

**Summary of Proceedings - July 7, 2008**  
**Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC) Meeting**

**MISCC Meeting Participants**

**Diana Jones Ritter, Chair**

*Commissioner, New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*

**Deborah VanAmerongen**

*Commissioner, New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal*

**Karen Carpenter-Palumbo**

*Commissioner, New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services*

**Nancy Martinez**

*Director of Strategic Planning and Policy Development (representing Gladys Carrion, Commissioner, New York State Office of Children and Family Services)*

**Michael F. Hogan, PhD**

*Commissioner, New York State Office of Mental Health*

**Dr. Rebecca Cort**

*Deputy Commissioner, VESID (representing Richard Mills, Commissioner, New York State Education Department)*

**Marcus Harazin**

*Deputy Director (representing Michael Burgess, Director, New York State Office for the Aging)*

**Jane Lynch**

*Chief Operating Officer, Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities*

**Stuart Rosenblatt**

*Director, Division of Planning and Policy (representing Richard F. Daines, MD, Commissioner, New York State Department of Health)*

**Ron Epstein**

*Director, Statewide Policy Bureau (representing Astrid C. Glynn, Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation)*

**Public Members**

**Debra Holland**

*Government Affairs Associate (representing Carol Raphael, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Visiting Nurse Service of New York)*

**Constance Laymon**

*Chief Executive Officer, Consumer Directed Choices*

**Patricia Fratangelo**

*Executive Director, Onondaga Community Living*

**Karen Oates**

*President and CEO of the Mental Health Association of Rockland County*

**Henry M. Sloma**

*Commissioner, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority*

Commissioner Ritter welcomed everyone to the Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC) meeting.

Commissioner Ritter notified the group that Kim Hill was not in attendance because she had a sick child and wished her well with care giving.

She shared with the group that Harvey Rosenthal would not be present due to sickness and she wished him well. It was noted that the day was Harvey's birthday and everyone wished him a happy birthday.

Commissioner Ritter thanked Michael Seereiter, Program Director for Mental Hygiene Services for Governor Paterson, for attending the MISCC meeting. Commissioner Ritter noted that Michael Seereiter is MISCC's support from the Governor and an advocate for MISCC.

She said that she would like to announce that for the first time, thanks to Commissioner Carrion and the Office of Children and Family Services, that MISCC would provide Braille translation for many of the day's presentations.

Commissioner Ritter stated that in January she spoke about the former administration's vision to transform the human services delivery systems so that persons with disabilities would have the same opportunities to live with dignity in their home communities as do the rest of the citizens. Commissioner Ritter wanted everyone to know that under Governor David Paterson, MISCC will continue with the same fervor, the same dedication and the same mission.

Commissioner Ritter reiterated that each of the MISCC member agencies have established a stakeholder work group to advise each agency as it develops, implements and annually updates its most integrated setting implementation plan.

She stated that the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and the Office of Children and Family Services will present their stakeholder work group updates at this meeting.

Commissioner Ritter shared that additionally MISCC will receive reports from the three work groups established to tackle the cross-issues related to MISCC, which are housing, employment and transportation, and also to facilitate links between the work groups. Each of the work group will provide input to the most integrated setting implementation plan to be presented to the MISCC members at the October 8, 2008 meeting for review and discussion. She added that the MISCC Plan will be completed and submitted to the Governor and the Legislature by December 16, 2008.

Commissioner Ritter also stated members from the New York Native American Community would be presenting today.

She informed the group at the last meeting, at the request of the advocates, the discussion period was moved to a point earlier in the agenda. Today the constituent period will be moved toward the end of the agenda so that after the group speaks about its reporting mechanism it can have input from the advocacy community.

Commissioner Ritter thanked Stuart Rosenblatt, who is new in his position at the Department of Health. She shared with the group that he is a long-term advocate and friend of people with disabilities and has accomplished much in his career.

She welcomed Jane Lynch in her new role at the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.

Commissioner Ritter reviewed the action items from the previous meeting and she noted the following agenda items:

- John Allen, Office of Mental Health, would invite someone from the Native American Community to present at the MISCC.
- MISCC Plan and how to move forward and how to report.
- To reshape the MISCC agenda so there are more "people" outcomes.
- Ensuring that MISCC membership is replaced and reenergized and that vacant positions are filled.

Commissioner Karen Carpenter-Palumbo of OASAS informed those present that OASAS is one of the largest treatment agencies in the country. She stated that New York State has 2.5 million people with an addiction. She reiterated that this equates to one in seven New Yorkers with an addiction.

Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo stated that although OASAS' job is very complicated, the policy is very simple. She noted the three-part plan of prevention, treatment and recovery.

Prevention: She stated that OASAS invests more than \$100 million in schools and communities annually to try to prevent drug, alcohol and the growing addiction of gambling.

Treatment: She stated that OASAS serves more than 110,000 people every day in treatment across New York State. She further noted that OASAS provides the best quality-of-care program similar to the Department of Health in the physical health arena. OASAS wants to be sure that the behavioral health entities have the same quality standards.

Recovery: She stated that addiction is a chronic illness and has to be treated over a significant period of time to promote long-term recovery. To be successful, a person in recovery needs a stable house, a place to live, a job or education that satisfies them.

Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo reported that OASAS created bureaus for housing, employment and recovery, which were not previously in place. She introduced Lureen McNeill, Director of the Bureau of Recovery Services.

McNeill said that in order to build a premier system, OASAS had to be able to move to a place where people in recovery are able to sustain long-term recovery and to really enjoy the benefits of recovery.

McNeill stated that OASAS has a strategic plan for developing recovery services and one of the first things done was to develop a recovery implementation team. McNeill stated that this team is made up of persons in recovery, representatives from the recovery treatment system as well as other systems. It includes strong representation from the child welfare system, the courts and the mental health systems as well as the faith based systems. McNeill stated that representatives from key areas in OASAS are included on the team, which is made up of more than 70 people. Meetings are held quarterly. McNeill reported that the team is broken down into subgroups, which are putting into place the foundational elements needed for the recovery system. She indicated that OASAS has had focus groups all over New York State with persons in recovery and families in recovery. McNeill reported on the Integration Subcommittee. She spoke about the integration of recovery into the prevention/treatment systems and the development of recovery centers. McNeill stated that the funding available for recovery centers is so small that OASAS must work with the larger systems.

McNeill stated work is being done on policy and practices and that a work group on data to find out about people who are in recovery has been established. She predicts that OASAS will be looking at a lot of things while building a data system.

She said that Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo will be heading a national effort where states will come together and do a survey to find out just how people recover and what their needs are. McNeill pointed out that the first Recovery Conference will be held in Albany at the Crowne Plaza on September 14 and 15, 2008.

Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo spoke about OASAS non-partisan, civic engagement to strengthen advocacy around recovery. She shared with the MISCC that every work group OASAS has is chaired by somebody from the agency and another person from the field (consumer, provider or advocate).

Commissioner Ritter asked if there were any comments or questions from the group.

Dr. Karen Oates stated that she was always advocating for children and asked if there was going to be a subcommittee on kid's services. Dr. Oates stated that dually licensed clinics were something being sought in the future.

Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo assured Dr. Oates that children were a priority. She further shared that OASAS has a point of contact for children, Maria Morris-Groves, and that is integrated with everything OASAS does.

Commissioner Ritter commented on the focus group on data, and stated that was something everyone was trying to get better at across all the stakeholder groups.

Commissioner Ritter introduced Nancy White Martinez, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). Martinez stated that OCFS was the agency whose responsibility spans a number of areas. She commented that OCFS funds and supervises locally provided child welfare and adult protective services; funds and license child care daycare programs and regulates daycare programs as well as funding and supervising County Youth Bureaus. Martinez said that OCFS operates the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

She indicated that it is OCFS' plan to have the agency's Advisory Board to be the overarching MISCC stakeholder group and at the same time, because they do so much work that is highly specialized and focused, the agency has reached out to many stakeholders along the way.

Martinez was sorry that Commissioner Carrion was not available to attend today's MISCC meeting to speak on her reform agenda for reforming OCFS' juvenile justice programs. She noted that OCFS operates juvenile justice facilities and the community based programs.

Martinez said today she wanted to speak about two special efforts that were indicative of OCFS and introduced the following staff and proceeded to outline their program areas:

- Mimi Weber, Director, Bridges to Health (please refer to material in packets). Nancy White-Martinez stated that the goal of Bridges to Health Waiver Program for children was not to keep children in Foster Care but to provide the necessary wrap-around and supports for children who require foster care or juvenile justice facilities and can stay in the least restrictive and most community-based family-type setting. She stated that children's birth parents, foster parents or adoptive parents can receive the waiver supports and services. She noted that children with emotional, developmental and medically fragile conditions were eligible. She reported that presently 70 children are enrolled in the waiver program. The implementation plan spans three years and at the end of the third year the target is to have 3,000 children enrolled in this program. She pointed out that the program will be rolled out regionally.
- Brian Daniels, Associate Commissioner, Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (please refer to material in packets). Martinez introduced the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped within OCFS, funded largely with Federal funds. She noted it was designed to provide supports and encourages services that individual adults, families and children need to reach their goals; obtaining an education, and obtaining employment to becoming self-sufficient. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped has provided a list of the stakeholders it works with.

Rebecca Cort asked if she could get some information out to the school districts about the Bridges to Health Waiver. Commissioner Ritter stated that in reviewing the Bridges to Health brochure that the MISCC values are incorporated there to avoid, delay or prevent medical institutional care.

Commissioner Ritter introduced the MISCC Work Groups and their presenters.

Ron Epstein, DOT, directed those present to the April 9, 2008, Transportation Work Group PowerPoint presentation posted on the MISCC Web site. Epstein stated that the Transportation Work Group has been holding regular meetings since 2007. He said one thing the Transportation Work Group needs is information to better understand transportation provided by agencies, that are non-transportation agencies. DOT administers a program that is public transportation. He noted that many of the programs are client-specific and service-based programs where transportation is an activity in a much broader scope of effort. Many agencies may not know what the scope of their transportation efforts.

