



# Council Meeting Minutes

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February 26, 2021

**Council Members Present:**

Allison Bynum\*  
Jody Cheek\*  
Roddey Coe\*  
Jennifer Coleman\*  
Sarah Cripps\*  
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  
Mandy Johnson, Voc. Rehab. Services  
Mark Liverman, Dept. Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse  
Lisa Primm, Disability Rights TN  
Elise McMillan, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center  
Don Watt, THDA  
Rose Naccarato, Tenn. Commission on  
Children & Youth

**Staff Present:**

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

**Guests Present:**

**Visitors Present:**

Sharon Stout

**Council Members Absent:**

Jean-Marie Lawrence\*  
Karen West\*  
Bruce Keisling, UT Center  
for Developmental  
Disabilities (UTCDD)  
Robin Wilmoth, Dept. of  
Intellectual and  
Developmental Disabilities

*\*denotes Governor appointed citizen*

## **9:00 a.m. Opening & Introductions**

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Council Chair Tecia Puckett Pryor called the meeting to order after ascertaining there was a quorum at 9:00 a.m. Tecia welcomed everyone and facilitated introductions, including Public Policy Intern Conor Rayel, and newly appointed members:

- **Shontie Brown**  
Memphis-Delta Development District
- **Edward Mitchell**  
Southwest Development District
- **Ernie Roark**  
East Tennessee Development District

Tecia then reviewed the meeting agenda.

## **9:15 a.m. Business Items**

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### **Approval of November 2020 and January 2021 Minutes**

The November 2020 and the January 2021 Council meeting minutes were emailed to all the Council members prior to the February 26, 2021 Council meeting to give members an opportunity to review before the meeting. Roddey Coe and Tatum Fowler submitted edits to the January 2021 minutes. Tecia called for a motion to accept the minutes, as edited, from the members present at the February meeting. **Roddey Coe moved to accept both the November 2020 and the January 2021 minutes as written and Brigham Scallion seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.**

### **Executive Director Report**

Wanda Willis, Executive Director, encouraged members to read the Executive Director report included in the email to members dated February 25, 2021. Wanda emphasized key projects in the report:

The Council was contacted by state and federal health agencies to consult on issues surrounding vaccines for citizens with developmental disabilities. Staff from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) met with the Executive Director and Director of Public Policy to talk about vaccine issues, best practice ideas, and suggestions for how CDC could be helpful. The TN Department of Health appointed the Council to a small advisory group about vaccine priorities and needs of Tennesseans with disabilities. The Council promoted caregivers of people of all ages living at home and sign language interpreters not available in hospitals for patients with COVID who are blind and deaf. The department staff was grateful to be made aware of these groups and explained that vaccine supply shortages are affecting their ability to reach as many priority groups as they would like. So far, they have only been able to extend to sign language interpreters.

For the first time in its 25-year history, Partners was conducted virtually. A new director coordinated the retooling and planning for the 2021-22 sessions with support from other staff. Future sessions of Partners are likely to follow a hybrid of virtual and in-person training models.

The Council is winding up its first year overseeing the collaborative work of 4 state agencies (Departments of Education, Human Services, Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, and the Council) to jointly fund and direct the work of TN Disability Pathfinder operated by the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center. Agencies meet monthly to plan for and review TN Disability Pathfinder workplan items.

### **Executive Committee Report**

Tecia shared that the Executive Committee continues to meet virtually every month. Minutes from these meetings are available on the Council website. Roddey Coe requested that these minutes be uploaded regularly. Staff will post approved minutes to the website monthly.

The Council hosted a New Member Orientation for newly appointed members on February 12. Edward Mitchell, new member from Jackson, Tennessee, shared that this orientation was helpful in preparing him for the February meeting.

### **Budget/Operations Report**

Lynette Porter, Deputy Director, shared an update on the state budget process. The Governor presented the Council's FY22 budget to the legislature in February. The state budget is the approved operational plan for how we spend our federal dollars. The Council is level funded in this budget, which is finalized when the Legislature passes the state budget.

