



# TN Council on Developmental Disabilities Meeting Minutes

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March 1, 2019

**Members Present:** Jody Cheek, Roddey Coe, Jennifer Coleman, Ryan Durham, Evan Espey, Dawn Fry, Serina Gilbert, Clancey Hopper, Lisa Johnson, Tecia Puckett Pryor, Karen West, Martez Williams.

**Members Absent:** Amy Allen, Tatum Fowler, Lesley Guilaran, Jean-Marie Lawrence, Craig Lemak, William Lovell, Steve Sheegog, Gina Summer.

**Agency Representatives Present:** Annalea Cothran (Commission on Aging and Disability), Ruth Brock (Vocational Rehabilitation), Shannon Nehus and Amber Cockings (TennCare), Jeremy Norden-Paul (Dept. of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities), Alison Gauld (Dept. of Education), Courtney Taylor (Vanderbilt Kennedy Center), Lisa Primm (Disability Rights TN), Bettie Teasley (TN Housing Development Agency), Mark Liverman (Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Svcs.), Sarah Kassas (Non-governmental agency).

**Agency Representatives Absent:** Bruce Keisling (Univ. of TN Health Science Center, Boling Center), Rose Naccarato (Commission on Children and Youth), Jeremy Norden-Paul (Dept. of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities).

**Staff Present:** Alicia Cone, Ashley Edwards, JoEllen Fowler, Lauren Pearcy, Lynette Porter, Jolene Sharp, Emma Shouse Garton, Ned Andrew Solomon, Mildred Sparkman, Wanda Willis.

**Visitors:** Jim Rogers, Brad Turner and Cara Kumari (Dept. on Intellectual Developmental Disabilities), Joseph Williams (Office of the Governor)

9:00 A.M.	OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS
<p>Council Chair, Tecia Puckett Pryor, opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Puckett Pryor welcomed everyone, introduced new Council staff member Jolene Sharp (Chief Information Officer) and facilitated introductions.</p> <p>Ms. Puckett Pryor announced that Serina Gilbert, current Vice Chair of the Executive Council, has resigned from the Council due to personal health concerns. We appreciate Serina’s leadership and her dedication to the Council.</p>	

9:10 A.M.	COMMISSIONER BRAD TURNER
<p>Commissioner Brad Turner from the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), was introduced by Wanda Willis. Commissioner Turner shared his vision for the future of the Department's work in the disability service system. He emphasized gratitude for the partnership between DIDD and the Council and thanked members for investing their time and talents in Tennessee.</p>	
9:25 A.M.	BUSINESS ITEMS
<p>Ms. Tecia Puckett Pryor called the business meeting to order after ascertaining there was a quorum.</p> <p><b><u>Approval of November 2 Minutes and Agenda Review</u></b></p> <p>The November 2, 2018 Council meeting minutes were emailed to all the Council members prior to the March 1, 2019 Council meeting to give members an opportunity to review before the meeting. Ms. Puckett Pryor called for a motion to accept the minutes as written from the members present at the November meeting. <b><i>Mr. Evan Espey moved to accept the November 2, 2018 minutes as written and Mr. Ryan Durham seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.</i></b></p> <p>Ms. Puckett Pryor reviewed the agenda for the Council meeting.</p> <p><b><u>Executive Committee Report</u></b></p> <p>Ms. Puckett Pryor reported that the Executive Committee met on Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. The Committee approved FY20 grant continuation projects in addition to approving an amendment to one current grant recipient for FY19. Ms. Puckett Pryor reminded Council members that in July of this year, several seats on the Council will be vacant and Council staff will present nominees for the Governor's consideration. She encouraged Council members to share with staff anyone they think might be interested in being nominated as a Council member.</p> <p><b><u>Executive Director Report</u></b></p> <p>Ms. Willis encouraged members to read the staff report included in their folders. In November, the Executive Director discussed an increase in the number of presentations and opportunities to inform and educate citizens across the state. In addition, the Council set a goal to improve its outreach to rural communities beginning in 2019. As a result of this increase and aim for broader reach, the Council has restructured its Communications Team. Jolene Sharp was hired as Chief Public Information Officer in January to oversee messaging, manage public relations, develop and maintain the agency communication plan, and act as the liaison with public information offices. Emma Shouse Garton will continue to produce the Council's e-news, maintain social media outlets, manage the website, and create communication analytics as the Public Information Specialist. Already, Jolene and Emma have created a strong and focused team.</p> <p>Ms. Willis also highlighted a recent visit to Tennessee from Assistant Secretary for Aging for the Administration on Community Living (ACL), Lance Robertson. Assistant Secretary Robertson met with the DD Act Program leaders, governor appointed Council members Evan Espey and Clancey Hopper, state agency representatives, and state legislators to learn how the Council works collaboratively to expand opportunities for community living. Assistant Secretary Robertson shared about his visit in a recently published blog on the ACL <a href="#">website</a>.</p>	

