

Developmental Disabilities Council

Full Council Public Meeting

**MINUTES**

June 18, 2020

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

WebEx: <https://dcnet.webex.com/dcnet/onstage/g.php?MTID=e056740d72c824e98bf38a785db40d7c4>

By phone: 650-479-3208, access code: 472 038 216#

**MEMBERS PARTICIPATING**

Carol Grigsby – Chair

Ricardo Thornton - Vice-Chair

Lisa Matthews

Bernard Crawford

Yetta Myrick

Kali Wasenko-Rao

Anjanette Shelby

Heather Stowe, Department of Aging and

Community Living

Amber Keohane

Robin Shaffert for Tawara Goode, University

Center for Excellence in Developmental

Disabilities

Cheri Mallory

Emily Ornstein for Andrew Reese,

Department on Disability Services

Sarah Grime, SchoolTalk

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Ron Smith and Jane Brown

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

Alison Whyte - Executive Director

Luz Collazo - Program Analyst

Denise McCain - Staff Assistant

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Mat McCollough and Jessica Hunt – Office

of Disability Rights

Heidi Case – Multimodal Accessibility

Advisory Council

Rita Abou-Samra, Evelyn Israel, and Chris

Shaheen - DC Department of

Transportation

Geremaw Edist - State Rehabilitation

Council by phone

Molly Whalen - Best Buddies of the National

Capital Region

Marrissa Ditkowsky - Tzedek DC

Silvia Garrick – Office of the People’s

Council

Julia Wolhandler - DC Public Library

Jill Lamoreaux, ASL Interpreter

Maggie Hart, Washington Lawyers

Committee

Linda Brown

Yared Mengistu

Walter Williams

Sabrina Pation

Kimberly McAndrews

Anita Walker

Albert Reed

Lincoln Pitts

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

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.

**EXPLANATION OF VIRTUAL PLATFORM AND ACCESSIBILTY**

Alison Whyte, Executive Director, DDC provided the participants with an overview of today’s platform and how the different accessibility features worked. She also noted that we will record this meeting and post the video recording and transcription on the DDC website.

**INTRODUCTION OF DDC MEMBERS AND STAFF**

Ms. Grigsby asked DDC members to introduce themselves followed by the introduction of DDC Staff by Ms. Whyte.

**INTITIAL REMARKS**

Ms. Grigsby provided remarks about budget advocacy related to the Department on Disability Services (DDS) and other agencies as well, COVID-19 advocacy, Black Lives Matter protests, and re-convening the former Police and Disability Community Working Group going. Ms. Grigsby also shared that the DDC formed the Crisis Committee to enable the DDC to act quickly and respond to emerging issues during the public health crisis. Eventually, the DDC will transition back to a more standard way of operating.

**OLD BUSINESS (April 23, 2020 Minutes and DDC Retreat Notes)**

Ricardo Thornton, Vice Chair, DDC called for a motion to approve the April 23, 2020minutes. Amber Keohane made a motion to accept the minutes of April 23, 2020. Kali Wasenko-Rao seconded the motion. There were no objections. The motion carried.

In regard to the Retreat Notes, Ms. Whyte advised that those don’t require a vote because they are not formal minutes (the Retreat was the DDC’s strategic planning session) however, if there is anything that the membership has concern with, they can let her know.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Accessibility in Raised Landscaped Terraces

Rita Abou-Samra, Evelyn Israel, and Chris Shaheen gave a presentation on “Accessibility in Raised Landscaped Terraces.” DDC members agreed to provide comments after additional review and recommended that the Office of Disability Rights (ODR) review this information.

