

Governor's Council on Disability Meeting Minutes September 19, 2014

Council Members Present/Participating:

Joan Bergstrom, Ed.D., Chuck Comstock, Betty Davidson, Ph.D., Rep. Jeff Grisamore, Ron Hack, Mary Ann Harter, Todd Mayfield, DeAnna Noriega, Derek Smith, James Trout

Council Members Not Present/Participating:

Ed Duff, Mike Esser, Sue Orton, Bob Wallace

Department Liaisons:

Bonnie Aaron	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – DESE
Gena Ahlers	Department of Revenue – DOR
Shawn Brice	Department of Social Services – DSS
Becky Brietzke	Department of Transportation – MODOT
Kristin Funk	Department of Economic Development – DED/DWD
Jonathan Hensley	Attorney General's Office – AGO
Valerie Howard	Department of Social Services – DSS
Dana Muessig	Department of Natural Resources – DNR
Sarah Parsons	Missouri Housing Development Commission – MHDC
Duane Shumate	Department of Mental Health – DMH/DDD

Guests:

Scott Barnes, MU Nursing Student
Kelly Behlmann, Disabled Athletes Sports Association
Patricia Ritchie, National Association of Injured & Disabled Workers

Staff:

Linda Baker, Claudia Browner, Dawn Evans, Laura Mueth

Real-Time Captioner: Deb Reithmeyer

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. With ten (10) Council members in attendance, there was a quorum for the meeting. Introductions followed.

Approval of agenda and minutes:

The Council members unanimously approved the meeting minutes for April 25 and the agenda for the day.

Report from Acting Chair James Trout:

No report.

Report from Executive Director Linda Baker:

- Linda summarized her ED report. GCD has spent about 16% of its FY15 budget.
- This year, 17 delegates attended the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum. New this year was a community service project, which was a great success. Paraquad is interested in becoming the fiscal agent for the program. A new MOU is being drafted and will be sent to the Executive Committee for review. The MyLIFE Alumni Association is pursuing 501(c)3 status.

- The LEP is being restructured to include videos and PowerPoint presentations as learning modules on the GCD website. The LEP program will be offered at the capitol only upon request.
- 327 individuals participated in the annual legislative poll. Results will be sent to the legislators when the session begins. According to the poll, health care and universal design housing are top priorities.
- GCD is looking for nominations for the 2014 Inclusion Awards and Youth Leadership Award.

Department Liaison Information:

Valerie Howard (DSS) – While the Family Support Division is undergoing reorganization, challenges are being addressed to resolve customer concerns. Medical Review Team specialists, disability interview phone teams, and new office procedures will ensure that customer issues are resolved. Staff has been designated to conduct live food stamp phone interviews. One statewide office in Texas County is designated to handle all spenddown calls.

Bonnie Aaron (DESE) – The department has hired two new superintendents: Geoffrey Barney (Missouri School for the Blind) and Ernest Garrett (Missouri School for the Deaf). Opeoluwa Sotonwa is the new Executive Director of the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Missouri was one of only 15 states to receive a “Meets Requirements” determination from the annual review by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) for the Part B program.

Shawn Brice (DSS) – Under the Money Follows the Person grant, 117 individuals have transitioned into the community in 2014. Since inception of the program, 943 individuals have transitioned and 172 cases are pending. The biggest barrier for transition is the lack of affordable, accessible housing. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) conducted an on-site visit in August 2014 and the initial feedback has been very positive.

Kristin Funk (DED/DWD) – Provided a presentation and informational booth at the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum in July.

Becky Brietzke (MODOT) – MODOT tested accessibility in Jefferson City for wheelchair users and people with visual impairments. The Non-Motorized Highway Division’s focus is increasing access to biking and hiking trails. Due to a large response to a sign language class offered this fall, there will also be a class next spring. MODOT is making efforts to hire more people with disabilities.

Sarah Parsons (MHDC) – MHDC will be giving preference to future funding projects that include 100% universal design to address the shortage of affordable/accessible housing.

Dana Muessig (DNR) – Efforts continue to make state parks accessible by adding accessible restrooms, shower houses, and ramps. Two new accessible cabins have been built at Bennett Springs State Park; playgrounds are being resurfaced, and UbiDuo communication devices for customers/staff that are hard of hearing have been purchased.