Lynette explained the difference between obligated and "spent" funding. Obligated means that the dollars have been placed into a contract; spent means the dollars have been used. The status of the Council's federal allotments are as follows:

- FY 19 – Fully Obligated (have until 9/30/21 to spend)
- FY 20 – Fully Obligated (have until 9/30/21 to spend)
- FY21 – Fully Obligated (have until 9/30/22 to spend)

The Council has begun working with the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) to implement the recently approved contract for Family Support. Funding has been divided evenly across the 16 regional agencies to be spent according to local need/priorities. DIDD expressed much gratitude to the Council for the additional funding. The Council will receive a data report on this project at the end of the fiscal year.

Lynette updated the Council on several operational highlights. Significant staff time has been spent on updating and adapting Council processes for contracts related to grantee spending in the COVID environment. There has been a shift in focus to new tools for agency efficiency in an electronic environment. Staff continue to work with the Secretary of State toward an upcoming records assessment. Mildred Sparkman serves as our central hub for office operations and is currently the only staff member working at the Davy Crockett Tower (Council office) full time.

## **9:50 a.m. Adjourn to Council Committee Meetings**

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## **10:45 a.m. Committee Report Outs**

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*Minutes from committees are attached to these minutes.*

- Evaluation Committee (Lisa Johnson, Chair)
- Public Policy Committee (Lesley Guilaran, Chair)
- Communications Committee (Tatum Fowler, Chair)

## **11:25 a.m. Break**

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## **11:35 a.m. State Plan Update**

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Over the last several months, the Council has posted its proposed Five-Year State Plan to the website for public comment. Staff shared an overview of comments and proposed updates to the objectives and activities for Council member approval. An outline of proposed changes is included in the PPT attached to these minutes. The themes and summary of these comments for each Goal are outlined below:

### **Goal 1: Developing Engaged Leaders**

Public review and comment themes:

- Innovation that connects leadership training to advocacy and systems change
- Support for self-advocacy (People First mentioned specifically)
- Building greater public awareness of learning opportunities

### **Goal 2: Improving Policy & Practice**

Public review and comment themes:

- Council role in addressing breakdowns in communication within the system that affect individuals and families
- Council role in bringing together people with disabilities through events and meetings with policymakers
- Need to reach beyond our existing network to underrepresented groups and rural communities, including rural policymakers

### **Goal 3: Informing the Public**

Public comment themes:

- Council role in getting clear, easy-to-understand information to self-advocates and the community
- Broadening the reach of Council information, including to minority communities/those not well connected

- Exploring tools and relationships that help us build broader engagement with the public
- Both support for and questions regarding targeted disparities objective

Dr. Alicia Cone, Director of Program Operation, presented a brief overview of the federally required Targeted Disparity objective at the request of Council members during the November meeting.

## **12:05 p.m. Legislative Update**

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Lauren Percy, Director of Public Policy, presented a brief update on priority bills and the work of Council members.

The Council has worked on several projects related to policy and practice for 2021:

- Launching the Center for Decision-Making with The Arc TN, Disability Rights TN
- Assisting TDOT with implementing the new Office of Accessible Transportation
- Explaining vaccine distribution, Medicaid block grant in plain language for a broad audience
- Conducting year-long training initiatives in Employment First and person-centered practices for front-line staff: VR professionals, Support Coordinators, and American Job Centers.

Disability Day on the Hill will take place virtually on March 11, 2021. Council members are encouraged to make an appointment with their legislators. The Council will host a morning “breakfast” to prepare members for visits. More information will be emailed to members.

Council members are also invited to participate in the annual Disability Policy Seminar on April 22, 2021 (also virtual). To attend, Council members should email Lauren Percy with their interest.

The Council has been watching several bills in the Tennessee General Assembly that align with its current work. Several Council members have worked on legislation this year:

### **Changing Spaces ([SB602/HB905](#))**

Bill would expand access to adult-sized changing tables in certain public buildings in Tennessee. Council member Chrissy Hood shared her experience in using her voice and her experience to present this idea to legislators. Council member Roddey Coe shared his experience in partnering with Chrissy to get this legislation in motion. The bill is in committee now.

