



Developmental Disabilities Council
Full Council Public Meeting

MINUTES

Thursday, June 17, 2021
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/94181843554?pwd=c21Ub0cvdHJNcGZSYzlxM2dpcjcwUT09>

By phone: 1 (301) 715-8592 Meeting ID: 941 8184 3554 Passcode: 081732

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Carol Grigsby, Chair
Ricardo Thornton, Vice-Chair
Bernard Crawford
Yetta Myrick

Cheri Mallory
Anjie Shelby
Andy Reese
Amber Keohane
Robin Shaffert for Tawara Goode
Lisa Matthews

ABSENT MEMBERS

Jane Brown
Naisha Dembele
Kali Wasenko
Heather Stowe

STAFF

Alison Whyte, Executive Director
Luz Collazo, Administrative Support
Specialist
Emily Kranking, DDC Communication
Fellow
Denise McCain, Staff Assistant

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Evan Davies
Berta Mata
The Linner Foundation
Rhonda White
Stephanie Lanham
Marrissa Ditkowsky
by phone- (202) 441-5631

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

After establishing there was a quorum, Carol Grigsby, Chair, Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

INTRODUCTION OF COUNCILMEMBERS AND DDC STAFF

Carol asked DDC members to introduce themselves followed by the DDC Staff. She then asked members of the public who were in attendance to enter their name and affiliation into the Chat Box.

EXPLANATION OF VIRTUAL PLATFORM AND ASSESSIBILITY

Alison Whyte, Executive Director, DDC provided a brief overview of today's ZOOM platform and noted that the meeting will be recorded.

COUNCIL BUSINESS VOTES

March 18, 2021, Minutes

Ricardo Thornton, Vice Chair, DDC called for a motion to approve the minutes of March 18, 2021. Following a brief discussion, Andrew Reese made a motion to approve the minutes with the following comments and a few typographical corrections: page 2-paragraph 4: note that the DDS Budget Hearing was move from April 27, 2021, to June 7, 2021; paragraph 6, last sentence: change DDS budget to DDS policies. Yetta Myrick seconded the motion. There were no objections. The motion carried.

CHAIRPERSON REMARKS

Carol advised that her remarks would be a little different this time. What she would like to do today, is to give a read out on the conversations she had with DDC Members over the course of December 2020 through April 2021. The readout will cover what their conclusions were from that discussion on: how we are doing as a council and where we hope to be headed as a council. She asked Alison to share her presentation on the screen.

She began by thanking those who participated and shared their ideas, opinions, and sometimes their personal challenges. She knows some of the participants are working full-time jobs and it took some doing to come up with an hour to have those conversations. To those who were unable to participate, she knows this has been hard times for some people and it was not possible for everyone to make the time. If that is how it was, then that is fine, but if it means you need some extra support, she asked they contact Alison and let her know.

Following her presentation, she stated that we have a lot to do as we emerge from what has been a difficult year. Nevertheless, we have accomplished a lot and we are on an upward swing. She will ask Alison to share this PowerPoint¹ with everyone so that they can go through it at their leisure to see what thoughts it generates, and we can discuss more in the months to come between now and our retreat.

She reminded everyone that her term as Chair, DDC ends this year and then she will have one more year to serve on the DD council. She thinks it would be the perfect time for somebody else to step up and become Chair in January then she would have that year to work them while she was still serving on the DDC. She asked everyone to think about that and if they are interested to contact Alison so that we can began the process.

STATE PLAN COMMITTEE UPDATES

FY22-26 State Plan Development

Luz Collazo, Administrative Support Specialist, DDC provided the following update on the state plan progress: The DDC gathered information from District residents with developmental disabilities, their families and the public through community surveys, agencies/organizational surveys, and virtual focus groups. The State Plan Committee worked together with the DDC to analyze and decipher all this

¹ Carol's Power Point is attached to these minutes.

information and came up with the goals, objectives, strategies, and priorities to create our draft state plan. We are currently in our 45-day Public Comment Period May 2, 2021 – June 15, 2021, which she advised would end tomorrow. She invited those who had not already provided their comments to please do so. During this public comment period the DDC also hosted two virtual Public Hearings on March 27, 2021, to get feedback on the plan that we had developed. Additional comments are being gathered through our on-line survey, email, and regular mail. These comments will be reviewed to see if we need to make any revisions to the stat plan. If not, then the state plan will be presented to the full DDC for approval and then submitted to Department of Health and Human Services/Administration on Community Living for final approval.