Commissioner Ritter asked Ron Epstein if there is representation from all the MISCC Member state agencies. Ron Epstein replied that they are working on it. Epstein pointed to the issue that DOT is a transportation agency and does not have a human services, client specific transportation background, so DOT looks to those at the table for that information and guidance.

Ron pointed out that many of the agencies do not have a transportation expert, they have program experts and are familiar with the eligibility within that program but no one within the agencies have the responsibility for understanding transportation outside of a transportation-related agency. Epstein stated that was one of the natural barriers.

Epstein reported that the Transportation Work Group is in the process of putting together a potential proposal and recommendations to present to the full MISCC.

Epstein thanked Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo for her report and he emphasized that when establishing new, subsidized housing, the housing should be adjacent to or integrated into the public transportation lines or other forms of public transportation. Epstein commented that we can give all the services people need but if they cannot get to their employment or to their appointment than we have failed them and it would be a gap in the system.

Epstein stated that DOT is looking to achieve a mobility manager in each community that will have the responsibility for placing individuals with transportation services so they can get to whatever services or employment or educational needs they may have.

Epstein stated that DOT wants to assure that the state-owned fleet, vans and buses are handicap accessible.

He stated that at DOT, the agency is working on a travel itinerary system and a travel information system called 511, which is a national telephone number that would have local travel information. He stated there is the potential to have a human services agency call into it that would locate services and plan a trip to get there. He reported the launch date for the 511 is late in 2008.

Ron Epstein stated some of the issues brought to the table by advocates were transportation to voter polling places and accessible taxis. He noted the work group is also looking at paratransit, which is mandated at the federal level and seeing where there are gaps in the provision of that service.

He noted the presentation from the Dan Skulicz from the Center for Transportation Excellence at an earlier MISCC meeting. It is a private, for profit, enterprise looking at improving the reliability and access to services for individuals with disabilities through training, maintenance and other transportation related access opportunities. This is a model which could be replicated in other regions of the state.

Ron stated that these are just some of the topics the Transportation Work Group are looking at to develop future recommendations and that it has to go beyond the public systems to the private service agencies or everyone will still have these continuing and significant gaps.

Epstein shared with the MISCC that the next Transportation Work Group meeting is scheduled for July 10 and he welcomed everyone's attendance. (Attached is the Transportation Work Group one-page overview of the presentation **Addendum A.**)

Stuart Rosenblatt, DOH, pointed out that there were many non-profit and private organizations with incredible fleets, which are DOT-approved and that they have periods of downtime between transporting individuals from program to program, evening hours and weekends and that they may be willing to participate.

Epstein said that they are aware of that and that one of the barriers recognized and identified as part of the Transportation Work Group is that for Medicaid-related services DOT has to inspect and grant operating authority to those vehicles. If one takes on a client for hire outside of your client group you then fall subject to a number of regulatory requirements, which could be cost prohibitive. We need to try to figure out a way to make this work so, for example, you can take on a client from OASAS, if you are OFA and not subject your organization to all these new requirements and insurance fees and everything else. He further commented, that as DOT tries to work through these transportation barriers there historically have

been a number of barriers that we just can't seem to get through which are federally related.

Commissioner Ritter shared with the MISCC that within OMRDD the individuals we serve want to go do something in the evening like going to the movies, visiting a friend or going bowling and that, particularly in the rural areas, we are missing our inclusion goals. Commissioner Ritter stated that we have an opportunity to look more collectively and breakdown those barriers because the existing rules don't help people with disabilities nor foster the values and principles of MISCC.

Rebecca Cort, VESID, said we may not have a good data base on private fleets. She thought in relationship to emergency evacuation and weather issues that being able to put together a more comprehensive data base of where these fleets exist and how they might be used in these emergency situations may be another thing we should be looking at, especially for a person with disability that cannot run out and get in their own car or on a bus.

Jane Lynch stated one of the problems often found with public transportation was their not crossing county borders and she asked if that is still an issue. Ron Epstein stated it could be and we are aware as to why that is and are working to resolve it.

Ron reported that they have been working with the Community Transportation Association of America just on the issues of evacuation and especially for people with disability issues who would not be able to mass at a pick up point. Many of these people are homebound and may not have another means of transportation. Epstein stated that DOT is looking to identify some of the incidences over the last decade that involves the most vulnerable populations. He reported that there were a number of counties that actually encourage people to register and we encourage all persons with disabilities to register if they have not done so. Identify where you are and what your physical limitations are so that you could be evacuated safely.

Constance Laymon commented that possibly the State Trade Association may know more about their constituencies than the state agencies themselves.

Ed Placke, SED/VESID, representing the Employment Work Group, informed the MISCC that, while they have just been formed over the last couple of months, they have made significant progress. Placke stated that the guiding principle of the Employment Work Group has been addressing the idea that every person is eligible to work. The employment rate of persons with disabilities in New York State is about 33 percent compared to non-disabled individuals which is almost 80 percent. Placke further stated that is complicated by the fact that the average hourly wage is \$11.40 for people with disabilities and if you are not disabled it is closer to \$28.50.

Placke stated, that essentially those have been the driving forces to those on the Employment Work Group. He said the ultimate goal is to close this employment gap, as well as the gap in hourly salary. Placke stated agencies need to do an enhanced job in regard to marketing that hiring people with disabilities is truly good business.

