

APPROVED MINUTES – COUNCIL QUARTERLY MEETING

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

Monday, November 27, 2023

625 SILVER AVENUE SW, SUITE 100 (DDC LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM)

TELECONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Members Present

Advocates

Laurel Deans
Amelia-Ann Dickey
Crystal Garcia
Lystra John
Elisheva Levin

Family Members

Joel Davis
Katie Stone
Valentin Anaya
Jennifer Sanchez
Deanna Cole
Tarra Main
Selma Ramos Nevarez

Agencies Present

John Arango (CLSC)
Melanie Buenviaje (HCA)
Margaret Cage (PED)
Chris Futey (DOH, DDS)
Elizabeth Groginsky (ECECD)
Jennifer Jones, proxy (ALTSD)
Gary Housepian (DRNM)
Tim Gardner, proxy (DRNM)
Pat Osbourn (UNM, CDD)

Staff Present

Alice Liu McCoy (Executive Director)
Joe Turk (OOG Legal Director)
Donna Vigil (Chief Operating Officer)
Michelle Varela (Chief Financial Officer)
David Gonzales (Chief Procurement Officer)
Michelle Tregembo (Special Education State Ombud)
Daniel Ekman (CSA Program Manager)
Vashad Frink (Job Trainee)
Lucero Estrada (Office Administrator)
Delilah Tenorio (OAG Assistant Attorney General)

Advocates Absent

Richard Segura

Family Members Absent

Joseph Melvyn Jaramillo

Agencies Absent

Eli Fresquez (CYFD)
Lanthia Miles (Non-Government Agency)
Casey Stone-Romero (DVR)

Public Guests

Jennifer Rodriguez (PED)
Robert Kegel
Tracy Perry
Bruce Weatherbee

Call to Order/ Housekeeping

Chair Joel Davis called the meeting to order, completed the roll call, and housekeeping was conducted. The meeting convened at 11:06 AM.

Public Comment (Morning)

None.

Approval of November 27, 2023 Agenda – Action Item

Valentin Anaya moved to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Jennifer Sanchez. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of August 14, 2023 Quarterly Meeting Minutes – Action Item

Katie Stone moved to approve the minutes with the following two amendments: (1) revise minutes to state that Katie Stone toured UNM with Representative Kathleen Cates to showcase accessibility improvements and note gaps for suggested future improvements; and (2) add Elisheva Levin as a member of the health committee. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Groginsky and passed unanimously.

Council Chair & Executive Director Report – Joel Davis & Alice Liu McCoy

Alice reported updates on DD councils at the national level and the DD council executive director summit. Alice discussed the difference between advocacy and lobbying.

2024 Legislative Session Preparation

Alice discussed the upcoming pre-legislative forum on January 13, 2024, and Disability Rights Awareness Day on February 6, 2024. Alice discussed DDC's FY25 budget request and the importance of supporting state agency budget requests during the session. Gary Housepian requested the current guardianship wait list. Joe Turk and Alice discussed wait list management and the case assignment process. Gary asked about alternatives to guardianship, and Alice discussed ways OOG is incorporating alternatives into its work.

Melanie Buenviaje discussed the new Health Care Authority structure, the DD waiver superallocation, DD services rate study, and importance of supporting HCA's budget request.

Elizabeth Groginsky discussed expanding eligibility of childcare access to 400%, \$40 million request to expand FIT to serve 2,000 more infants and toddlers, \$33 million to expand pre-K access for three-year-olds with a goal of universal pre-K (including 1080 hours of instruction, literacy readiness, and other quality control measures), \$19 million for Pre-K supports (professional development, coaching, materials), \$11 million for childcare and redesigning quality control systems, and invited Council members to attend ECECD's

budget hearing on December 12, 2023.

Margaret Cage discussed PED's new Office of Special Education and its staffing needs, OSE's behavioral initiative to train teachers and staff across the state, professional development (literacy, behavior, serving students with disabilities in areas of academics, behavior, and social/emotional support), partnering with higher education institutions to create incentives for more special education teachers, differential pay, and a parent university to train parents on how to help their students academically, acquire necessary wraparound services, and advocate for their students' needs.

Alice encouraged Council members and the public to attend LFC budget hearings to advocate for state agency budgets that support DDC priorities.

John Arango suggested that today's projects should cost tens of millions of dollars and big projects should cost hundreds of millions, especially in light of the \$4 billion in projected revenue and astronomical costs of today.

Tim Garnder asked when the new rate increases would be implemented for DD and Mi Via waivers. Melanie explained the CMS amendment process, which should be completed in 30 to 90 days.

Tim commented that the rate study does not support an increase for supported living direct service providers and requested that DOH or HCA explain the plan for the current waitlist. Melanie discussed the enrollment or offer of the supports waiver and Medicaid community benefits to individuals on the waitlist, and offered to provide the number of individuals on the waitlist accessing community benefits services.

NMDDC Program Updates & Council Committee Priorities

Education:

Michelle Tregembo, John, and Alice discussed the LESC workgroups and listening sessions. John discussed the special education budget. Margaret discussed what she has observed in her first few weeks in New Mexico as the inaugural OSE director. Elizabeth lauded the broad stakeholder involvement. John emphasized that regulation is not the key to success in special education, but a cultural change that prioritizes what each student needs to succeed. Margaret and Elizabeth stressed the importance of accountability and putting measures and laws into place to require accountability. Alice state the importance of outcome-based, person-centered approaches to problem solving. Elisheva Levin stated that piling on accountability in its current forms has not produced outcomes and that accountability at the level of each individual child is needed. John suggested that DDC focus on jobs and career development as its primary goal for New Mexicans living with DD.

Katie asked whether PED was working with other states who have been more successful at special education. Margaret described the myriad ways she and her team are working across states to learn and incorporate best practices.

Alice and Michelle Tregembo presented the annual Special Education Ombud report. Alice discussed the administration's cradle to career approach and collaboration across all state agencies.

Health:

Daniel Ekman, Elisheva, Chris Futey, Jennifer Sanchez, Pat Osbourn, and Alice discussed health committee initiatives such as collecting meaningful feedback from DD waiver participants about DD waiver services and DDS visits.

Community-Based Services:

Joe Turk and Alice discussed housing issues and alternatives to guardianship project.

Employment:

Alice, Chris, Jennifer Sanchez, and Elisheva discussed the need for a broad range of employment supports.

Self-Advocacy:

Amelia Ann-Dickey and Daniel discussed the new Advocacy Leadership Academy model that will be incorporated into the spring 2024 Academy class.

Public Comment (Afternoon)

Bruce Weathersby asked if the Council will take a stand on the inadequacy of the DD waiver rate study. Alice responded that the DD Council has and will continue to advocate for adequate rates.

Member Announcements

Jennifer Sanchez announced Autism Day at the Capitol Roundhouse on January 17, 2024, and a legislator postcard writing event on January 20, 2024. Joel reminded members that Disability Rights Awareness Day is February 6, 2024. Jen reminded members that the pre-legislative forum is January 13, 2024.

Adjourn

The next meeting will be held in February 2024. Motion to adjourn was made by Tarra Main and seconded by Jennifer Sanchez. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:56 PM.