

**Governor’s Council on Disability
Quarterly Council Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2020**

Council Members Present/Participating:

Betty Davidson, Ronald Hack, Chip Hailey, Katie Jones, Elijah Mayfield, Susan Orton, Andrew Sartorius, Lesia Shelton, Opeoluwa Sotonwa, James Trout, Robert Wallace, Yvonne Wright

Council Members Absent/Not Participating:

Joan Bergstrom, Chuck Comstock, Rosemary Hendon, Kim Lackey, DeAnna Noriega

Department Liaisons:

Rosie Anderson-Harper	Department of Mental Health – DMH/Behavioral Health
Terry Black	Department of Health & Senior Services – DHSS/DSDS
Ali Carey	Attorney General’s Office - AGO
Edwin Cooper	Department of Mental Health – DMH/Housing
Cathy Lucia	Department of Conservation - MDC
Sarah Schappe	Attorney General’s Office – AGO
Kris Sweeten	Department of Corrections - DOC

Staff: Claudia Browner, Laura Mueth, Rachel Rackers, Jessica Zimmer

Guests: Chrissy Peters, Director of Elections, Secretary of State’s Office
ASL interpreter AJ Housewright and CIS interpreter

Council Chair Yvonne Wright called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. Roll call was taken by Claudia. There was a quorum for the meeting with 12 of the Council members in attendance. The meeting was held by WebEx.

Approval of agenda: The agenda was unanimously approved by the Council.

Approval of meeting minutes: The Council members unanimously approved the meeting minutes for May 1, 2020. The approved minutes will be posted on the GCD website.

Public Comment: None.

Council Chair report from Yvonne Wright:

Yvonne extended happy birthday wishes to Council member Sue Orton.

Yvonne was asked to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council. She submitted her application and was officially appointed on June 11.

Yvonne congratulated GCD staff for taking the lead in planning the 30th anniversary of the ADA celebration.

Reports from GCD Team:

The full team report was sent by email to the Council members prior to the meeting and staff provided the following highlights from their reports.

Claudia Browner:

The [ADA30 celebration](#) event was held in collaboration with several other state agencies and disability organizations. Planning meetings started in January. Due to the COVID pandemic, we added the virtual

broadcast option. GCD worked with IT to set up the Facebook live event in addition to the in person event at the Capitol. Thanks to the support from Facilities and IT staff, we were able to reach the over 3,300 people that viewed our video on Facebook. The social media post about the event and photos reached almost 13,000 people. Ope was in attendance, and his agency provided sign language interpreters and CART provider. The event is summarized in the [GCD August newsletter](#).

Since the ADA30 event, GCD has received more requests for presentations, technical assistance and collaborations in the upcoming months.

James Trout requested a history of the GCD council chairs. Claudia researched on the Secretary of State's website and put together a chronology of chairs and directors as well as some history of the GCD.

Governor Parson signed [SB 656](#) and [SB644](#) into law regarding service animals, requiring GCD to provide information and door plaques for businesses on our website. Laura and Claudia worked together on this project and updated the website. This was submitted to OA's General Counsel for review; the response is pending.

[GCD Poster Contest for Disability Employment Awareness Month](#): The deadline was extended to 8/25/20. GCD will feature the winning poster in a display in the Truman building and virtually during the month of October, to celebrate and raise awareness about the 75th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. GCD budget: For FY 2020 ending June 30, GCD's expense & equipment (E&E) budget was cut by 36%. In FY 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021), restrictions/reductions to date total \$3,132 or 13% of the E&E budget. For FY22 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022), Claudia submitted the budget request yesterday.

Laura Mueth:

Laura reported attending multiple disability related trainings and virtual events as well as working on presentations for the future. Some presentations have been delayed due to COVID.

The First Responder Disability Awareness Training (FRDAT) video is complete and being integrated into national training.

Laura is working on the [Legislative Priorities Poll](#), which will go out on August 24. She continues to work with OA IT to make GCD's website more accessible.

Rachel Rackers:

Rachel has been participating in webinars related to the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF).

Her focus has been on planning the [Regional Leadership Forums](#) (RLF). The date for the Jefferson City event has been moved to October 24. Bi-weekly meetings are continuing, plus each of the four regions has its own planning committee and meetings. The RLF team in each location will be evaluating the COVID situation a month prior to its event to decide whether to continue on the scheduled date or postpone until spring of 2021.

The last two weeks, Rachel has been working with IT to build a web application for the MO-YLF to simplify the application process and paperwork. This application is scheduled to launch in October.

Jessica Zimmer:

Jessica has been working on the MO-YLF alumni database calls by contacting past alumni and getting updates on their employment, education, and living situation. She also participated in MO Learning classes to expand and learn new skills.

Report from State Liaisons:

Rosie Anderson-Harper (DMH/BH) – The Division of Behavioral Health received a \$10 million grant from the Coronavirus relief funds to cover COVID-19 related expenses for the behavioral health population. Virtual behavioral health services are working well. They seem more helpful for people who may have transportation issues or anxiety of leaving their house. After the pandemic, DMH will keep the telehealth option because of its advantages.

DMH Behavioral Health is participating in employment first initiative with the US Dept. of Labor, Office of Disability Employment. They work with Vocational Rehabilitation and other state partners on work placement and supports, and have provided services to over 1,200 people so far.

Cathy Lucia (MDC) introduced herself as the new state liaison for the Department of Conservation and is looking forward to working with the Council.