## **Budget/Administrative Report**

Lynette Porter, Deputy Director, reported that the Council has current available federal funds of \$25,918. Additionally, the current percentage of Federal funds dedicated to state plan goals is 91.5%. This exceeds the minimum required by the DD Act, which is 70%. We received our FY19 award notice and have been level-funded at \$1,457,810.

All Councils received a rule adjustment from the federal funders concerning how Councils obligate and spend their funds. Previously, our process allowed for 2 years to obligate funds and a 3rd year to spend remaining dollars. Effective the FY20 award, Councils must obligate and spend the award in the 2-year performance period, and no spending will be allowed in the third year after the initial award. We will be adjusting internal process to assure we obligate and spend our awards. Technical assistance will be offered to the Councils.

Ms. Porter then highlighted some operational activities since the last meeting.

- The FY20 agency budget will be presented to the State Legislature by Governor Lee the first week of March. The Council is scheduled to present our budget to committees in the House of Representatives the following week. We have asked for level funding in the State budget and do not anticipate any issues.
- In January, the agency began working with the state space planners to design a more efficient office space.
- We are required to have a formal process to assess risk factors within our agency. The agency completed the annual risk assessment process in December, including the inclusion of the Audit Committee in the review process. No material weaknesses were found.
- Extensive work with the Secretary of State's office continues with regard to records management. The agency is reviewing all paper and electronic files and developing an agency records management plan in alignment with state requirements. This is a year-long process being led by JoEllen Fowler. A review of internal records management by the Secretary of State is tentatively planned for Summer 2019.
- Dr. Alicia Cone is hard at work developing contracts that start with the new fiscal year on July 1st. In January, the agency received formal notification that the subrecipient monitoring plan she developed has been approved.

## **Audit Committee Report**

Dawn Fry, Audit Committee Chair, gave the following report of activities since the Council last met:

- State agencies are required to conduct a formal risk assessment that must be submitted to the Comptroller of the Treasury by December 31 each year. One of the roles of the Audit Committee is to review the documentation of the assessment and assure that internal controls are in place to mitigate any identified risks. The committee reviewed the documentation in December and found the agency controls to be adequate. The report was submitted to the Comptroller ahead of the deadline.
- In January, Ms. Fry worked with staff to develop a written reminder that was sent to all members and staff. This reminder was also in the meeting packets. Ms. Fry asked if there were any questions from the members about your duty to immediately report concerns of fraud, waste, or abuse at the agency. There were no questions.
- The Audit Committee will create a written code of conduct to be adhered to by all members. The code of conduct will remind members of the public nature of the agency and the need for all members to

maintain the highest level of integrity in all activities. The committee will be bringing this to the May meeting for members to review and acknowledge. The committee will also review the process for staff acknowledgement of the code of conduct required for all state employees.