Luz expressed her appreciation to Carol, the rest of the DD Council and State Plan Planning Committee members: Jane Brown, Kali Wasenko, Bernard Crawford, Lisa Matthews, Amber Keohane, Heather Stowe, and Andrew Reese. She also thanked the DDC staff for being a part of this process of developing the state plan.

Several DDC members thanked Luz and the State Plan Planning Committee for doing a great job of working with the DDC and keeping them involved and on task throughout the process of developing the state plan.

Carol thanked Luz for her presentation, the State Plan Committee, DDC members and staff for their work so far. She stated we all worked hard on this, and we are awfully close now to getting this over the goal post.

ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATES

Oversight and Budget Advocacy

Ricardo Thornton and Anjie Shelby, Co-Chairs, Advocacy and Public Policy Committee (APPC) provided the following updates:

Ricardo had provided testimony at the FY22 Budget Hearing for the Department on Disability Services (DDS) on eligibility reform for services under the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and the need for full funding of the DSP Payment Rate Act of 2020. He thanked DC Councilmember Brianne Nadeau for introducing the bill that she and the committee have been working on to reform DDA services. He also encouraged everyone to get their comments in on the DDC 5-year State Plan before tomorrow's deadline.

Carol had provided testimony at the Committee on Health which is Councilmember Vincent Gray's Committee because he was reviewing the budget and planning the FY22 Budget Hearing for the D.C. Department of Health Care Finance. Since they oversee everything having to do with Medicaid, she wanted them to also hear from the DD Council on our support for revising eligibility for DDA services. They also talked about DSP wages, and the DDC State Plan.

Anjie Shelby, Co-Chair, APPC announced that she will testify at the upcoming Committee on Labor and Workforce Development FY22 Budget Hearing on the Department of Human Resources' budget. Anjie also announced that the committee is working on developing position papers on COVID and Education, COVID and Employment, COVID and Vaccines, DD Eligibility, and Police Reform Recommendations.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Carol advised that there were two potential DDC candidates among the public attendees at today's meeting and she thanked them for their interest and participation.

DD COUNCIL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

DD Eligibility Advocacy Work

Alison Whyte reported that the DDC has been advocating along with other community organizations, people with developmental disabilities, their families and DC Councilmember Brianne Nadeau to change the eligibility requirements for services under the DDA. Councilmember Nadeau along with seven other co-sponsors have introduced Bill 24-0268 to the Committee on Human Services. This bill would alter eligibility for services provided by the DDA to include individuals with developmental disabilities who do not have an intellectual disability, and allow modifications to Medicaid Waivers accordingly. There will be a public hearing on the bill after the DC Council's recess and the DDC will be contacting advocates to see who would like to provide testimony or share their personal stories at that hearing.

Centers for Disease Control/Administration for Community Living Funding for COVID-19 Vaccine Engagement

The DDC has received additional funds from the collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Administration for Community Living to specifically engage our community in different ways about the COVID-19 vaccine. Some information about the vaccine has already been placed on the DDC social media, by Emily Kranking the DDC's Communication Fellow. The DDC also recently joined Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities in their effort to produce some videos (in English and Spanish) of people who have already gotten the vaccine sharing their perspective. The DDC has had other discussions on how the funds could be used and is still in the process of developing a work plan. If people have thoughts on how the funds could best be spent, she is still collecting ideas.

Membership Updates

The DDC sent the names of five potential members (with recommendations for formal appointment to the DD Council to fill vacancies that we have) to the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments (MOTA). There will still be other vacancies once those individuals are brought on board including several unfilled agency/government appointments. She reiterated Carol's thanks to those potential appointees who attended today's meeting.

Following a brief discussion regarding the outreach in terms of the agency/government positions on the DDC, she noted that we can make recommendations to MOTA for those positions, and suggested that perhaps the DDC should invite those individuals to our meetings so that we can start developing those relationships.

