

## **Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities Quarterly Meeting**

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) met on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 10 a.m., via the teleconference and webinar platform, Zoom.

### **Agenda Item I Call to Order**

Chairperson Kate Donovan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with a quorum present.

### **Agenda Item II Roll Call**

Vice Chairperson Kozlowski conducted the roll call with the following results:

#### **Members Present:**

Kate Donovan - Chairperson  
Lud Kozlowski – Vice - Chair  
Karan Burnette  
Charles Lyford (ARS) – proxy for Joseph Baxter  
Syard Evans  
Cynthia Fong  
C.W. Gardenhire  
Mark George  
Ke'Arus Henderson  
Carrie Hollis-Anthony  
Tom Masseur  
Ann Price  
Toni Roy  
Heather Shrader  
Melissa Stone  
Christopher Tebbetts  
Maria Villagran  
Judy Watson

#### **Members Absent:**

Kasey Hodges  
Annette Mencer  
Kimberly Horton  
Rhonda Saunders

#### **Staff Present:**

Assiah Lewellen, Program & Outreach Manager  
Melissa Trostel-Hall, Program Coordinator  
Kim Gatewood, Admin. Specialist

**Others Present:**

Daniel Faulkner, (GCDD Legal Counsel)

Colbie Jones, Mangan Holcomb Partners (MHP)

Julie Robins, Mangan Holcomb Partners (MHP)

Ally Tomlinson, Community of Champions

Michael Thornton, Statewide Self Advocate Coordinator, SAND Project / DRA

**Agenda Item III  
Welcome and Guest Introductions**

Chairperson Donovan welcomed attendees and acknowledged the guests that were in attendance for the meeting.

**Agenda Item IV  
Approve March 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Chairperson Donovan requested the approval of the minutes for the previous Council meeting on March 11, 2021. She asked if there were any additions or corrections needed to be made. With no changes requested, a motion was made by Syard Evans and seconded by C.W. Gardenhire to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2021 meeting. All members present voted unanimously in favor and the motion to approve the minutes passed.

**Agenda Item V  
Council Staff Update**

Chairperson Donovan turned the Council's attention to Agenda Item V. She requested that Program Manager, Assiah Lewellen give a brief update on the Budget Report. Lewellen reviewed active Federal awards outlined in the GCDD Arkansas Federal Funds Report, June 2021 (see attached and recording for full details). Lewellen focused on 2101 ARSCC5, funding specifically allotted for GCDD's COVID activities. Lewellen asked if there were any questions. There being none, Chair Donovan then asked for a motion to approve the Budget Report. Chris Tebbetts made the motion and Cindy Fong seconded. All members present voted unanimously in favor; none were opposed, and the Council budget report was approved.

Chair Donovan turned the floor over to the Program and Outreach Coordinator, Melissa Trostel-Hall, to report on the project utilization report. She explained that the report shows the funded programs currently utilizing their funding but explained that there were still a few that were lagging in the submission of their reimbursement request. She assured the Council that she was in contact with the sub-grantees regarding their request but as they will see in the Programmatic Report, all programs/projects were showing great progress and that she expected to see more reimbursement request in the coming weeks. Trostel-Hall asked if there were any questions regarding the utilization report. There were none.

Trostel-Hall advanced to her Funded Project Summaries report. She stated that she hoped everyone had the opportunity to review this report on their own before the meeting, because due to the full agenda, and other business that needed to be addressed, she would not be able to go through each program/project programmatic report. She did

inform the Council that if there were any questions, she would be happy to discuss them after the meeting. Kozlowski thanked her for her work on the reports and informed the Council to reach out to her if they had any questions or concerns.

## **Agenda Item VI Reports from Committee Chairs**

Chair Donovan advanced to agenda item VI: reports from Committee Chairs. She began with the Executive Committee's progress on hiring a new executive director. She stated that of the two hiring firms they had attempted to utilize, one could not comply with the State's full hiring guidelines and the other had "too much on their plate". Chair Donovan said that the Executive Committee would interview three final candidates in the third week of June, and a hiring decision would be made shortly after that. She acknowledged the hard work of the staff.

Nominating Chairperson, Kozlowski gave a brief update to the Council, stating that letters have gone out to those whose term ended December 1, 2020. He affirmed the reappointment of Syard Evans, Ann Price, and Tom Masseur. Kozlowski reviewed terms expiring in 2021: Chairperson Kate Donovan, Maria Villagran, and Judy Watson. He asked that anyone who wishes to continue serving reach out to staff, and that he would discuss membership again in September. Kozlowski then discussed prospective members and encouraged everyone to look for future recruits to the board. Tom Masseur followed up on the automatic nature of his membership on the GCDD. Chair Donovan expressed her intent to continue with the board.

State Plan and Implementation Committee Chairperson, C.W. Gardenhire gave his update to the council. The state plan has gone through public comment, and the SPI Committee has reviewed them. C.W. invited comment on the plan. With no comments offered, Chair Donovan entertained a motion to approve the State Plan, Objectives, and Activities. Gardenhire made the motion to approve, seconded by Karan Burnette. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Donovan thanked the SPI Committee for the time and commitment to completing the State Plan. C.W. expressed thanks to the staff as well.

