

**Governor's Council on Disability
Quarterly Council Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2021**

Council Members Present/Participating:

Joan Bergstrom, Chuck Comstock, Wayne Crawford, Betty Davidson, Ronald Hack, Chip Hailey, Katie Jones, Kim Lackey, Elijah Mayfield, Sue Orton, Traci Ritter, Andrew Sartorius, Lesia Shelton, Bob Wallace

Council Members Absent/Not Participating:

Rosemary Hendon, James Trout

Department Liaisons:

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| Joe Amberger | Attorney General's Office (AGO) |
| Shawn Brice | Department of Social Services (DSS) |
| Cathy Lucia | Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) |
| Christina Predmore | Missouri Department of Revenue (DOR) |
| Andrew Ragsdale | Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) |
| Joyce Wilson | Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) |

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

Guests: Amy Bowen and Jessica Bloch, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Interim Chair Ron Hack called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. Roll call was taken. There was a quorum for the meeting with 14 Council members in attendance. The meeting was held in person at the Kathy Carter Building located at 221 Metro Drive, Jefferson City, MO along with 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 August 20, 2021. The approved minutes will be posted on the GCD website.

Public Comment: None

Report from Interim Chair – Ron Hack: None. Ron mentioned that he regularly reviews the meeting minutes of the weekly GCD team meetings.

Report from GCD Team: Council members received the full report by email prior to the meeting. Each team member provided highlights of their report.

Claudia Browner:

- Model Employer initiative – met with Division of Personnel and Office of Equal Opportunity to discuss carrying out the tasks outlined in the Governor's Executive Order. Tasks included an annual state employee self-disclosure survey, promoting the disability awareness training for state employees, and raising awareness about National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October.
- Provided presentations to state agencies and organizations on employment of people with disabilities and an overview of GCD programs and services.
- Had an introductory meeting with new Acting Commissioner Ken Zellers.

- Participated in Leadership Development Program for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (LDP) planning meetings and the LDP event held November 1-4, 2021 at Missouri School for the Deaf in Fulton.
- Claudia and Laura are working with OA/IT department to redesign and update the Disability Web Portal, GCD website, and GCD logo.

Laura Mueth:

- Provided trainings for the Missouri Court Administration, Missouri Rehabilitation Association, Missouri State Highway Patrol drivers' examiners, and Fire/EMS personnel as part of First Responder Disability Awareness Training.
- Completed the Legislative Priorities Poll report, which will be posted on the GCD website and sent out to state legislators and elected officials next week. This year, 528 individuals from 63 counties in Missouri participated in the poll. The report is available at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/files/2021-Legislative-Priorities-Poll-Report.pdf>
- Participates on the planning team for the Disability Rights Legislative Day.

Rachel Rackers:

- Presented in an interview panel with Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) alumni in a webinar segment titled Candace's Corner, informing participants about the program.
- Hosts monthly planning team meetings for the upcoming Virtual Leadership Summit on February 26, 2022 and the MO-YLF scheduled for July 11-16, 2022.
- Hosted the first Leadership Development Program for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (LDP) in collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation, Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD), Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, MU Pre-Employment Transition Services, and Paraquad. The event was held November 1-4 at MSD in Fulton. Nine students participated and learned about leadership, goal setting and career development.

Jessica Zimmer:

- Attended several professional development webinars in MO Learning.
- Assisted GCD staff with meeting and travel arrangements.
- Participated in GCD program meetings and provided administrative support.

State Liaisons Reports

Shawn Brice (DHSS/DSDS) for Shomari Rozier- Shawn reported that the Level of Care transformation started on October 31. It uses a new algorithm to calculate the need for services. The current Adult Daycare Waiver is running out of slots. If all the slots fill, the remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list. On January 1st, new waiver slots will open up. The waiver is for adults aged 18-63. Those 64 and older do not need waivers.

The Money Follows the Person (MFP) grant under the Department of Social Services (DSS) transitioned 75 people this year, which is a decrease from last year. The MFP program is currently undergoing rebranding, which will include changing the program name to "Show Me Home" and a new logo. The program is filming a new commercial that will air on TV, and advertise on social media and google to promote the MFP program. The new brand will be launched in March 2022.

Shawn and Wayne Crawford reported that individuals who are transitioning from a nursing home into the community are experiencing great difficulties with reestablishing their social security benefits. They are finding that communicating with the SSA office is very challenging because many offices are still closed and it is difficult to reach staff and get assistance. They asked meeting participants to share any resources or contact information

within the SSA to address these issues. Katie Jones recommended contacting the US representatives and senators to make them aware of these issues.

Joyce Wilson (DESE) reported that Missouri State Schools for the Severely Disabled are experiencing a staffing crisis. Overall, numbers of COVID cases have dropped significantly in the schools.

Presentation:

Amy Bowen and Jessica Bloch presented on VR's Summer Work Experience Program. The program offers training to students who have either a 504, IEP, or a known disability. The students participate in paid work experiences during the summer that typically last for 6 weeks at 20 hours per week. The program trained 891 students at more than 200 employer sites during the summer of 2021, which shows a significant growth from the first year of the program in 2015 when 116 student participated. Of the 891 participants, 110 were offered employment. More information about the program can be found at:

On the DESE/VR website: <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/vr-summer-work-experience>

On YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mG380W10QBY>

Old Business:

The Council held the annual election of officers and committee chairs per by-laws. Kim Lackey was appointed as the new chair of the Healthcare Committee. All other officers, committee and subcommittee chairs were confirmed for another term by unanimous Council vote.