In terms of future meetings and events, she and Luz were on a call with a company that specializes in supporting hybrid, virtual, and in person events. The representative shared with them information about how that would work and how to make it run smoothly. Her main message is that we are in

the process of gathering information to figure out what we need to have successful virtual and in-person events and they will keep learning and exploring how to make that happen.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence Work – 5-minute Video from Transformation Leadership Forum

If there is time at the end of today's meeting, she would like to share a 5-minute video from our Transformation Leadership Forum that was put together as part of the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Community of Practice that we have in DC.

DD COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES' UPDATES

Department on Disability Services –

DDS Director Andrew Reese provided the following update:

DDS just completed its budget hearing where a lot of folks testified and expressed their concerns to the DC Council. He is interested to hear the outcome from the Georgetown project regarding vaccine hesitancy because there is still the need to reach some of the people DDA supports and get vaccination numbers up. DDS has been working on its draft plan for the "American Recue Plan Act" which includes a provision for enhanced Federal matches for DDS's waiver or changes they could make. The funding is only for one year (they have until March 2024 to expend those funds) and they would have to show how any implemented systemic changes would be sustained past that first year of funding. Even though the DC government will be closed tomorrow in recognition of *Juneteenth*, their Friday community forum will go on as planned to give an overview of DC's "American Recue Plan Act" proposed plan, as well as some information about suggestions received at the DDS Budget Hearing. They have identified several potential initiatives, and they will be sharing information about those and seeking feedback from participants. The DDS plan is due to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services by July 12, 2021, which means they have about a week and a half to finalize it so that they can get it to Department of Health Care Finance for review.

Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities – Robin Shaffert provided the following update: Georgetown has received funding from several sources and a lot of their focus has been on the vaccine and learning about vaccine hesitancies in DC. As Alison mentioned they are producing videos geared towards people with developmental disabilities and their families as well as focusing on a lot of the policy and advocacy issues that were mentioned earlier. Georgetown is continuing their focus on parents with intellectual developmental disabilities in DC and was just awarded a LEND grant. This is a training grant in multiple disciplines around neurodiversity for children, adolescents, and youth focusing on medicine, social work, and a lot of other disciplines that work with people with or at risk of developmental disabilities. The *National Children's Center* was also awarded a LEND grant and Georgetown is looking forward to collaborating with them.

Project ACTION! Ricardo reported Project ACTION! will be having a meeting this Saturday and everyone one is welcome to join them. He stated that the theme at Project ACTION! is to let their voices be heard and he has seen a commitment where they have stepped up since the beginning of COVID to take on task that they really did not have to take to overwhelm themselves, but they did it and we should all be proud of that. They also have a planning meeting scheduled for today at 5:00 pm so he will probably have to leave this meeting a few minutes early.

Carol thanked Ricardo and asked if everyone was open to seeing the video that Alison spoke about earlier? There were no objections.

Before showing the video, Alison advised that every state was asked to create a five-minute video that gave people an overview of their community of practice and the work that they have been doing and this video is what they created for the Transformation Leadership Forum. She then showed the video. Alison will send out the link to the video.

Carol stated that it was great to see that the video looped back to what folks said in her read out at the beginning where we were talking about making sure that we use plain language and not using a lot of acronyms and that sort of things. Even in this meeting we had to sort of keep up with that a little bit, like adding things to the chat box to explain some of the acronyms that people were using. She thanked Alison for sharing the video.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bernard Crawford announced that he is now working out on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday with a trainer to get himself back in good shape. They are trying to get more people to join them including people from group homes and their staff.

Ricardo announced that Special Olympics has kicked off their games and they had Bocce on Tuesday night and tennis on Wednesday. These are small individual games that will last for six weeks. He will make sure to give Alison a flyer with upcoming events to disseminate to everyone.

Lisa Matthews announced that the Sibling Leadership Network Conference will kick off tomorrow and go through Thursday with some international sessions. She will be the keynote speaker on Saturday and believes a few people here today will be presenting at some of those sessions as well. They have also been able to afford opportunities to siblings that are part of the community to be presenters at this conference, as well as, creating scholarship funds for them to be a part of this event.