Gardenhire moved to recommendations for funding (Competitive and Solicited). Chair Donovan entertained a motion to approve the recommendations. The motion was made by Chris Tebbetts and seconded by C.W. Gardenhire. The motion was carried unanimously with the exceptions of Karan Burnette, Tom Masseur, Syard Evans, and Judy Watson, Maria Villagran. All five abstained due to conflicts of interest.

Chair Donovan turned the meeting over to Vice-Chair Kozlowski, and asked Mangan Holcomb Partners (MHP) representative, Colbie Jones to give the marketing efforts and results for the past quarter. She delivered a PowerPoint presentation to the Council reviewing the previous quarter's website and social media metrics (please review the Zoom recording for the full presentation).

Vice-Chair Kozlowski asked for a staff report on funded projects. Melissa Trostel-Hall reviewed the utilization report and programmatic reports. Trostel-Hall explained that lagging invoices from sub-grantees made it appear that there were remaining funds on the utilization report. Once the invoices are submitted the funds will be fully expended. August 15 is the final due date for invoices. Any remaining funds are 2020 funds and can be reallocated.

On the programmatic report Trostel-Hall reviewed: Jobs-4-You, Reducing Barriers NWA, The Ready to Work Program, SET for Success, The Bridge Project, and the Marshallese Interpreting for Community Inclusion (MICI) Project. She then moved on to The Self Advocacy Network Development (SAND) Project, The Community of Champions Advocate Project & DD Awareness Campaign, and The Guardianship and Alternative to Guardianship Conference and Toolkit.

Vice-Chair Kozlowski circled back to the Public Policy and Outreach Committee with Mark George. He expressed thanks to Council members who participated in the legislative process. George then discussed funds available in the American Rescue Act. Melissa Stone explained that a plan can be submitted to the Federal government, that if approved would generate a one-time 10% extra federal match around strengthening and expanding community and home-based services. Stone invited Council members to be part of upcoming workgroups focused on how to use those funds wisely.

### **Agenda Item VII Council Education & Training**

Kozlowski advanced to agenda item VII. Assiah Lewellen discussed understanding the multiple levels of capacity building: individual, organization, and systemic (the training is outlined in her memo from 6/8/2021).

### **Agenda Item VIII DD Network Update**

Vice-Chair Kozlowski moved to the DD Network Update, starting with Ally Tomlinson at Community of Champions. She gave a full overview of her programs, including a sample of CoC user surveys. After her presentation Kozlowski turned the Council's attention to Council members Karan Burnette and Tom Masseur for the DD Network Update. Burnette discussed how Partners, DRA, and GCDD's strong working relationship allows each group to achieve its goals more effectively.

Burnette then talked about how coordinated use of the DD Network COVID-19 grants support each agency's goals. She also discussed how the DD Network supports Self-Advocacy programs in Arkansas. Discussion was had amongst the Council on the above topic. Tom Masseur explained how DRA was using their COVID funding to monitor psychiatric facilities. Specifically, DRA plans to educate residents of those institutions about the COVID vaccine, and to ensure their safety. Masseur echoed the excitement

around supporting Self-Advocacy efforts in Arkansas. He then delivered an update on the guardianship grant.

### **Agenda Item IX Self-Advocacy Update**

Kozlowski directed the Council's attention to agenda item IX, the Self-Advocacy Update and asked Michael Thornton, for his update. He thanked the Council for supporting his efforts. Thornton addressed the Council with the work he had been doing over the last quarter. Thornton spoke about the continued progress he was having through Facebook and YouTube. He has also had some face to face contacts throughout the state. Thornton asked if there were any questions. A brief discussion was had regarding the work Thornton was doing.

Tom Masseau expanded on the Youth Ambassador project. It's a five-year grant through Harvard and ACL. It instructs self-advocates how to present alternatives to guardianship through a 16-week curriculum. Michael Thornton will be one of the course instructors.

Thornton is also participating in a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome program out of Conway.

### **Agenda Item X New Business and Announcements**

Kozlowski addressed agenda item X, New Business and Announcements. He asked how the Council felt about resuming in person meetings in September and December. Syard Evans expressed a desire to focus on a hybrid approach, as did Judy Watson, and Chris Tebbetts. Assiah Lewellen assured the Council that staff could accommodate a hybrid without issue.

Lewellen reviewed the last two meeting dates for the year, noting the end of the federal fiscal year on 9/30, the new State Plan and new fiscal year beginning 10/1. Kozlowski asked if there was any other new business. Chris Tebbetts experienced some technical difficulties at that point. After that the Vice-Chair moved on to the final agenda item.

### **Agenda Item XI Adjourn**

Kozlowski requested a motion to adjourn. Chris Tebbetts made the motion to adjourn. Annette Mencer seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

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Melissa Trostel-Hall, Recorder