Placke stated that the overall work group has 40 plus members and represents over 30 state agencies and private providers as well as advocacy and consumer groups. He assured the MISCC that we have a robust group of individuals looking to close this employment gap. He further noted, the work group started with 23 recommendations and after the second meeting it was down to five. Placke reviewed the five proposed collaborative opportunities between the state agencies as well as the private providers and the consumer advocacy groups:

- Advocating for an Executive Order for Public Sector Employment, also known as 55a, 55b and 55c that deals with municipalities, state government as well as the armed forces.
- Take a look at benefits counseling, because benefits are a huge barrier to employment. When you look nationwide less than .5 percent of people with disabilities on benefits actually leaves benefits and become gainfully employed. The group is looking for some type of network statewide to address that particular issue around benefits.
- The group has heard from the advocates, consumers and individuals with disabilities that there tends to be a wrong door towards eligibility in regards to state agencies so the group is looking to make it more user friendly as far as applying for services across New York State with our various departments.
- The group needs to do a better job at marketing as far as the business community and various sectors are concerned to let people know that we have a talented group of individuals who can really contribute to the overall gross national product. A marketing campaign across state agencies is in order.
- Looking at funds invested in segregated environments and how we take a look at retrofitting those funds into more integrated employment opportunities.

Placke stated that the next Employment Work Group meeting is August 6 at which time he hopes to have more defined recommendations. The last piece which is very exciting is that the MISCC Employment Work Group is now the Advisory Group for the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, also known as the MIG, that was submitted by OMH.

Commissioner Michael Hogan stated that the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant is quite a substantial grant at \$6 million, but it goes away in a few years. He stated one of the challenges is to make investments that make a sustaining change when you only have the funding for a brief period of time.

Hogan commented that one area where a good deal of progress can be made is to go hard at our relationships with employers, particularly coalitions representing employers, to try to really get consistently in their plans and on their mailing lists as well as establishing some materials to live with after the grant goes away.

Hogan stated that we wrote into the application that we will work in conjunction with the people at Cornell and law schools who work on these issues very effectively as well as some people at Syracuse University.

Constance Laymon wanted to comment on the benefit issues. She shared that it took 21 years to literally become free of all systems and deems herself a lucky one because she founded a non-profit and volunteered for many years. She knows people with disabilities are afraid to be without Medicaid services.

Patricia Fratangelo spoke about the Medicaid Buy-In Program and that the more people can do that the safer it would be for them to get the employment and to receive the services they really need.

Rebecca Cort stated that she wants people to be aware that VESID has issued a new Request-For-Proposal for unified contract services and it is really changing and expanding the number and the kinds of services and some of it does include benefits counseling. She commented that Independent Living Centers played a tremendous role in this area but there is a very broad range of services that we should be aware of and this new RFP will be looking at.

Placke stated all Employment Work Group members agreed that they needed to come up with some tangible goals and objectives for closing the gap. He stated that the Employment Work Group is looking for a new policy or framework want to be sure that there is action behind it and to be sure that we as well, as New York State, be held accountable for those efforts. Placke noted that we will have that by October. (Attached is the Employment Work Group one-page overview of the presentation **Addendum B.**)

Commissioner VanAmerongen stated she first wanted to share that Governor Patterson through the auspices of NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) announced over a \$137 million in housing awards for the unified funding round for this year which will generate more than \$300 million of private and other governmental resources going into affordable housing. Commissioner VanAmerongen mentioned the common themes that continue to come up with MISCC members.

VanAmerongen stated her agency made visitability a requirement for every application that came into us this year. She noted that it was the first time it had been done by any state agency, although there were some exceptions with historical rehabilitation, and where we thought local building codes might be a problem.

Commissioner VanAmerongen stated for the first time the units that were intended for persons with disabilities had to be built out as accessible and not designated as adaptable.

She thought there was a fundamental importance to assure that DHCR was producing the units for persons with disabilities that we said we were doing. She noted that also because of the additional money that was provided by the State Legislature with the Governor Paterson's leadership this year, DHCR was able to include a significant increase in the number of units over last year.

Commissioner VanAmerongen highlighted a couple of programs that received a significant increase in funding this year. The "Access To Home" program does accessibility improvements to individual's homes. She noted that \$14 million under this program last year provided over 1,000 units. The Residential Emergency Services to Offer Repairs for the Elderly (RESTORE) which assists elderly home owners to remain in their homes received an additional \$6.3 million for over 2,000 units to assist low-income homeowners to remain in their own home and not to think about going into an institution.

Commissioner VanAmerongen stated on the capital project side of things the agency did set aside units for supportive housing. She noted that 340 units will be set aside for sponsors with visual impairments, developmental disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, persons that are homeless, long-term recovery from alcohol and substance abuse and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Commissioner VanAmerongen stated that Governor Paterson and DHCR have announced a statewide Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to promote the continued development of affordable housing in communities throughout New York State. The PSA's began airing in July on broadcast television stations and radio stations throughout the state. Commissioner VanAmerongen said the ads feature filmmaker and green affordable housing advocate Edward Norton, former NFL football player and community developer Tiki Barber and former Major League baseball player and affordable housing developer Mo Vaughn. She encouraged every one present to visit DHCR's Web site at [www.affordablehousingworks.org](http://www.affordablehousingworks.org).