Gena Ahlers (DOR) – September is renewal month for disabled placards and plates. People with disabilities can now go into the local offices to renew and receive their placards/plates on the spot.

Duane Shumate (DMH) – The Division of DD has hired Valerie Huhn as the new director. DDD is drafting a transition plan for Home and Community Based Services. Waiver renewals will be due in the spring. The Division is working on serving individuals currently on the in-home wait list based upon the priority of their need. Marshall Habilitation Center will be closing. The individuals who are being served by MHC will transition into the community or to Higginsville Habilitation Center.

JoAnn Hanley (MDC) did not attend but provided Council members and state liaisons with copies of the department's new publication "Disabled Accessible Outdoors".

New Business:

The Council unanimously voted to approve the Strategic Plan for 2014-16.

The Council set meeting dates for 2015 – February 9 (in person), April 24 (videoconference), September 18 (in person), and November 6 (videoconference).

GCD Committee Reports:

Legislative Committee: Jeff Grisamore provided an update on disability-related legislation. There has been major progress for funding and services for people with disabilities with over half a billion dollars in new funding items over the last eight years. Rep. Grisamore is currently serving his last term, ending in December 2014.

Public Comment:

Kelly Behlmann, Executive Director of Disabled Athletes Sports Association (DASA), spoke about promoting participation of athletes with disabilities in high school competitions. Schools are accepting and including disabled athletes and providing accommodations, but para-athletes are often not allowed to compete in district or state athletic competitions. Nineteen other states are including para-athletes in their competitions. Discussion followed. The Council recommended several contacts including the School Superintendent Organization, the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, and the Missouri State High School Association.

Lunch recess was taken.

Patty Ritchie, Volunteer Public Policy Director with the National Association of Injured and Disabled Workers (NAIDW) asked the Council to provide feedback on the issues she addressed in previous Council meetings. James Trout informed her that the Advocacy Committee would review the information and provide feedback.

Committee Reports, continued:

Advocacy Committee: GCD was contacted by Mr. David Hood, a parent of a student with a disability who participates in UMSL's SUCCEED program, requesting GCD's support for his request of tuition reimbursement from VR. VR cannot support tuition reimbursement of the SUCCEED program. After discussion, the Council decided that GCD cannot support this request for a letter of support because, per statute, GCD cannot provide direct advocacy. GCD will write a letter to inform Mr. Hood of this decision.

Programs Committee: James Trout reported that the National Coalition on Healthy and Safe Housing is conducting a pilot study with St. Louis hospitals to test indoor air quality.

Education and Employment Committee: Linda Baker has been asked by the US Business Leadership Network (USBLN) to support the revitalization of the MOBLN in St. Louis. Linda will be attending the USBLN conference in September.

James Trout asked for volunteers to chair the Transportation Subcommittee.

Council member reports:

Betty Davidson stated that she received feedback about the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, describing the program as a wonderful, life-changing experience.

Variety Children’s Theater will be performing Disney’s Little Mermaid at Touhill Performing Arts Center in October. The cast includes children with disabilities. A flyer will be sent out by email.

DeAnna Noriega attended the American Council for the Blind Convention in Las Vegas. Her employer, Services for Independent Living will be celebrating its 35th anniversary in 2015, along with the 25th anniversary of the ADA. DeAnna will give a presentation on ADA at MODOT in September.

Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D. retired from Longview Community College. She reported about her advocacy work for and personal struggles with peanut allergies.

Rep. Jeff Grisamore asked the Council to support the appointment of Kelly Behlmann as a Council member. Interested individuals are encouraged to send their applications to the Governor’s office. The Council currently has six vacancies.

Derek Smith participated in the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum as a facilitator and is working with the MyLIFE Alumni Association.

Old Business: Linda Baker met with AJ Fox from the Governor’s Office to discuss appointments to the Council and was informed that appointments might be announced in November.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

The next regular Council meeting will be held **Thursday, November 13, 2014** at 10 AM by videoconference in Jefferson City, Lee’s Summit, Kirksville, and St. Louis.

Summary of Action Items:	Person Responsible:
Post Strategic Plan 2014-16 on GCD website	Claudia Browner
Conduct Committee meetings prior to November Council mtg.	Committee Chairs
Send Committee list to Council members	Claudia Browner
Send letter to Mr. Hood	Linda Baker, Ron Hack, Joan Bergstrom