Olmstead Community Integration Plan

Ms. Whyte provided a brief update on the Olmstead Community Integration Plan for Jessica Hunt, Office of Disability Rights (ODR) who was having a technical issue. She informed the participants that an Olmstead Community Forum will be held on July 21, 2020 to review and discuss the draft plan and she asked everyone to get involved in this planning. Mat McCollough, Director, ODR advised that they really need the participants’ feedback and comments to make this a living document. Past feedback/comments to date on the Olmstead Plan can be found on their website: [www.odr.dc.gov](http://www.odr.dc.gov) under the Olmstead tab.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS**

Heidi Case, Chair, Multi Modal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MMAC) invited DDOT to present their information to the MMAC. Ms. Case also shared some of the accessibility issues at the last Olmstead Community Forum and how important correcting those issues are if you are trying to get everyone’s feedback and comments.

**DD COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES UPDATES**

Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Robin Shaffert provided the following update: Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities has a lot of information on their website to support the community in dealing with COVID-19. Over the years, UCEDD has done a lot in support of parents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and they trying to get some funding to create a collaboration within the district on what that would really look like to help those parents with intellectual developmental disabilities help their children transition through the different phases of life. They are actively working along with the other people to try to make sure that the issues that the intellectual/developmental disability community is addressing during this pandemic are getting the attention of the Mayor and the DC City Council and others.

SchoolTalk

Sarah Grime, SchoolTalk, provided the following update: SchoolTalk is shifting to their summer programming including the Jumpstart Program which works with Department of Employment Services, Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and the Rehabilitation Services Administration to support youth with significant disabilities in accessing SYEP. She is managing a program that is providing youth with work-based learning experiences in visual art, videography, music production, community advocacy and organizing, and yoga. SchoolTalk has also kicked off a program (funded by the DDC) working with youth that are providing Social Connections with other adults in the disability community.

Project ACTION!

Ricardo Thornton, Project ACTION! provided the following update: Project ACTION! is active and meeting virtually and at their last meeting they discussed their concerns about the reopening of schools and the city with Andy Reese, Director, Department on Disability Services. They also discussed their plan to have a candlelight vigil and they would like to see if they can get some DDC members and some other partners to join them in getting that planning started. They would like to do this for those who have passed from COVID-19 and to try and bring some peace to the city. Bernard Crawford agreed this is a good idea.

Family Support Council

Yetta Myrick, Family Support Council provided the following update: Today’s Family Support Council (FSC) meeting was canceled to create space for them to do smaller group work. FSC is continuing to finalize formal recommendations for the Department of Health Care Finance and are working on their bylaws. Their next public meeting will be held on July 16, 2020 and that information will be placed on the Department on Disability Services website. She is participating in the Charting the LifeCourse Ambassador training, which will ensure that both she and Joan Christopher Co-chair, FSC have shared knowledge of the supporting families framework and tools.

Department on Disability Services

Emily Ornstein, Department on Disability Services provided an update: The existing IDD waiver and the proposed Individual and Family Support (IFS) Waiver are both up for public comment. The IFS Public Forum will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 10 am – 11:30 am and the IDD Waiver Public Forum will be held on Thursday, June 25, 2020, 10 am – 11:30 am on WebEx. This information was placed in the Chat Box. The virtual Person-Centered Organization Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 from 1 pm – 4 pm. She also thanked Donna and Ricardo Thornton for providing training to DDS Developmental Disabilities Administration’s service providers on creating one-page person centered descriptions in the COVID-19 context.

Department on Aging and Community Living

Heather Stowe, Department on Aging and Community Living (DACL) provided the following update: DACL is continuing to move into Phase II and will have more of their services face to face. They are also looking at opening their Adult Day Health Programs.

Ms. Grigsby stated that in thinking about those who have passed away from COVID-19 and the protesting taking place around the world because of individuals losing their lives at the hands of police, she would like to call for a moment of silence.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Ms. Whyte first expanded on the COVID-19 DDC activities before providing the following report:

By-Laws – Denise McCain, Staff Assistant, DDC will be scheduling a call for the DDC membership to specifically discuss the bylaws and hopefully finalize them. Ms. Grigsby stated she is very much aware that we need to be planning to turn the corner and get our committees stood up and so forth. The DDC talked about that at the retreat and there were questions about what exactly the committees will do and a lot of that is embedded in the draft by-laws and that is why we want to get the bylaws done and approved. Then we will be moving forward to form the committees so that everyone will have more of an opportunity to be engaged in the whole array of work that the DDC is doing.