Terry Black (DHSS/DSDS for Shomari Rozier) Under the Money Follows the Person grant, there have been 61 transitions from residential care facilities to the community this year.

COVID-19 Provider Relief Funds are available for agencies serving people with disabilities and the elderly to provide reimbursement for PPE, revenue loss due to business interruption, etc. The website for information about this program can be found at <https://health.mo.gov/seniors/hcbs/covid-19-provider-relief-funds.php> DHSS is offering a small Structured Family Caregiver Waiver, intended to provide a small stipend for caregivers providing 24-hour care for a person with dementia. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid approved/granted the waiver, however it was not funded this year. CMS amended waiver to a start date of 07/01/2021 pending funding. Individuals on this waiver must require medical care equivalent to Level of Care (LOC) received in a nursing home and not enrolled in another waiver. Information about the Level of Care (LOC) transformation schedule to take effect July 2021 can be found at <https://health.mo.gov/seniors/hcbs/loc-transformation.php>

Anita Baker (DESE/VR) – (Report submitted by email) All but two VR offices are open to the public. However, clients can set up appointments at those offices. All visitors must wear a mask. Most of the staff are working remotely, but there is always staff coverage in the offices. Referrals are increasing again (back to 80%). VR is working to improve services remotely through new technology and software. VR staff is working with students in the school districts, either in-person or remotely.

Presentation:

Chrissy Peters, Director of Elections, Secretary of State's Office, provided a presentation on **Voter Registration, Accessibility and Absentee Ballots.**

Grants for Local Election Authorities (LEA) provided funding to purchase electronic voting machines and assure accessibility of polling places. The grants also provide funding to upgrade software or replace machines. Federal Cares Act grant funding distributed to LEA can be used for anything COVID related at polling locations, such as PPE, and upgrading to electronic poll books. Polling places have accessible equipment. Each LEA can provide interpreter services upon request. They may also designate polling places to any voter with physically disabilities other than the main location. Curbside voting allows an individual to vote within 200 feet of a voting location with two voting judges being present to accept the ballot.

The presentation also explained the voter registration process, requirements for the Permanent List to establish absentee voting for all elections, and mail in ballots for registered voters.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Committee Reports:

Programs Committee – Ron Hack will be working with Claudia to set up a conference call to discuss programs for next year's Council meetings.

Education subcommittee – Joan Bergstrom submitted a written report of a March 13 committee meeting where education related bills were discussed. The report included a summary of the bill statuses at the end of the legislative session.

Council member reports:

Ron Hack asked for resources or guidelines regarding individuals with disabilities who reside in group homes, and the recommended length of quarantine and return to work after exposure to COVID. Katie Jones shared the COVID hotline phone number (877-435-8411). Claudia shared the COVID resource page for people with disabilities on the Disability Web Portal (<https://disability.mo.gov/covid-19.htm>).

James Trout is working with the Inclusive Design Alliance in St. Louis with builders, stakeholders, occupational therapists, and realtors to get MLS to include search tab for universal design for existing homes as well as new construction. The group is developing a UD ready model to retrofit existing housing with accessibility features for a budget of \$10-20,000.

Katie Jones reported that all but two of Missouri’s sheltered workshops have reopened and met the requirements of the Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act. They employ a total of about 5,400 people. St. Charles County is concerned with students with IEP and virtual learning. Meetings will be held in the next few weeks to address these concerns.

Elijah Mayfield stated that he was glad to be at the meeting. He just recently returned back to work after self-quarantining since March.

Sue Orton attended Paraquad’s webinar forum on Medicaid expansion. The program will cover about 230,000 additional individuals once it goes into effect. The Older Adult Commission for St. Louis County has been addressing the need for technology for students with disabilities and the elderly during the pandemic. The Brain Injury Association’s annual statewide conference will be held virtually on October 1-2. https://braininjuryassociationofmissouri.formstack.com/forms/bia_annual_statewide_conference_copy

Ope Sotonwa addressed concerned about access to healthcare for people with disabilities in times of COVID with the Governor’s office. The issue was closed due to no concerns being brought up. The 911 Service Board designed a new map showing where Text-to-911 is accessible. More information can be found at <https://www.missouri911.org/textto911/consumer>. Two bills affecting individuals who are deaf/hard of hearing were signed this year: House Bill 1963 included an amendment allowing for D/HH individuals to obtain their CDL by modifying the licensing requirements. HB1682 designates September as Deaf Awareness Month, as well as making the last week of September Deaf Awareness Week. The Missouri Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) is working with Deaf, Inc. in St. Louis to come up with a month of content to celebrate deaf culture and awareness as well as deaf history in Missouri. Clear Masks - MCDHH has distributed 40,000 clear masks. They are working with the state to purchase another 80,000 masks. The office has gotten approval to use CARES funding to purchase reusable smile masks” for adults and children.

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MCDHH's hearing aid distribution program was temporarily suspended due to budget cuts. They are looking into potentially using CARES funding for pay for this program.

Lesia Shelton has been working with Preferred Employment Services to assist people with accessing services during the pandemic. People are frustrated with the follow up process once they are registered for various services. The lack of clear masks are another issue for some people who are deaf/hard of hearing. Lesia participated in the First Responder Advocacy Training.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

The next regular Council meeting will be held **Friday, November 13, 2020** at 10 AM at the **Missouri Coalition for Community Behavioral Healthcare, CFO Room, 221 Metro Drive, Jefferson City**

Minutes by Jessica Zimmer
August 24, 2020
Approved by the Council on November 13, 2020