale	First Coast South District Ombudsman Manager
Cindy Johnston	North Central
GUESTS	

Meeting called to order – Chair, Marshall Kapp

1. **Welcome** – State Council Chair, Marshall Kapp
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Quorum Established
 - c. Approval of April Minutes

- d. Marshall Kapp Appoints Vice Chair, Jane Horowitz, to serve as Vice Chair.

Council Members Discussion/Q&A

- 2. **Supervised Voting** (Marshall Kapp) – encouraging volunteers to speak to administrators or social service directors about provisions for those wanting to exercise their privilege to vote.

Celebrating Advocacy (Kevin Cronin) – Looking for ways to do this in the public sector. Who are our partners, and who should they be? Encouraging residents to be a part of their community and participate in their precincts. Voter registration is an important aspect. Suggests this is a platform to begin to learn and continue to explore how to work with partners. NHs and ALFs have a responsibility to conduct and make sure that they encourage individuals to sign up. AARP is very interested in this population as well. There are a few places that already have supervised voting on site. There has been a significant drop in mail-in ballots as well as other aspects that keep the older population from voting.

- 3. **Question from South Dade Council:** (Charles Garavaglia)

- a. **Generators**

Ombudsmen have had some questions about this. Smaller facilities normally have Home Depot type generators sitting with gas cans, etc. Is there any guidance at the state level about generators?

(Kevin Cronin) It is a risk certainly, but the two groups that are responsible for that are the fire department and AHCA. This is a regulatory issue.

(Charles Garavaglia) Can you mention the issue if you see it to the Administrator?

(Renee Harkins) Yes. It is a relevant safety issue. Escalate through the proper chain of command.

(Marshall Kapp) If a resident complains, then that would be our job.

- b. **Storage of oxygen tanks**

There is a lot of conversation about the storage of oxygen tanks.

(Renee Harkins) This would be like the generator issue.

c. Feedback on the form - license.

There is not a spot to comment on license that needs to be renewed.

(Marshall Kapp) Putting it in general comments would be the best way to do it.

(Renee Harkins): Diandra has been taking questions about the new database.

(Paul Wilson) We put it in the comments section, but of course if there is some out-of-date license, then it can be put in the comments section.

Old Business

None.

New Business

4. (Marshall Kapp) The State Council would like to set up notices far in advance for State Council Meetings. Summer, Spring, Winter meetings, etc. Besides the in-person meetings, we can plan ahead on the meeting dates. Jane is taking the lead on this. It is our hope to begin picking a specific date each quarter that goes on year after year. Jane is sending out a survey for everyone. Please fill it out.
5. (Marshall Kapp) Status of the Program website. The dates of meetings are woefully absent and out of date.

(Audra Peoples) – the IT team is doing updates, perhaps between August and December. Unfortunately, our website is not getting an overhaul. I am checking with the Web Team. There is not going to be an overhaul from an organizational standpoint. We are getting more modifications on our website. I am working with them to prioritize our program.

(Marshall Kapp) - The concern was not the design or looking for an overhaul. The concern is that the information is updated currently. There should have current information on the website.

(Audra Peoples) – I am currently working on getting those updated.

Workgroup Updates.

(Marshall Kapp) The individual workgroups used to meet a week before each State Council Meeting. We would like them to go back to that to have a regular system with these meetings.

6. **Advocacy and Legislative** (Kevin Cronin) We have been inactive this summer but will pick back up soon.
7. **Training and Education** (Rita Duncan) We have not met recently.
8. **RRR** (Audra Peoples) We only have three members currently, so we did not meet this quarter. We are planning to resume the recruitment campaign.

Other Questions

Question concerning Service Animals: (Terry Lonczak) What is our role if any that a resident claims the animal is Emotional Support Animal or Support Animal? Does the resident have to prove that this is a Service Animal?

(Sharon Lauter) With a Service Animal they will have a certificate. If it is a bona fide service animal, then they are required to allow access.

(Kevin Cronin) It is only dogs that are a protected class. There is some legislation on this issue.

Kevin Cronin will send this to Renee Harkins for review.

(Marshall Kapp) The trade associations may have policies that may be worth exploring as well.

Question Concerning Medical Marijuana (Terry Lonczak)

(Renee Harkins) There are tinctures and ingredients without the THC. I would think that if it is a prescription, then the resident should be allowed.

(Marshall Kapp) It is still illegal under federal law.

(Patrick Cannan) – Recently a resident was being disciplined because she was smoking marijuana, but it was prescribed. The facility there has a no smoking

policy, but they were able to resolve the issue by allowing the resident to sit farther away from the smoking area.

State Ombudsman Report

1. Photos in facilities

For now let us put the photo piece to bed for a while, until we decide all of the repercussions. For now, do not take photos. It is a very complicated and complex topic.

Terri will speak with the Regional Managers and the District Managers at the next meeting and send an email to make it more formal.

2. Legislators

Speaking to legislators is to be left to Central Office.

Renee Harkins will send an email out regarding this.

(Marshall Kapp) You can have any legislative contact as a private citizen, but we are not to identify ourselves as a representative of the Ombudsman Program.

(Marshall Kapp) It is our understanding that there is a possibility to work with the legislator to amend the State Council role.

(Terri Cantrell) The Director of Legislative Affairs took the lead on this and changed some things.

Terri will get with the DLA to find out what the changes look like. Terri recommends having a separate meeting regarding this.

(Marshall Kapp) – LTC Home assignments. How has the recruitment process impacted the numbers going into homes? There are some facilities that are not getting visited.

(Terri Cantrell) Some of these areas are getting back filled with some more part-time positions in the north areas. Also working on some OPS positions in South Florida.

(Audra Peoples) Different parts of the states have a lot of challenges with recruiting. Little pockets throughout the state – like rural areas – we did target those areas. In addition, we are doing a statewide campaign, but when we

have more information about areas filling up, we move those dollars to other areas.

(Jane Horowitz) – Asked about RTZ.

(Terri Cantrell)– There is a learning curve with the new program. Staff have been working with RTZ for about six weeks. As staff becomes much more familiar with RTZ and it is fully functional then it will be available to all volunteers. This introduction for volunteers should be in August.

Terri has ordered tablets and headsets for each office that can be used.

(Terri Cantrell) There are five state council slots that are empty. This is something that is concerning.

In 2008-2009 we had 66 employees in our program and we had 50,000 fewer beds and currently we only have 30 FTEs. We are really focusing on getting those numbers back up.

It is going to take another legislative session to really see where the gaps are in the program.

Our next consultation meeting for the north area with Jamie is going to be in August in Jacksonville.

Marshall thanks the State Ombudsman for her report.

Marshall Public Comments:

None.

Marshall Kapp thanks everyone for their participation and says to expect communications and respond in a timely manner.

(Louis Grossman) – May not be returning to the council after his term expires. He is grateful to have had this opportunity and has been inspired to see the proactive actions of this council and the enthusiasm of the members and has learned a great deal. He appreciates the opportunity to be a part of the council.

Adjournment: 11:39