CONCLUSION AND ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Carol called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Yetta Myrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bernard Crawford seconded the motion. There was no objection. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise McCain

IDEAS YOU SHARED

READOUT FROM MY CONVERSATIONS WITH DDC MEMBERS,
DEC 2020 – APRIL 2021

DDC CHAIR CAROL GRIGSBY
JUNE 17, 2021



- Thanks for taking the time to talk with me!
- Thanks for trusting me with your thoughts, ideas and (sometimes) personal challenges!
- If you weren't able to participate:
 - I know, this has been a hard last few months for many of us!
 - If you need some personal support from someone on the council, let Alison or me know! We're a team!
 - Let's look ahead to working together as we begin to re-emerge from a tough year!

HOW HAVE WE DONE DURING THE PANDEMIC?

General reactions:

- We've been moving in the right direction and accomplishing a lot – Alison and her staff are doing great! (State plan, Latinx conference)
- Folks are more involved and energized than in the past: in some ways the pandemic has brought us closer together, even operating remotely

A few ideas and concerns:

- Some have struggled with remote interactions
- More communication from staff between meetings could be helpful
- Our meetings:
 - Are we trying to cover too much ground in our meetings?
 - Can we improve the appeal of our meetings (esp retreat) for visual learners?
 - Should we vary our regular meeting time (some evening meetings?)

Doing our work efficiently

Engaging the public

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Setting priorities

Communicating within DDC

In-person and remote

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

Expand our community membership!

- Self-advocates (DCAP?), marginalized groups, wards 7 and 8, families with young children
- Attracting young people: meeting format; choice of topics

How to approach our work:

- Set priorities!
- Use plain language/focus on education
- Get outside the “disability bubble” to influence the whole community

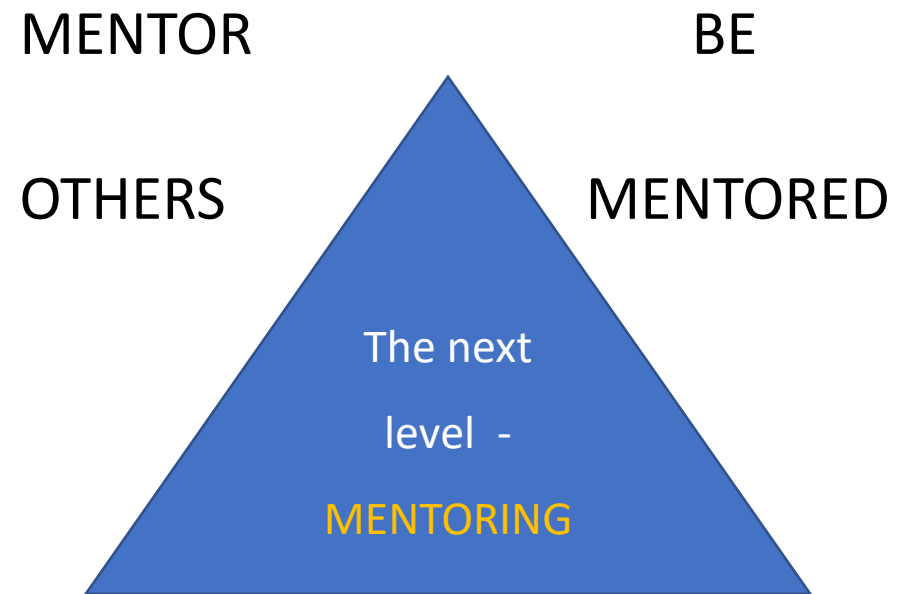
We've interviewed some great candidates!

Our committees are helping set solid priorities!

Let's be creative in our outreach and clear about our goals!

STEPPING UP – YOU HAVE!

You said you were ready for more responsibility, and our committees are humming thanks to you!



IN CONCLUSION

- WE HAVE A LOT TO DO AS WE EMERGE FROM A DIFFICULT YEAR
- WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED A LOT AND ARE ON AN UPWARD SWING
- LET'S KEEP THESE ISSUES ALIVE - SOME OF THEM FOR OUR NEXT RETREAT
- PLUS – **A REMINDER** –
 - MY TERM ENDS THIS YEAR – WOULD ANYONE LIKE TO STEP UP INTO THIS JOB? 😊