### **Precious Cargo Act (SB110/HB40)**

Council member Martez Williams helped amend this bill to include people with physical disabilities.

### **Other state bills the Council is watching:**

- Texting 911 (SB182/HB173) – led by a self-advocate with The Arc TN, would allow Deaf and hard of hearing individuals to gain access to 911 services.
- State as a Model Employer (SB100/HB112) – a long-time priority of the Council; this bill would encourage state agencies to employ people with disabilities.
- Teacher Discipline Act (SB230/HB16) – providing for teachers to remove disruptive students.

Lauren also provided a brief overview of resolutions affecting disability, which can also be accessed by reading the Council’s Policy News.

**12:35 a.m. Wrap-Up**

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Tecia reminded members to complete the evaluation form this week.

**12:35 p.m. Adjournment**

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**A motion for adjournment was made by Sarah Cripps and seconded by Roddey Coe. The motion carried and the Council meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.** The next Council meeting will take place on May 7, 2021, virtually.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates**

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**2021 Council Meeting Dates**

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

Respectfully submitted by:  Ashley Edwards, Executive Assistant

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Approved by:  Wanda Willis, Executive Director

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## Council Communication Committee

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Location: Virtual: Zoom  
Date: Friday, February 26, 2021  
Time: 9:50 A.M. CST

**Present:** Tatum Fowler, Jennifer Coleman, Chrissy Hood, Tecia Puckett Pryor, Alison Gauld, Don Watt, Edward Mitchell

**Absent:**

**Staff:** Jolene Sharp, Emma Shouse Garton

**Guests:**

1) **Call to Order**

After ascertaining there was a quorum, Tatum Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

2) **Updates on Communication Plan Priorities / Progress on FY 21**

Jolene Sharp, Chief Operations officer, shared updates on progress for FY21.

3) **Highlights of Comms Role in State Plan Process**

4) **Input: What services would you like to see explained through short, easy-to-understand animated videos?**

Tatum facilitated a discussion for council members to share ideas for this potential project.

5) **Adjournment**

*At 10:55 a.m., Tatum Fowler adjourned the meeting.*

Prepared by: Jolene Sharp



## Council Evaluation Committee

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Location: Zoom Meeting  
Date: Friday, February 26, 2021  
Time: 9:55 A.M. CDT

**Present:** Lisa Johnson, Ryan Durham, Alicia Hall, Brigham Scallion, Mandy Johnson, Mark Liverman, Alison Bynum, Jody Cheek, Robin Wilmoth

**Absent:** Bruce Keisling, Shannon Nehus, Karen West

**Staff:** Alicia Cone, Cathlyn Smith

**Guests:**

1) **Call to Order**

After ascertaining there was a quorum, the committee meeting was called to order at 9:55 a.m. CST.

2) **Introductions and Review of the purpose of the Evaluation Committee**

Lisa Johnson facilitated introductions and a brief review of the purpose of the Evaluation Committee.

3) **Consent Agenda: Approve today's Evaluation Committee Agenda**

The agenda for the meeting was shared.

*Brigham Scallion moved to approve the agenda. Alicia Hall seconded. Approved.*

4) **Discussion of FY21 First (1<sup>st</sup>) Quarter Score Cards**

- General highlight –
  - By far COVID-19 has had the most significant impact on Goal 1 as far as accomplishing objective related work activities is concerned. While the staff has worked with collaborating partners to move to virtual platforms for the various leadership trainings offered under Goal 1, the process has moved at varying speeds. For example, Partners has very successfully transitioned and is on course, while LAEDS moved more slowly, and AiM will be starting virtual trainings in early March.
- Under Goal 1 – Leadership Development, AiM and the Scholarship Fund have had the most difficulty making the transition to a virtual meeting environment.



These objectives are in red due to slow movement on program activities and slow expenditure of funds.