Staffing Update – The DDC has already welcomed Luz on board and Ms. Whyte suggested that the membership connect with her as much they would like because she thinks it’s important and valuable for her to hear from all councilmembers and hear about their experiences. She also let everyone know that the DDC would be bringing a fellow on board from an organization called Lead for America. That fellow will be starting in August and will also share her time with the Offic­e of Disability Rights.

Update on DDC Grants

The DDC spent $37,724 on COVID-19 relief grants to minimize isolation and maximize communication for our community. A lot of that involved supporting people by providing them with technology in their homes so that they could be connected to the outside world.

Possible State Plan Amendments

The DDC touched on this at our retreat but it needs a little bit more discussion and she is going to be making a proposal to the DDC about a couple amendments very soon. The reason she wanted to mention it here at the public meeting is because any amendments to our state plan require a public comment period.

DDC Statement on Anti-Racism

The DDC Statement on Anti-Racism is still pretty much in draft form so; she does not want to present anything today because it is not public yet. We have a great draft and she has gotten some great feedback on it from our extended Executive Committee but, the ball is in her court to move this forward and to get the Council on board and feeling good about the statement that we want to put out in the community.

Census 2020

Ms. Whyte has put together a brief list of resources related to the 2020 Census and voting which have been placed on the DDC website. There is still some concern that people who receive services through a service provider may not get counted in the census. The census has specific ways that those people can get counted and, and she wanted to push that information out so the service providers could take charge of that, or DDS could put out guidance on that if it seems helpful. For voting, there are some awesome voting resources out there right now including a great video series called “Vote for Access” by Imani Barbarin where she talks about barriers to voting for people with disabilities; how to break down those barriers; and what your rights are.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS & COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Whyte informed the participants that Molly Whalen announced (in the chat box) that she is with Best Buddies now and welcomes any questions on both the school and citizen matching programs. Ms. Grigsby suggested that maybe Ms. Whalen could do a presentation on Best Buddies at a future DDC meeting because this meeting did not offer that opportunity. Ms. Whalen replied that she would love to do that.

Mat McCollough announced that in recognition of the 30th anniversary of the ADA, the Office of Disability Rights is doing a project which entails taking quote from those who have been impacted by the ADA. They are looking for brief quotes that states why the ADA is important to you or what you would like to see in the coming years. Anyone wishing to participate should contact him as soon as possible.

Ricardo Thornton announced that Special Olympics of DC did not have its Summer Games this year and what they are planning to do is to have a Summer Games at Home event. So, if you are doing exercises at home, walking around the park, playing basketball or some type of event that you like doing, you can let Ron know what you are doing and he will probably send you a certificate. Ms. Grigsby announced that Nicole Preston, President and CEO, DC Special Olympics, recently did a presentation on their Fit Five Program which is on their website.

Ricardo Thornton reiterated that Project ACTION! really wants to do a candlelight vigil, but they need other partners to do that with. He asked that those who are interested in volunteering or becoming a partner, to please join Project ACTION!

**CONCLUSION AND ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Grigsby stated that before calling for a motion to adjourn, she wanted to give another special welcome to Luz and to also thank Ms. Whyte and Ms. McCain for putting together this wonderful online event. If you were online with us in April, you know that we had a lot more difficulties with the technology and Ms. Whyte and Ms. McCain in particular have put tremendous effort into making this work for us so, thank you again! There being no further business, Ms. Grigsby called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Bernard Crawford made a motion to adjourn. Yetta Myrick seconded the motion. There were no objections. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next DDC Meeting will be held on September 17, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise McCain