



TN Council on Developmental Disabilities Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2017

Members Present: Amy Allen, Roddey Coe, Stephanie Brewer Cook, Jennifer Coleman, Evan Espey, Tatum Fowler, Dawn Fry, Serina Gilbert, Clancey Hopper, Tommy Lee Kidd, Jean-Marie Lawrence, Deborah McBride, Tecia Puckett Pryor, Steve Sheegog, Karen West.

Members Absent: Jody Cheek, Rick Davis, Lesley Guilaran, Doug Hall, Lisa Johnson, William Lovell.

Agency Representatives Present: Jackie Bruce (Commission on Aging and Disability), Ruth Brock (Vocational Rehabilitation), Michelle Morse Jernigan (TennCare), Jeremy Norden-Paul (Dept. of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities), Lisa Primm (Disability Rights TN), Elise McMillan (Vanderbilt Kennedy Center), Bruce Keisling (UT Memphis Boling Center), Katie Lee (Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Svcs.).

Agency Representatives Absent: Alison Gauld (Dept. of Education), Jacqueline Johnson (Dept. of Health/Maternal Child Health), Richard Kennedy (Commission on Children and Youth), Bettie Teasley (TN Housing Development Agency).

Staff Present: Alicia Cone, JoEllen Fowler, Lauren Pearcy, Lynette Porter, Emma Shouse, Ned Andrew Solomon, Mildred Sparkman, Wanda Willis.

Visitors: Dr. Fred and Judy Palmer (Boling Center), Zach DeBerry (Boling Center); Elisabeth Dykens and Jan Rosemergy (Vanderbilt Kennedy Center); Dr. Tom Cheetham & Matthew Parriott (Dept. of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities); Paul Choquette (TennCare).

9:00 A.M.	OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS
Council Chair, Tommy Lee Kidd, opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. Mr. Kidd welcomed everyone, announced that Serina Gilbert has been appointed Vice-Chair of the Council by Gov. Haslam, introduced new Boling Center Director Bruce Keisling, and facilitated introductions.	
9:20 A.M.	BUSINESS ITEMS

Approval of September 16 Minutes and Agenda Review

The September 16, 2016 Council meeting minutes were emailed to all the Council members prior to the February 17, 2017 Council meeting to give members an opportunity to review before the meeting. Mr. Kidd called for a motion to accept the minutes as written from the members present at the last meeting. ***Ms. Lisa Primm moved to accept the September 16, 2016 minutes as written and Mr. Steve Sheegog seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.***

Mr. Kidd reviewed the agenda for the Council meeting.

Executive Director Report

Ms. Wanda Willis encouraged members to read the staff report included in their folders. Then she presented the Executive Director's report:

- The Council Public Policy Program is being built from the bottom up. She and Lauren Pearcy, new Council Public Policy Director, have met with several departments' legislative liaisons and are analyzing any legislation that might have fiscal impact to the Council. Ms. Willis mentioned there are several new staff participating in the Disability Policy Alliance. Also, Evan Espey, Council Public Policy Committee Chair, will represent the Council at the annual Disability Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. this spring.
- In March, the Council will host a visit from Jonathan Martinis to present at the Partners in Policymaking™ Reunion and consult with various statewide groups on Supported Decision-Making. He will assist staff with informing and educating members of the legislature and communities across the state. The Policy Alliance is working on legislation and education about this option for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Council Member Rick Davis has been unable to join us the last few meetings due to complications during his recovery from a surgical procedure. A card was passed around for members to sign.

Budget/Administrative Report

Ms. Lynette Porter, Deputy Director, reported that the Council budget currently has \$252,940 in available funding for planning. This includes a reduction of \$23,416 to align with the proposed federal fiscal year 2016-2017 presidential budget. This is retroactive to October 1, 2016 and has not yet been passed by Congress. The federal budget is under a continuing resolution until April 28, 2017. Simultaneously, Congress will also be passing the federal year 2017-2018 budget, which has a start date of October 1, 2017. The Council Executive and Deputy Directors are watching the federal budget very carefully, as cuts are anticipated. As we learn any news, we will inform the Council.