Commissioner Deborah VanAmerongen presented the Housing Work Group report. (Attached is the Housing Work Group one-page overview of the presentation **Addendum C**.)

Commissioner Ritter thanked Commissioner VanAmerongen for the Housing Work Group update and asked if there were any questions.

Rebecca Cort, VESID, asked if DHCR had been in contact with the Public Broadcasting System in terms of getting that information out there to the community.

Commissioner VanAmerongen stated we would be happy to talk to anyone and we have been working through the Broadcasters Association and although it's not a traditional Public Service Announcement, free could be 2:00 a.m., as a limited buy you were guaranteed a certain number of viewings in different markets at certain appropriate times. She stated DHCR would be happy to speak with anyone.

Commissioner Ritter stated that the next agenda was a perfect segue today from the stakeholder reports and all the involvement of stakeholders up and down the state in these groups and the work group reports. Commissioner Ritter noted that they are very clearly the precursors of what will end up in the report in October.

Ritter shared with the MISCC that she had an opportunity to meet with some of the public advocates a couple of weeks ago to talk about the MISCC plan. She commented that the MISCC legislation requires a detailed plan. The advocates agreed that we don't want to get into planning as a process but we want to get into having some outcomes and some measurable results.

Commissioner Ritter wants to be very clear about what outcomes are being pursued and that we don't want a plan that is short on substance and long on process. Commissioner Ritter stated we want to focus on what realistic outcomes we can achieve. She noted that we have a very difficult fiscal environment that will continue to grow more challenging.

Commissioner Ritter stated that in the packets there is a copy of the Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council Operating Plan for MISCC reporting, focusing on internal systems and cross-systems. Commissioner Ritter reviewed in detail the points of the standard format for MISCC. She reiterated that models of things that work need to be identified so that we may be able to cascade them statewide.

Ritter also commended the MIG grant that Commissioner Hogan and Dr. Placke spoke about. This is the type of thing MISCC wants to make sure we are embracing and we should pursue in our MISCC agenda and how, in addition, can we leverage other dollars to support our goals. She noted that some of things we are doing make sense to do, and they are embracing our MISCC principles. Ritter stated that cross-system issues and data issues should be addressed because we are all struggling with that. She said data is so important not only to measure our outcomes but knowing we are targeting our efforts and energies in the right places, utilizing data to break down barriers which may require changes in regulations or legislation. She reiterated that those were the types of things we want to see from our work groups. She noted that the intent is to show we are outcome driven and we are not constrained by process.

Commissioner VanAmerongen asked about the involvement of agencies who are not members of the MISCC and those agencies whose policies or programs have a direct impact on our ability to create the most integrated setting and she was wondering if there has been thought or discussion of bringing other agencies to the table, not being members of MISCC, but in terms of moving forward with policies that make sense to advance our goals.

Commissioner Ritter stated that there is nothing that would stop MISCC from bringing anybody to this table that we think would be helpful. She also said that each Work Group is allowed to have members outside of the MISCC membership. Knowing that we have

Governor Paterson's support in what we are doing, we can bring anyone we want to the MISCC table. She said do not hold back on those recommendations.

Constance Laymon stated she was happy to see the tired old planning document coming forward again. It took years and we fought tooth and nail and scraped against the brick wall to get something and although it wasn't what we wanted, it was something.

Constance was concerned with October being so close that many of the reports will be crap. She commented that New York State is so entrenched with what it does. Laymon said we need to be logical about who is where and where we want to go. She encouraged everyone to keep plugging away to do what we have to do because we are only as strong as our weakest link.

Commissioner Ritter stated she appreciated Constance's comments and we are further ahead in some areas but I am not looking for any crappy reports.

Constance Laymon stated there are only a few months till October and every advocate is working to move things forward. She noted that in other states where there were lawsuits and the court standard was there reasonable movement.

Commissioner Ritter commented that we have been working on this as a new administration and now as a new, new administration for more than a year and we should have something to show for that and I do feel that we do have some things to report. Commissioner Ritter stated that the report should be transparent about what is in the works. Commissioner Ritter stated that it is her expectation and asked the MISCC to comment.

Dr. Karen Oates thanked Constance Laymon for speaking her mind and indicated that she was always grateful for that, but she thought that Commissioner Ritter has brought us to a different level.

Dr. Oates pointed out that the report due in October would go to the Governor in December and that we will have time to clean it up. She stated that she thought that there was much more going on now then before. Dr. Oates thanked Commissioner Ritter for her efforts.

Commissioner Ritter said that was a good point we will have time to receive input from October to December when we bring the report to the Governor.

Patricia Fratangelo said that everyone maybe at a different point but everyone should be able to learn from one another and that is what she thinks is important about the report.

Commissioner Ritter stated she was looking for input on how to reshape the agenda with possibly doing some of the reports in writing and translating to Braille so we can use this time for discussion. Everyone agreed for the next couple of meetings that is what we will be doing.

