

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

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD or The Council) met on Thursday, December 12, 2024, on the virtual meeting platform Google Meet.

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

Council Chair Katherine Donovan called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM CST. She then proceeded to call roll.

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

Chair Donovan then conducted the roll call with the following results:

#### **Members Present:**

Katherine Donovan – Chair  
Ludwik Kozlowski  
Joseph Baxter  
Jennifer Brezee  
Karan Burnette  
C.W. Gardenhire  
Mark George  
Ke'Arus Henderson  
Kasey Hodges  
Carrie Hollis-Anthony  
Tom Masseur  
Ann Price  
Amanda Sanders  
Rhonda Saunders  
Maria Villagran  
Janette Williams-Smith

#### **Members Absent:**

Syard Evans  
Toni Roy  
Heather Shrader  
Christopher Tebbetts

#### **Guests:**

Sherice Smith  
Tanya Miller-Witsell

**Staff Present:**

Jonathan Taylor, Executive Director  
Assiah Lewellen, Deputy Director  
Linda Sims, Program Coordinator  
Scottie York, Finance and Operations Coordinator (F&O)  
Kim Gatewood, Admin Specialist

With a quorum of 16 Council members in attendance, Chair Donovan moved to Agenda Item III.

**Agenda Item III  
Guest Introductions**

Chair Donovan asked for guests to introduce themselves. They are listed under "Guests" in Agenda Item II – Roll Call.

**Agenda Item IV  
Approve Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chair Donovan asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the 09/12/2024 Council meeting. She asked if there were any corrections. No corrections or discussions occurred. C.W. Gardenhire made the motion to approve the minutes and was seconded by Karan Burnette. During discussion on the motion there were then spelling and name corrections identified. The vote passed unanimously with the corrections included. Chair Donovan then turned the floor over to the staff to make updates.

**Agenda Item V  
Council Staff Update**

- A. **Executive Director's Report** - Executive Director Jonathan Taylor thanked the Council members for attending the meeting. Taylor also thanked GCDD Council staff for all their work putting the meeting together. Taylor outlined his activities since the September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Quarterly Business Meeting. He then discussed the multiple outreach events that himself and staff took part in. For full details please see the written Executive Director's report.
- B. **Council Budget Report** – F & O Coordinator Scottie York presented the Council Budget Report. York updated the Council on any changes to the report. York also presented a full breakdown on the Federal Fiscal Year 2025's budget and available funds. See the Council Budget Report for more details. He then asked if there were any questions. Being none, Chair Donovan asked for a motion to approve the Council Budget Report as presented. Tom Masseau made the motion, with Maria Villagran seconding. All members present voted unanimously in favor, and the motion to approve the report passed unanimously.

- C. **FY24 Funded Project Report** – Program Coordinator Linda Sims reviewed the Funded Project Report, sharing the highpoints from each program as well as remaining fund amounts for each and her process in closing out the fiscal year. For full details please see the Funded Project Report.

Chair Donovan thanked staff for their work and moved to the next Agenda Item.

### **Agenda Item VI DD Network/Advocacy Update**

Tom Masseau, Executive Director of Disability Rights Arkansas (DRA) was then called upon to give an update on DRA's activities, specifically:

- Human Development Center monitoring.
- Follow up on Senate committee testimony.

Chair Donovan thanked Masseau for his presentation and information, and then called on Karen Burnette, Executive Director of University of Arkansas Partners (UA Partners, or Partners) to share an update. Burnette discussed Partners' work with children and their efforts to keep them out of the Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs).

Chair Donovan then allowed the Council to take a ten minute break.

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

Upon returning from break, Chair Donovan asked the Committee Chairs to deliver their reports:

- A. **Executive Committee** – No Updates.
- B. **Nominating Committee** – Nominating Committee Chair Ludwik Kozlowski discussed the status of attendance and its importance moving forward, and the recent struggles to meet quorum.

General discussion ensued on the current status of applications to the Council and Boards and Commissions.

- C. **Public Policy and Outreach (PPO)** – PPO Committee Chair Mark George gave updates on his committee and its current work. George spoke to several pieces to legislation at the national and state level. An extensive conversation on the subjects ensued. For full details please refer to the recording.

At this time Chair Donovan paused the meeting for a brief break.

- D. State Plan and Implementation (SPI)** – SPI Committee Chair Gardenhire reviewed the state plan and the upcoming work and reporting required for the creation of the new five-year state plan, and the current status of the Requests For Proposals (RFP) for federal fiscal year 2025. Gardenhire turned the floor over to Deputy Director Assiah Lewellen to provide more details. Deputy Lewellen then gave a presentation on the overall progress of The Council's current five-year plan, as well as the necessary steps that need to be taken to establish the framework for the creation of the next five-year plan.

Gardenhire made a motion to use the unallocated funds to complete the work as needed. The motion was seconded by Ludwik Kozlowski and the vote passed unanimously.

Gardenhire then spoke about the work SPI would be doing in the future towards the development of the next state plan.

### **Agenda Item VIII State Agency Updates**

Council Chair Donovan then called on any representatives of State Agencies on the meeting for an update. Jennifer Breeze, Director of the Arkansas Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDS) gave an update on her agency. As no other agency heads were present Donovan moved to the next agenda item.

### **Agenda Item IX Training and Education**

Executive Director Taylor then conducted the annual training and reminder on the Statement of Financial Interest form that needs completed by Council members.

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

Executive Director Taylor then spoke briefly on the upcoming events and the support that staff will be providing during the legislative session.

**Agenda Item XI**  
**Adjourn**

Chair Donovan asked for a motion to adjourn. C.W. Gardenhire made the motion, seconded by Maria Villagran. All voted in favor of ending the meeting, and it adjourned at 12:31 PM CST.

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Scottie York, Recorder

**APPROVED BY FULL COUNCIL ON: 03/14/2024**