Ms. Porter also gave an administrative update about new agency processes. A risk assessment was conducted in December that included over 350 risk factors. Minor agency processes, including the process for surplus property and office supply procedures, were identified and procedures are being developed. In addition, a team of the Council staff is working to make the communications the agency sends out to our various audiences, including alumni of leadership programs, more engaging, consistent and trackable. We appreciate any feedback as we adjust communications platforms and messaging over the next month.

Executive Committee Report

Mr. Kidd reported that the Executive Committee met on Thursday, February 16. The Committee concluded their year-long discussion about updating the Council Standing Committees. The Council has had 3 standing committees since its inception. Those committees were:

- Legislative and Public Policy
- Projects Review
- Planning and Priorities

Two of the Council Standing Committees will be dissolved in favor of two new committees that relate to the current work of the Council. The Projects Review Committee historically was focused on tracking performance on Council grant projects when we funded as many as 20 grants each year. The Planning and Priorities Committee researched and developed ideas for short-term demonstration projects.

Today the Council funds fewer demonstration projects in favor of projects supported in partnership with other funders that will guarantee sustainability of the project. Less time and funding are spent operating a competitive grant program with short-term funding.

A new Evaluation Committee will be structured to consider not only the impact of grant projects but also consider the impact of staff activities on our State Plan. A new Communications Committee will be established to develop strategies to reach target populations about a broad range of subjects. Considerable funds and staff resources are spent on communications and increasing public awareness through Breaking Ground magazine, e-newsletters, the Council website, Facebook and other public information projects. Public Policy continues to be a Council priority. We expect this committee to continue, but with a shorter name – the Public Policy Committee versus the Legislative and Public Policy Committee.

Mr. Kidd brought a motion from the Executive Committee to:

- ***Change the name of the Legislative and Public Policy Committee to the Public Policy Committee;***
- ***To eliminate the Projects Review Committee and the Planning and Priorities Committee;***
- ***To establish the Evaluation Committee and the Communications Committee.***

There was no need for a second. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

9:50 A.M.	ADJOURN TO COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
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10:50 A.M.	BREAK & CHECK OUT
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11:20 A.M.	COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS
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Evaluation Committee

Steve Sheegog, Acting Evaluation Committee Chair, reported out to the Council about the content covered in the Committee. As an introduction to the newest Council members and state agency representatives, Mr. Sheegog asked that each attendee introduce themselves and say what it is that “brought them to the Council” – in other words, their connection to the disability community. Mr. Sheegog also gave an overview of the Committee’s purpose, tools related to the Council’s “logic model” evaluation, and the alignment of the Council’s short- and long-term goals with the 5-year State Plan, with our hope that increasing skills in the short-term through Council initiatives will lead to increased abilities, engagement and more effective actions in the long-term.

Public Policy Committee

Evan Espey, Public Policy Committee Chair, reported three general topics were discussed: the Council's public policy priorities, including legislation and broader programs; feedback about the weekly policy message, and policy topics of interest to Committee members. The meeting began with a quick overview from Public Policy Director Lauren Percy of the Council's two top priority bills: **SB264/HB941** on "Supported Decision-Making", which would create an option for people who need some support with making decisions but choose to retain the authority to be the ultimate decision-maker, rather than choosing existing options like Power of Attorney or Conservatorship; and **SB 199/HB 384**, which would create the Tennessee Autism Council, and the Council on Developmental Disabilities would be a member. Ms. Percy then described the Council's public policy activities to date, including tracking legislation and programs that impact people with disabilities, building relationships with key policymakers (as of 2/17, meetings held with 14 legislators and 8 state departments) and conducting research into best practices for emerging issues like Supported Decision-Making and Employment.

The Committee provided feedback about the Council's Weekly Policy Message, generally agreeing that the message is effective. One Committee member suggested identifying bills that may have a negative impact on people with disabilities.

Finally, the Committee discussed interests and priorities from everyone's respective areas. Two items were raised, 1) considering the addition of "disability history and awareness" into the K-12 curriculum, which has been done in other states; and 2) providing input into which tasks would be included in a bill filed ([SB968/HB5097](#)) that would allow disabled adults to have paid personal aides to perform health maintenance tasks for them.