Commissioner Ritter told those present that the MISCC Operational Plan format was not in everyone's packet and that we will place it on the Web site.

Commissioner Ritter asked John Allen to introduce the members of the Native American community.

John Allen stated that there were three representatives from the Native American community. He introduced Michael Martin from the Native American Community Services and Denise Walter and Randy Hill from the Native American Independent Living Services and stated that each of them are going to give you a couple of minutes about their urban Native American experiences and the barriers they have had in accessing services.

Michael Martin opened his dialogue with a native introduction. He introduced himself as the Executive Director of the Native American Community Services and identified himself as Onondaga of the Beaver Clan of the Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve. He shared with the group that he was born and raised in Buffalo and that he returned after college.

Martin stated that his agency provides many services and that he works with many of the State agencies. He shared with the group that packets were available to learn more about their services. Michael Martin thanked everyone present for having time on the MISCC Agenda and for OMH and John Allen's facilitating their presence to share with you some of their concerns here today.

He noted that none of them here today represent the Nation but are representatives of urban-based organizations serving native people in the urban areas and off-reservation territories. He stated 50 percent of the Native American populations in New York State live, work, pay taxes and access services in the urban areas or off reservation territory.

Martin stated that there is a need for a holistic approach in terms of servicing the Native American community largely due to intergenerational traumas and issues that go deep into the community in terms of trying to resolve what are often symptoms. He asked by a show of hands how many people there knew about the Native American Residential Boarding School Experience in North America. He noted there was a very few show of hands regarding the Residential Boarding School Experiences, which was a traumatic period that went back to the government policies of the only good Indian was a dead Indian, kill the Indian save the human, that somehow the native people of this land were sub-human or savages and needed to be civilized and it became we need to take the Indian out of them and save them as human beings. It is a very similar experience to those with disabilities and not being looked at as part of society. He said what makes us human is the caring for each other.

The Residential Boarding School Experience was during an era trying to civilize and assimilate native peoples throughout North America. He stated that unfortunately there

are various forms of abuse that feed into that. There was emotional, mental, physical, sexual abuse and we all know in our service provision today that somebody who was abused as a child is most likely to perpetrate that abuse as an adult if unchecked and there is no exiting program from these residential boarding schools. He said, the schools thought they did their jobs and people were released back into their community. Martin stated that we know we have high rates of alcoholism, that those are ways of dealing with pain from being abused like that as a youth. He shared with the MISCC, as service providers we have to unwind a lot of those inter-generational issues and approach our services as if what we are dealing with are the symptoms and really go back to those deeper intergenerational issues and treat them as the root causes.

Martin introduced Denise Walter to share with the group her work at the Native American Independent Living Services some of the more particular issues our community faced.

Denise Walter stated she works as an Independent Living Specialist and has a physical and mental disability. Denise shared her testimony with those present and told stories of people she works with in her community. Her many stories touched upon lives of people who have fallen through the cracks. Stories of elderly people living without running water, disabled people living in burned out trailers without heat, seriously depressed and suicidal people released from programs that have gone missing and their cases closed because no one knows where they are, and instances of county employees rejecting to assist a Native American woman who was in a disheveled state.

Walter asked if the MISCC could assist people in getting services instead of being bumped from one agency to another. She stated the need for comprehensive services linked with a continuum of care, transitional housing, halfway houses and recovery home programs established for young adults and she noted she has many young people who come through her office who do not get the services they need and they don't fit into the adult mental health service. She also identified that we need spiritual, holistic and cultural healing included into treatment.

Randy Hill introduced himself as a MICA Coordinator for the Native American Independent Living Services. He identified himself as Tuscarora Indian, Iroquois Confederacy, Bear Clan and he shared his testimony. Randy Hill identified himself as an alcoholic and has a mental diagnosis. He is a Peer Advocate on and off the reservation. He only works part-time but says that the many Nations in Erie County need more peer coverage and transportation. He stated he often covers 300 miles in a day. He believes that a halfway house specifically for Native Americans is needed.

Hill spoke about the programs he has started, for which he needs funding, in his community. He spoke about the Talking Circle in Seneca Territory called GAHADAGOH, a Drum Circle which is inclusive with native and non-native people coming together healing one another from the inside out in the native way of spiritually connecting as a way of living. He thanked the Creator for the chance to come before the

MISCC. Randy Hill asked the MISCC to help the Native American people to help their people.

Commissioner Ritter thanked each speaker for so passionately presenting their testimony that are really supportive of the MISCC guiding principles of more integrated responsive services for all people with any kind of disability.

Commissioner Hogan wanted to reinforce what was presented and express his appreciation for their coming a very long way for a very brief period of time and he hoped that maybe this is the start of something better.

Commissioner Hogan reiterated his understanding of today's presentations. He reiterated that at least 50 percent of Native Americans live in other communities around New York State and not on tribal lands which means that they rely on our services and yet we have these issues of prejudice with lack of access and we have this added feature of how services that are not just culturally competent in a way but maybe even in some cases culturally specific are going to be more effective. He noted that this is a big challenge for us. If we could just get the cultural competence than he would be happy, but what is being said is we have to go beyond that in some cases because of the particular nature of what was done. He stated that all of you represent a professional as well as a personal face on it.

