



STATE COUNCIL MEETING
 Holiday Inn Resort, 3011 Maingate Lane
 Kissimmee, FL 34747
Monday, April 21, 2025
3:00 – 5:00 pm EST

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

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"/>
Kelly Kerr, North Central (3)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Patrick Cannan, Palm Beach (11)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jacqueline Dohmen, 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 type="checkbox"/>
Vacant, Brevard (18)	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Paul Wilson, Broward	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michael Swain, First Coast South (15)	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carolina Lombardi, North Dade	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Karen Gallagher, First Coast (5)	Present <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	Kevin Cronin, At-Large Member	Present <input type="checkbox"/>

OTHER OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES	
Terri Cantrell	State Ombudsman
JoAnn Quiles	Deputy State Ombudsman
Erica Hill	Legal Advocate
Alice Terry	Government Operations Consultant II
Audra Peoples	Staff Director / Public Relations Coordinator
Angela Andrews	Legal Assistant/Operations Analyst II
Diandra Taylor	Training and Development Manager
Deborah Gerrell	Panhandle District Manager
Ingrid Aldana	South Central District
Sara Munoz-Melendez	South Central District Manager
Gloria Freyre	East Regional Manager
Shereen Ally	Southwest District
Judy Carlson	West Coast District Manager
Diana Medina	West Regional Manager
Dennis Yonce	North Regional Manager
Judy Carlson	West Coast District Manager
Tina Rouissiya	West Coast District
GUESTS:	
Deanna Thompson, Doug Gorton, Christine Sproule, Theresa Zacek, Carol Weideman	

JANUARY 21, 2025

1. Call to Order and Attendance

- Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM by Chair Marshall Kapp.
- Quorum: ✓ Yes
- Approval of Previous Minutes (Last Quarter): ✓ Approved
 - Chair Kapp asked if there were any corrections or additions before approving the minutes. None were noted; minutes were approved.

2. Opening Remarks – Chair Marshall Kapp

- Welcomed attendees and thanked all participants.
- Introduced Terri Cantrell to deliver the State Ombudsman Report.

3. State Ombudsman Report – Terri Cantrell

- Reassured members: *“We are not going anywhere.”*
- Updated the Council on the DOEA legislative bill, and explained that removing the State Council could come up again.
- Acknowledged contributions by Audra, Diandra, and Alice.
- Shared concerning updates:
 - There are potential funding cuts and a possible push to transfer federal programs (DOGE) back to state-level control.
 - Cuts are projected for FY2026.
 - Urged members to reach out to legislators and highlight the value of the ombudsman program.
 - Described the current moment as critical.
- Stated that increasing staffing is no longer feasible; focus must shift to advocacy for residents.
- Provided updates:
 - Discussed Discharge/Transfer database.
 - Recognized JoAnn Quiles for her strong documentation work.
 - Jamie Freschi will ensure alignment with national standards.

- Reinforced importance of data entry: essential to showing program value and explaining Florida's unique position.
- Office support is available for those struggling with documentation.

4. Old Business

a. Advocacy/Legislative Update – Presented by Jane Horowitz

- Legislative data is being compiled; some quirks remain with the new database.
- Jane emphasized the responsibility of the Council to act on reports and engage the Legislative Workgroup.
- Jane and Kevin have previously sent letters to all state senators, highlighting facilities with low ratings.
- Follow-ups yielded interest and opened dialogue.
- Chair Kapp clarified that Council members are limited in advocacy roles due to program rules; any engagement must go through proper legislative channels.
- Additional discussion highlights:
 - Debate over volunteers' roles in advocacy vs. lobbying.
 - Questions raised about writing op-eds or speaking with media.
 - Consensus: Members must not claim to speak on behalf of the program without coordination.
 - Paul Wilson and others emphasized the need for clear, specific asks when contacting legislators.
 - Proposal for a virtual special meeting of the Advocacy Committee to plan next steps.

5. Committee Reports

- Training & Education: No updates
- Recruitment, Retention, Recognition: No updates

6. New Business

a. Technology and Database Concerns

- Reports of:

- Visit entries not being recorded correctly
- Database access issues when volunteers are reassigned
- Limited visibility of facility data between multiple assigned volunteers
- Because of inconsistencies in data entry, the state office could coordinate database training, similar to Ombudsman training, to ensure consistency.
- JoAnn and Diandra noted coding fixes and quirks are being addressed.
- Council discussed possible solutions and improved communication pathways.

b. Council Mission and Strategic Alignment

- Questions raised about members' familiarity with Florida Statute FS 400.0067.
- Recognition of a gap between statutory responsibilities and current practice.
- Terri Cantrell and others acknowledged the need to refocus, streamline, and advocate for preserving the program's future.
- Talk of possible legislative repeal or transition, with suggestions to:
 - Update the Council's mission
 - Conduct regular monthly meetings to develop advocacy strategy
- It was decided that the Advocacy/Legislative Workgroup would meet to discuss and recommend next steps for the State Council which would meet again late May.

7. Public Comments

- None

8. Closing Remarks – Chair Marshall Kapp

- Thanked everyone for their participation and expressed appreciation for continued commitment.

9. Adjournment

- Time: 5:00 PM