The following was noted –

- Partners in Policymaking is programmatically on track, but expenditures of slow. However, staff have found additional activities for the Partners contract to address this underspending.
- While Advocates in Motion is in red for programmatic and expenditure reasons, staff continued to work with our DIDD partner and worked out new payment options to support AiM trainers and they were retrained to provide AiM in a virtual environment. Staff also reported that by the early March, 2021 the first virtual AiM training will occur.
- Leadership Academy for Excellence in Disability Services – is working well in a virtual format and did indeed start back up during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of FY21. It is now on schedule and also being transitioned to CAT as lead staff.
- Scholarship Fund –
  - Two objectives related to the Scholarship Fund were reported as being a concern programmatically and fiscally. Overall, the first action staff has taken is to extend the contract from June 30 to September 30 to give the grantees more time to spend their funds.
  - More specifically, COVID-19 impacted both objectives 1.6 and 1.7 significantly. For Objective 1.6, the Council usually supports a large number of people from Memphis going to Disability Day on the Hill. However, that event is virtual and free this year. Instead staff is looking to support Tennesseans with disabilities to participate in the Disability Policy Seminar, which is virtual this year, but has a registration fee.
  - With regard to Objective 1.7, staff is looking at redirecting the funds to larger projects that would actually fit under objective 1.8. Examples already implemented is a dance project with Borderless Arts, and a photography class with AbleVoices.
  - Objective 1.8 has faced fewer barriers, as several partner organizations have been able to pivot to virtual conferences. The focus has been on assisting agencies to develop the ability to move to virtual platforms. This quarter, 3 training opportunities have made use of Council assistance: 11th Annual Community Conference on Autism, the 4th Annual Southeastern Adult Autism Conference, and a series of web-based trainings held by

## TABS.

- Under Goal 2- Impacting Policy and Practice, all public policy staff activities were are track and making progress. Highlights include –
  - Objective 2.1 - Staff is tracking 13 federal bills, working with 28 policy groups, and lead or participated in 58 meetings with state government and community stakeholders. Success story - One meeting with a legislator who called for help prepping for an ADA event.
  - Objective 2.2 - Despite COVID-19, staff has done over 15 presentations this quarter, and fielded 26 policy inquiries from Tennesseans. COVID-19 still represents a barrier to in-person meetings with policymakers.
  - Objective 2.3 – Staff currently collaborates with almost 50 group that work to improve policy and/or practice. These collaborations have led to outcomes such as: the partnership with vocational rehabilitation to embed person-centered thinking throughout the system and to revise a disability training VR gives to American Job Centers.
  - Objective 2.4 - Four grant projects are underway as a result of research on best practices and partnerships:
    - Arc of TN – SDM: The Center for Decision Making website is under development.
    - DRT – SDM: two staff hired to lead the project; Council staff conducted a training for each staff to give background on the project.
    - DIDD – Project START: Orientations have begun & are ongoing.
    - GHA – VR Trainings held in August with very positive evaluations.
- Under Goal 3 – Informing and Educating Stakeholders all communications staff and grant contract activities are on track and making progress. Some highlights include:
  - The Comms team’s focus on engagement has been successful with increases in e-news subscribers & e-news open rates; Facebook followers; Twitter followers; BG subscribers; & CDD web site reach.
  - N&R Rural Outreach contract – staff reported that this project accomplished all its milestones and will be complete in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
  - Pathfinder - Staff successfully launched a joint effort among five state departments to oversee, evaluate, and sustain Pathfinder, with two more state agencies slated to come aboard in FY22.
  - Pathfinder deep dive evaluation being done by Dr. Carter from VU is also well underway. The first activity, which is a survey is meeting all milestones, more information will be coming next quarter.