Pat Fratangelo spoke about her experience with the indigenous people of New Zealand the Maori. She stated through conferences she learned a lot from the Maori's on how to help their people help others. She shared with the group that the New Zealand system helped the Maori's get what they needed to support the Maori people. She stated she understood that she would not be the right person to help the Native Americans that they themselves would be.

Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo thanked them and stated OASAS has tried to look at the Native American as a special population that has different needs and how best to link some of the professional and Peer Advocates with the work you are doing with the work that we know in training/teaching and not taking over. Commissioner Carpenter-Palumbo requested that they do a follow-up with both OMH and OASAS and she would be interested in talking more specifically how we can support one another because we have a common goal helping people in recovery.

Commissioner Ritter stated that Commissioner Daines has a focus on Native American health and to bring them to the table to make connections with you.

Michael Martin stated that included with the Native American meeting summary is Web site information for the Urban Indian America by the National Urban Indian Family Coalition, [www.nuifc.org](http://www.nuifc.org), where there is a report showing statistics that are higher than average rates that Native American face in several areas. He stated his organization was involved with this report and he noted that Buffalo is highlighted.

Martin stated that at the State level we are being asked to use evidence based models and scientific approaches. We were given the model for the desert southwest because they said it was good for Native Americans. He said our Natives in New York State are different with 500+ Nations in North America.

Commissioner Ritter apologized for changing the agenda time for the constituent discussion. She informed the group that five people had signed up to speak representing ADAPT regarding five different subjects.

Commissioner Ritter asked Bruce Darling to speak on the MISCC Stakeholder Groups.

Bruce Darling thanked Commissioner Ritter for everything she does in moving the MISCC forward. He indicated that Commissioner Ritter has set the tone and the standard and he appreciates that.

Bruce Darling thanked OASAS for reiterating "nothing about us without us" but he feels that not all of the State agencies are doing that. He commented that in his relationship with DHCR that there is a working partnership although they do not agree on everything. Darling mentioned he is concerned with DOH whose stakeholders include professional groups, associations, lobbyists and providers and he doesn't know if that group of people is particularly interested in changing the system. He thinks it is important to bring in more people who are directly affected by these issues instead of those who are invested in maintaining the status quo. He noted one of the biggest issues we have on the health side is the lack of attendants because of the lack of a workforce. Bruce stated then he hears that VESID talk about the unemployment rate of people with disabilities and he said there are many people with disabilities who could be doing this type of work.

Commissioner Ritter introduced Gene Spinney from ADAPT who would speak regarding the Long Term Care Council. Gene Spinney stated what they are trying to do is get local representation on New York Connects Long Term Care Council in Monroe County. He stated that the council does not have any representation from the disability community and asked if there was anything MISCC could do to help get local representation on that.

Marcus Harazin stated our Director, Michael Burgess is committed that there is representation from the disability community on the State level and that is something the group wants to model for the New York Connects Committees.

Commissioner Ritter introduced Anita Cameron from ADAPT to speak on the Olmstead Plan. Anita Cameron thanked Commissioner Ritter and stated she was glad there is finally movement. She stated she is happy that we are gearing up for this report that is due and obviously the works got to be done soon. She was looking for tangible, people related results. She wanted to encourage Commissioner Ritter and the MISCC to keep on it. She advocated for a woman who is in a Long Island nursing home who wants to get out and into the community.

Commissioner Ritter introduced Terrie Lincoln from ADAPT who would be speaking on data. Lincoln stated that earlier in the meeting it was stated that data was very important and she wanted to know where we were and how are we to get it.

Commissioner Ritter introduced Chris Hilderbrandt to speak about the NYS Budget. Chris Hilderbrandt made mention to the Transportation Work Group that regarding transportation service for disabled people, the philosophy needs to change. He noted from his perspective it is set for non-service with schedulers that are verbally abrasive and a scheduling system that doesn't make sense. Hilderbrandt stated that some of the Transportation Work Group's goals were good but it needs to include some basic compliance and customer service issues that need to be addressed.

Chris Hilderbrandt stated with the Budget that the Governor needs to see a Plan, and he would like to see something with the Governor's signature. He stated that without a Plan when we get back to a budget crisis the lobbyists that are already there win. He addressed his concern that the nursing homes got back a large portion of their funding and the community service groups did not. He stated that without the Plan that says where we will be in five years we will be left out on the funding.

Meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

## **Addendum A**

### **MISCC Transportation Workgroup Activities**

The MISCC Transportation Workgroup has held regular monthly meetings since December 2007. These meetings have been conducted both via conference call and in-person. The purpose of these meetings has been to identify and develop proposals/recommendations - for the full Council's consideration - that will address the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities.

Ideas that have been presented at Workgroup Sessions - currently being considered for recommendation to the MISCC - include:

- Promote Transit Oriented Development/Land Use;
- Establish Transportation Mobility Manager/Coordinator in every County;
- Ensure accessibility of State agency fleet vehicles and schedules to encourage vehicle coordination;
- Evaluate opportunities to expand paratransit - consistent with ADA;
- Support some form of accessible taxi legislation;
- Streamline regulations for vehicles that share clients;
- Promote 511 Travel Information/Human Service Agency participation;
- Support user subsidies for accessible transportation trips; and
- Establish a State policy regarding accessible transportation access to voter polling places.