10:00 A.M.	ADJOURN TO COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
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11:10 A.M.	BREAK & CHECK OUT
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11:40 A.M.	COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS
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### **Evaluation Committee**

Lisa Johnson, Evaluation Committee Chair, reported on two aspects of the Evaluation Committee meeting. The first was the progress being made on all state plan activities. Specifically, Chairperson Johnson recounted that the committee had reviewed the 1st and 2nd quarter reports which summarized staff and grant activities from the state plan. The Chairperson highlighted several activities that were off to a slow start. The first was the Council contract with Support Development Associates for delivery of the People Planning Together train-the-trainer curriculum. She noted that planning took longer than expected, but all trainings were set and would begin in mid-March. The second was the Youth Leadership Academy with EmpowerTN. She noted that several planning meetings had occurred, and that the decision was made to have the Academy take place in July, which moved it into fiscal year 2019-2020. Chairperson Johnson then noted that two contracts, while programmatically on track, had not yet billed, and so were underspent. She also noted that staff had been in contact with the grantees and assured that the billing would be "caught up" in the third quarter. Therefore, Chairperson Johnson reported that while these slow starts are being monitored by staff, they do not represent a significant concern to staff because each grantee has taken steps to address the delays.

Chairperson Johnson also briefly mentioned Council staff's efforts to track and, where possible, to increase Council outreach, through programs, activities, and our Council communications to diverse communities. She mentioned looking into strategies for collecting more accurate demographic information when we deliver information through remote attendees in webinars.

### **Public Policy Committee**

The Public Policy Committee discussed the following topics: introductions, "what's next" for 2019, including the Council's legislative approach, what we know about the new Governor's administration so far, and what we are tracking in federal policy. We then spent time discussing what the DD Act says about Councils and public policy (informing and educating) including a discussion about the role of this committee in supporting the Council's public policy work. Finally, we discussed the Council's close connection with the new Governor's staff via the Director of External Affairs and state/federal legislative highlights. The meeting ended with an energetic discussion of federal legislation targeting subminimum wage for people with disabilities.

### **Communications Committee**

Emma Shouse Garton, Public Information Specialist, gave an overview of progress for the Council's social media and e-news: steady growth and have met or are on track to meet all goals for the fiscal year. Jolene Sharp, Chief Public Information Officer, gave an overview of Council communications priorities for 2019, including new messaging and rural outreach through newspaper inserts. For the report out, Ryan Durham, Chair, summarized the presentation about growth trends in Council communications for the past year. Mr. Durham shared

information about new messaging, rural communication, and themes that will guide Council communications going forward.	
12:00 P.M.	JOSEPH WILLIAMS, GOV. BILL LEE'S OFFICE
Wanda Willis introduced Joseph Williams, Director of External Affairs for Gov. Bill Lee. Mr. Williams extended a welcome from the Governor's Office to the Council. Mr. Williams shared his personal connection to disability and highlighted the Governor's commitment to encouraging and supporting communities to remove barriers in accessing services and supports they need to be active and included members of their communities. Earlier this month, the Governor issued a proclamation naming March as Developmental Disabilities Month.	
12:10 P.M.	LUNCH
1:10 P.M.	PUBLIC POLICY REPORT
Ms. Percy gave a public policy report covering the following areas: a review of the Council's role in shaping public policy per the Developmental Disabilities Act, the Council's top priority areas: Supported Decision Making, Employment, and Information Dissemination, and updates on each area. Council members participated in sharing how they are involved in the public policy work of the Council. Council members Martez Williams and Roddey Coe shared their experiences during Disability Day on the Hill, Feb 12, 2019. The report concluded with a high level update on bills the Council is tracking in the legislature (handout provided) and a reminder to stay up to date on details via the Council's weekly policy newsletter.	
2:00 P.M.	WRAP UP & MOTION TO ADJOURN
Tecia Puckett Pryor, Chair, encouraged members to turn in their travel claims and Council meeting evaluations. <b>A motion for adjournment was made by Mr. Evan Espey and seconded by Ms. Clancey Hopper. The motion carried and the Council meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.</b> The next Council meeting will take place at the Embassy Suites Nashville Airport on May 3, 2019.	

2019 COUNCIL MEETING DATES
<p><b>2018 Council Meetings</b> - Location: Embassy Suites Nashville Airport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Council Meeting: Friday May 3, 2019</li> <li>• Quarterly Council Meeting: Friday September 13, 2019</li> <li>• Council Retreat: Thursday &amp; Friday, November 14 &amp; 15, 2018</li> </ul>

Respectfully submitted by:

  
Ashley Edwards, Executive Assistant

Approved by:

  
Wanda Willis, Executive Director