Communications Committee

Tecia Pryor, Communications Committee Chair, opened the Committee meeting by asking members to introduce themselves and share their preferred styles of communication, and then she reviewed the purpose of the committee and agenda. The purpose of the Communications Committee is to provide input about Council communications efforts and propose strategies for using communications activities to achieve State Plan goals. Emma Shouse, Communications Director, reported about communications activities and data from the last year, including metrics around Facebook, e-newsletter and Breaking Ground subscribers, website visitors, etc.

Ms. Pryor then led a group discussion about potential priority areas or topics for communications activities during 2017, based on State Plan goals and objectives. She reported out to the full Council that the Committee discussed refining Council messaging about what the Council does, strategies for how the Council can use communications activities to keep alumni of its leadership programs (like Partners in Policymaking™) informed and engaged, and the Council's upcoming video projects during 2017 (including the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month video being filmed at the Feb. Council meeting and a second news program on employment for persons with disabilities through News Ch. 5 and the Dept. of Labor in October).

11:45 A.M.

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MEMBER DR. FRED PALMER

The Council recognized Dr. Fred Palmer, retiring Director of the Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities, for his many dedicated years as a member of the Council, and his service to Tennessee's disability community at large. Several special guests gathered to show their appreciation for Dr. Palmer, including his wife, Judy, Dr. Jan Rosemergy and Dr. Elisabeth Dykens of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center, and Dr. Tom Cheetham with the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The Developmental Disabilities Network Executive Directors, Elise McMillan, Lisa Primm, Dr. Bruce Keisling and Wanda Willis, presented Dr. Palmer with a beautiful

framed original painting by Joe Evangelisti, Jr. The Council gave Dr. Palmer a silver, engraved commemorative cup and a Certificate of Recognition from Governor Bill Haslam recognizing his many contributions to the state, including his twenty-two years of service on the Council.

Dr. Palmer addressed the audience and Ms. McMillan and Dr. Cheatham delivered remarks about Dr. Palmer's high level of commitment, valued partnership and exemplary career.

12:05 P.M.	LUNCH
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1:10 P.M.	PUBLIC POLICY REPORT
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Public Policy Director Lauren Percy, who started in October 2016, introduced herself and explained that the Council is building its public policy program from the ground up, so to speak. It will be designed to carry out activities to improve policies and practices that affect Tennesseans with intellectual and developmental disabilities, in keeping with the principles of the Developmental Disabilities Act. Specifically, Ms. Percy will spend her time conducting the following activities: examining policies and laws that impact people with disabilities; developing educational information and statements about policies; meeting with legislators, policymakers and partners; and developing recommendations for improving policy based on Developmental Disabilities Act principles and the experiences of constituents.

Ms. Percy then highlighted a few of the priority bills for the Council (Supported Decision-Making; the establishment of an Autism Council; support for business owners who have disabilities). She mentioned that all other bills the Council tracks are listed in the weekly policy message. Finally, Ms. Percy concluded the report by emphasizing the Council's year-round focus on supporting strong state agency programs that impact persons with disabilities, such as employment, healthcare, and special education. She mentioned the very strong existing collaborations with state partners who oversee those programs. Additionally, Ms. Percy noted that the Council is constantly looking to expand our partnerships. Most recently, we have made new connections with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and the Tennessee Department of Transportation – both areas of great importance for policies that affect the daily lives of people with disabilities.

1:40 P.M.	WRAP UP & MOTION TO ADJOURN
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Mr. Kidd encouraged members to turn in their travel claims and Council meeting evaluations. ***A motion for adjournment was made by Mr. Steve Sheegog and seconded by Mr. Tatum Fowler. The motion carried and the Council meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.*** The next Council meeting will take place at the Embassy Suites Nashville Airport April 28, 2017.

2017 COUNCIL MEETING DATES

2017 Council Meetings - Location: Embassy Suites Nashville Airport

- Friday, April 28, 2017
- Friday, September 15, 2017

Annual Planning Retreat - Location: Embassy Suites Nashville Airport

- Thursday & Friday, November 2 & 3, 2017

Respectfully submitted by:



JoEllen Fowler, Administrative Assistant

Approved by:



Wanda Willis, Executive Director