In addition, significant attention has been given to identifying better practice models. For example: The Center for Transportation Excellence (CTE) which has expanded transportation services; improved the reliability of those services for individuals with disabilities; and worked to establish more consistent community integration.

The initial Workgroup issues under consideration have taken shape, and the next meetings throughout the summer will define the final Workgroup proposals. Agency participation is critical, considering that many recommendations which can be implemented without significant financial implications may be regulatory in nature and agency specific.

The next scheduled meeting of the Workgroup will be Thursday July 10.

## **Addendum B**

### **The Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC) Employment Committee**

The Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC) Employment Committee held its second meeting at St. Anne's Institute in Albany on May 28, 2008. Thirty-two participants attended the meeting, representing 24 different State, local provider, consumer and advocacy organizations. Ed Placke, Chair, reviewed the charge from the MISCC, as well as the expectation that the Employment Committee will make formal recommendations to close the employment gap for individuals with disabilities through executive, legislative and budgetary action in advance of the October MISCC meeting. The Committee reviewed and discussed the 23 *Opportunities for Collaboration* that were generated at its initial meeting on March 6, 2008.

A broader policy framework discussion ensued. There was initial agreement that New York State needs to develop an integrated policy framework where policy would address the needs of consumers, services providers and employers. As a result of this discussion, the Committee proposed a vision statement affirming "all people can work" and cited the need for more effective marketing to employers through the Business Council and/or local Chambers of Commerce. The importance of establishing a tangible goal, such as increasing the number of employment outcomes by a specific number or percentage, was discussed so that any policy framework can lead to action and measurable results.

Thomas Golden presented the CMS Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) information and requested participation of the MISCC Employment Committee to undertake the advisory role as required in the grant. OMH will be applying on behalf of New York State DOH. The Committee agreed to consider this option via e-mail to meet the June 30 submission deadline. Subsequently, the Committee did determine that it would play an advisory role to the proposed Medicaid Infrastructure Grant project, if awarded.

### **Proposed Collaborative Opportunities**

The Committee selected five focus areas for additional exploration and development:

- Advocating for an Executive Order for Public Sector Employment;
- Developing a statewide infrastructure for benefits planning and management, including statewide collaboration on applying for the CMS Medicaid Infrastructure Grant;
- Exploring the options for a "No Wrong Door" service delivery process - easing access to employment services across State agencies;
- Marketing to Employers through a collaborative marketing campaign for employment of qualified candidates who have disabilities; and,
- Reviewing data and funding integration to explore how existing funding and reporting structures across agencies can more effectively fund integrated employment.

The next meeting of the MISCC Employment Committee is scheduled for August 6 at the VESID District Office, 80 Wolf Road, Colonie, New York.

**Addendum C**  
**Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council**  
Housing Task Force  
Monday, July 7, 2008

1. The Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver (NHTD) housing subsidy. Funded through the New York State Legislature to DOH and suballocated to DHCR at 2.5 million dollars annually is nearing finalization. This rent subsidy, modeled on the section 8/HCV program will be made available through a partnership with our Section 8 Local Administrators. It is anticipated that this program will roll out as a pilot in 12 counties and New York City and then include all other Local Administrators following this pilot phase.
2. The accessible housing registry has greatly expanded its listings and will soon be undergoing a major reconstruction, with a new website host, Socialserve.com, which currently operates affordable housing directories in 25 states. These new enhancements will position the site as the leading housing locator tool for New York State.
3. The Task force has identified three workgroups to focus in on some of our objectives:
  - Rental Subsidies, chaired by Shelly Nortz- Coalition for the Homeless
  - Education Campaign, chaired by Vera Prosper- State Office for the Aging
  - Data, chaired by Harvey Rosenthal- New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services

These groups have been slated to report out on their activities and future directions, in our meeting of 7/1/08. Towards these ends we have also engaged Dr. Kathryn Nelson, a former HUD staff person who has extensive experience on researching and writing reports on housing for persons with disabilities, to facilitate our discussion on data as it exists and what is missing to help guide our future directions.

4. In early 2008, DHCR revised the Qualified Allocation Plan, or QAP, which regulates how the agency administers the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHC) program. LIHC is a very important tool to infuse private sector dollars into affordable housing. The revised QAP identified visitability standards as review criteria. It also included rating criteria for fully accessible and adapted, move-in ready units.
5. The 2008-2009 Executive Budget increased funding to DHCR programs by about \$200 million over traditional levels. On June 30, Governor Paterson announced \$137 million in funding awarded by DHCR that will help build and preserve more than 6,000 units of affordable housing – nearly twice the number of units created and preserved by DHCR last year. These awards include \$87 million in capital projects. All of the units created will meet high energy efficiency standards and provide an unprecedented level of accessibility for people with disabilities.

These awards also include \$14 million in Access to Home funds to make accessibility modifications to 917 units and \$6.3 million in RESTORE (Residential Emergency Services to Offer Repairs to the Elderly) to make emergency repairs to 2,066 units.