## 5) Update on LAEDS long term follow-up evaluation -



Dr. Cone shared an update on the LAEDS long term follow up survey. Highlights include -

- Staff shared that the purpose of the follow-up survey is to perform an evaluation in order to obtain input from past participants regarding the impact of the program on their knowledge and skills, and to gather information to assist in improving the program.
- Staff reported the following highlights for the update –
  - UT Health Science Center-Center on Developmental Disabilities (UTHSC-CDD) faculty met with Ms. Willis and Dr. Cone to learn about the Leadership Academy for Excellence in Disability Services program.
  - Dr. Cone sent documents related to the Council's various programs and the UT-HSC-CDD faculty reviewed the documents.
  - UT has begun developing a longitudinal survey.
  - In addition, the UTHSC-CDD faculty and Dr. Cone submitted an application to the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) annual conference to present a poster on the history of the Leadership Academy for Excellence in Disability Services program, and it was accepted.

## 6) **Update on Council Impact contract -**

Dr. Cone shared a summary of the purpose of the Council Impact grant project, and an update on progress. Highlights include -

- The primary purpose of the work is
  - to perform a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness and impact of Councils' programs by obtaining, reviewing and synthesizing evaluation data (e.g., outputs and outcomes) over the last four years.
  - to look at actual outcomes and how they match with the five year state plan predictions.
  - To provide an analysis that will help inform decisions the Council makes about their work moving into the next 5-year state plan.
- Staff reminded the Committee that this project began October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Key documents have been reviewed including – 4 years of quarterly reports, the 5-year logic model, predicted short and long term outcomes. Staff is completing the last document necessary for review.
- The next step will be to conduct the analysis of data collected beginning in May.

## 7) **Review of the Year 4 Review document – Alicia [10 min]**

- Staff explained that the Year 4 Review was a new requirement for the PPR, and that It is an extension of the Council's ongoing evaluation process.
- Staff shared that the purpose of the 4-year review is for the Council to provide a description of how a Council will use and build on the knowledge gained and progress made to move forward into the next state plan.
- Staff also shared that the 4-year review provides –
  - a description of what activities and strategies are likely to be carried forward,



- information about systems change efforts that will be ongoing,
- information about current work that will not be built upon.
- Then staff shared the visual summary that had been developed that highlights 9 key lessons learned over the last 4 years, with next steps.

## 8) **Motion to Adjourn**

***At 10:50 a.m. Alison Bynum moved for adjournment. Brigham Scallion seconded. Approved.***

Prepared by: Alicia A. Cone



## Council Public Policy Committee

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Location: Virtual (Zoom)  
Date: Friday, February 26, 2021  
Time: 9:50 A.M. CST

**Present:** Lesley Guilaran, Shontie Brown, Roddey Coe, , Sarah Cripps, Clancey Hopper, Brent Wiles, Martez Williams, Lisa Primm, Kendra Mitchell (Jacqueline Johnson), Elise McMillan

**Absent:** Jean-Marie Lawrence, Anna Lea Cothron, Rose Naccarato

**Staff:** Lauren Percy, Conor Rayel, Mildred Sparkman, Wanda Willis

**Visitor:** Sharon Stout

### 1) **Call to Order**

After ascertaining there was a quorum, Lesley Guilaran, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. CST

### 2) **Consent Agenda**

Lesley Guilaran shared the agenda for the meeting.

### 3) **Introductions**

Lesley Guilaran facilitated introductions, including new member Shontie Brown, Spring Council Intern, Conor Rayel, and a visitor, Sharon Stout.

### 4) **Highlight of Legislation**

The committee reviewed key legislation that the Council is watching:

- Universal Changing Tables SB602/HB905
- Texting 911 SB182/HB173
- Precious Cargo Act SB110/HB40
- Teacher's Discipline Act SB230/HB16
- State as a Model Employer SB100/HB112
- Eliminate subminimum wage SB1292/HB1454
- Pay increase for direct support workers HB130/SB114

Committee members contributed to discussion and questions throughout.

### 5) **Review of Quarterly Updates for State Plan Goal 2**

Lauren Percy, Director of Public Policy, reviewed a report on Goal 2 Activities from the first two quarters. Information included highlighted input on policy decisions, plain language



explanations, efforts that target practices, and overall feedback on improving policy and practice. This full report is attached to the end of these minutes.

- 6) **Wrap up, Prepare for Report Out**
- 7) **Adjournment**

Prepared by: Lauren Pearcy