



# Council Meeting Minutes

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January 22, 2021

**Council Members Present:**

Alison Bynum\*  
Jody Cheek\*  
Roddey Coe\*  
Ryan Durham\*  
Tatum Fowler\*  
Lesley Guilaran\*  
Alicia Hall\*  
Chrissy Hood\*  
Clancey Hopper\*  
Lisa Johnson\*  
Tecia Puckett Pryor\*  
Brigham Scallion\*  
Brent Wiles\*  
Martez Williams\*  
Anna Lea Cothron, TCAD  
Alison Gauld, Dept. Special Education  
Jacqueline Johnson, Dept. of Health  
Bruce Keisling, UT Center for  
Developmental Disabilities (UTCDD)  
Mandy Johnson, Voc. Rehab. Services  
Mark Liverman, Dept. Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse  
Lisa Primm, Disability Rights TN  
Elise McMillan, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center  
Rose Naccarato, Tenn. Commission on  
Children & Youth  
Don Watt, THDA  
Robin Wilmonth, Dept of Intellectual and  
Developmental Disabilities

**Staff Present:**

Wanda Willis  
Lynette Porter  
Alicia Cone  
Cathlyn Smith  
Lauren Pearcy  
Jolene Sharp  
Emma Shouse-Garton  
Ashley Edwards  
JoEllen Fowler  
Mildred Sparkman

**Guests Present:**

None

**Council Members Absent:**

Sarah Cripps\*  
Jennifer Coleman\*  
Jean-Marie Lawrence\*  
Karen West\*

*\*denotes Governor appointed citizen*

## **11:00 a.m. Open & Welcome**

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Council Chair Tecia Puckett Pryor called the meeting to order after ascertaining there was a quorum at 11:00 a.m.

## **11:10 a.m. Business Items**

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### **Purpose of the Meeting**

Tecia reminded members of the purpose of this meeting: to consider a proposal for allocating \$300,000 in Council grant funds that the Council is unable to liquidate this year due to the pandemic. Council members will review the proposal, discuss the proposal and impact on state disability efforts, and decide whether to fund the project.

### **Family Support Program Project Proposal**

Wanda Willis, Executive Director, provided an overview and context for a project proposal.

With key Council programs (Partners in Policymaking and other learning events) unable to meet in person this year, the Council saw expenditures change significantly from month to month, not knowing if our programs could resume in person. The Council was disappointed to learn last month that the federal government decided not to extend our spending period this year, meaning we will lose access to funds not spent by September 2021. We have 9 months to redirect the funds, follow required administrative procedures to obligate and then spend the funds. This decision cannot wait until the February quarterly council meeting.

The Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities directs the Family Support Program, which serves (via financial assistance) families who have school-aged or younger children with severe disabilities, adults with severe disabilities who choose to live with their families, and adults with severe disabilities not supported by other residential programs funded by state or federal funds. Today's funding proposal would allocate \$300,000 of Council funds to support Tennesseans with developmental disabilities and their families experiencing needs due to the pandemic through the Family Support Program. Funds would be focused on distressed counties including Lake, Lauderdale, Hardeman, Perry, Wayne, Clay, Grundy, Bledsoe, Scott, Hancock, and Cocke Counties. This funding would begin immediately and would end June 30, 2021.

Council members were sent this proposal ahead of the meeting and asked follow-up questions, which Wanda researched and shared responses to:

- Funds are distributed to counties using a formula based on population
- Of the proposed 11 counties, 4 currently have a wait list of 1 to 6 people
- The 11 counties currently disburse between \$20-26,000 annually, with Cocke county disbursing \$33,000.

Communication Committee Chair Tatum Fowler asked if this spending would allocate all the excess funding the Council is unable to spend as a result of the pandemic. Wanda responded that we won't know final spending totals of current contracts until closer to the end of the state fiscal year, but there is a strong chance the Council grants will be underspent, meaning this project would not allocate all the Council's excess funding.

Several council members voiced concern of limiting this funding opportunity to 11 of Tennessee's 95 counties. Discussion shifted to the waiting list, families with expressed needs in counties where Family Support funds had run out.

**Rodney Coe moved to allocate \$300,000 of Council grant dollars to the Family Support Program under the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, with the goal of eliminating the waiting lists across the state and using the Department's priority metrics for spending. Ryan Durham seconded.** Robin Wilmoth (Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) abstained from voting and left the virtual meeting. Tecia asked any council member currently on any Family Support Program waitlist to also abstain from the vote. None were present. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **11:45 a.m. Adjournment**

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Council Chair Tecia Puckett Pryor reminded Council members of upcoming Council meeting dates. Tecia also encouraged members to participate in the TN Disability Survey and to share this opportunity within their communities.

**A motion for adjournment was made by Tatum Fowler and seconded by Lesley Guilaran. The motion carried and the Council meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.** The next Council meeting will take place on February 26, 2021. The meeting will take place virtually.

## Upcoming Meeting Dates

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**SAVE THE DATES: 2021 Council Meeting Dates** (Location: TBD)

- Council Meeting: February 26, 2021 (Virtual)
- Council Meeting: May 7, 2021 (Virtual)
- Council Meeting: September 17, 2021
- Council Retreat: November 4-5, 2021

  
Respectfully submitted by: Ashley Edwards, Executive Assistant

  
Approved by: Wanda Willis, Executive Director