New Business:

The Council set the dates for the 2022 council meetings as follows:

Friday, February 18, 2022

Friday, April 29, 2022

Friday, August 19, 2022

Friday, November 18, 2022

The Council decided to continue holding the meetings in a hybrid format with WebEx as an alternative to in person attendance. The February meeting will be held at the same location, the Kathy Carter Building.

Interim Chair Ron Hack invited Council members and state liaisons to join any Council committee of interest, and asked committee chairs to schedule a committee meeting prior to the next Council meeting in February.

Committee Reports:

Finance (Bob Wallace) – The Finance and Executive Committees approved recommendations for additional budget considerations that Claudia submitted to the Office of Administration. Bob asked for additional Council members to join to Finance Committee.

Advocacy (Katie Jones) – No report. The Advocacy Committee accepted the new project assigned in today's meeting of contacting the United States representatives and senators to address the communication issues with the Social Security Administration offices.

Housing (Sue Orton) – Sue and Wayne attended a conference call that they will discuss further at the housing sub-committee meeting.

Employment (Katie Jones) – Katie reported that staffing shortages are being felt everywhere along with lack of transportation. The State of Missouri has put together a 14-C Task Force consisting of members of MACDDS, DMH, VR, DWD and other stakeholders who meet monthly to collect data, provide resources and create employment opportunities should 14-C (subminimum wages) get eliminated in Missouri. Currently, nearly 6,000 Missourians employed in sheltered workshops would be affected by the elimination of 14-C. The task force will prepare a report and send it to the legislators.

Transportation (Betty Davidson) – The Transportation Network Committee discussed the urgent need for drivers to provide transportation for people with disabilities and others who utilize public transportation. Transportation providers are offering hiring and referral incentives for drivers.

Programs (Betty Davidson) – Claudia sent out an email asking the council for suggestions on topics and presenters for next year's Council Meetings. Recommendations included presentations about MACDDS, the Inclusive Design Alliance about universal design, Direct Support Professionals shortage, and elder care options for aging adults with disabilities.

Council Member Reports:

Ron Hack – The inclusive playground at Watson Trail Park in Sunset Hills is now open and accessible to all.

Chuck Comstock serves on the Advisory Board at A.T. Still University in Kirksville with a program to help educate student doctors about how to interact with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Chuck hosted a session on standardized patient encounters on the night of November 10 that focused on how to assist patients with disabilities that may come into the ER or doctor's office.

Chip Hailey has started the Technology Association for Visually Impaired Missourians (TAVIM). The program assists persons over 55, who are blind or visually impaired with little to no computer experience, and teaches them how to use computers. The program will issue refurbished computers to those who qualify. The program is free for participants. Chip distributed brochures to the meeting participants. The website can be found at TAVI-MO.org. Questions or brochure requests can be sent to Chip at Chiphaley52@gmail.com.

Katie Jones reported that there are concerns about where the vaccine mandates will land, and that Senator Eigel is proposing a bill concerning the taxes for the SB40 Boards that would affect funding for services provided by the boards.

Kim Lackey – Paraquad is finalizing its 2022 legislative priorities, which will be posted on their website soon. She highlighted an event Paraquad held on November 5th that featured over 20 artists with disabilities who showcased art that showed their experiences with the Medicaid program.

Sue Orton – The St. Louis County Older Adults Commission distributed approximately 1500 grand pads to the St. Louis library. The devices helped connect seniors with family members during COVID. The St. Louis County Commission on Disabilities is working on a universal design ordinance.

Traci Ritter – The SB40 board has been looking into offering more inclusive employment options for individuals with disabilities. Traci has been working with the local public school district to offer employment opportunities for students in her small business, as part of their transition plan.

Lesia Shelton is continuing to have trainings with the deaf and hard of hearing population and their advocacy programs. Lesia addressed concerns with children and/or parents who are deaf or hard of hearing in the Division of Family services system not experiencing effective communication due to the unavailability of qualified ASL or deaf interpreters during hearings or meetings. Claudia recommended reaching out to Steve Milburn, who serves as the state liaison for DSS, for help on this matter.

Elijah Mayfield – In September, I spoke at the Mid-America Special Sportsman's Association Annual Banquet and Fundraiser. They arrange guided deer hunting trips for individuals with disabilities. I hunted with them last year and shot my very first deer – a very nice size buck. These guys have helped hundreds of individuals with disabilities to be able to go deer hunting and are awesome to work with. More information on the program can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/midamericaspecialsportsmans/>
<https://www.freedomhunt.org/about-us/>

Bob Wallace asked for resources to assist adults with autism finding group homes and resources for parents of adult children with disabilities.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

| Action Item | Responsible |
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| Sign up for Council Committee membership | Council members and state liaisons |
| Set up Committee Meetings prior to February 18 meeting | Committee Chairs/Claudia Browner |
| Contact US legislators regarding communication issues with SSA offices | Advocacy Committee |
| Schedule presentations for 2022 Council meetings | Claudia Browner |

The next regular Council meeting will be held **Friday, February 18, 2022** at 10 AM at the **Missouri Behavioral Health Council, Kathy Carter Building, CFO Room, 221 Metro Drive, Jefferson City** or by WebEx/conference call.

Minutes by Jessica Zimmer
11/16/2021

Approved by Council
2/18/2022