

**Governor’s Council on Disability  
Quarterly Council Meeting Minutes  
February 16, 2024**

**Council Members Present/Participating:**

Wayne Crawford, Betty Davidson, Ron Hack, Chip Hailey, Katie Jones, Kim Lackey, Sue Orton, Andrew Sartorius, Lesia Shelton, Bob Wallace

**Council Members Absent/Not Participating:**

Joan Bergstrom, Chuck Comstock, Rosemary Hendon, Elijah Mayfield

**Department Liaisons Present/Participating:**

Ashley Anderson	Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD)
Shawn Brice	Department of Social Services (DSS/MFP)
Becky Davis	Missouri Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)
Louis Gatewood	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
Eliot Gusdorf	Attorney General Office (AGO)
Chad John	Department of Conservation (MDC)
Lane Lakey	Department of Social Services (DSS/FSD)
Forrest Luck	Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Chiquita Small	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE/MSSD)
Venice Wood	Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS/DSDS)

**Staff:** Claudia Browner, Reece Ellis, Laura Mueth, Jenn Pettit

**Guests:** Deb Hobson, MOCIL President, Karen Gridley, MOSILC Executive Director, and Vicky Davidson  
MO DD Council Executive Director

Council Chair Ron Hack called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll call was taken. There was a quorum for the meeting with 10 Council members in attendance. The meeting was held by WebEx. Introductions followed.

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

**Approval of meeting minutes:** The Council members unanimously approved the meeting minutes for November 17, 2023. The approved minutes will be posted on the GCD website.

**Public Comment:** None

**Report from Council Chair – Ron Hack:**

Ron stated that three council members have resigned: James Trout, Traci Ritter and Joan Bergstrom. He asked all Council members to join him in congratulating and thanking them for their service on the Council.

Ron stated on a personal note that starting February 19, he would be on medical leave for at least six weeks. Katie Jones will be the acting chairperson until he can return.

**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**

- Introduced and welcomed Reece Ellis to the team. He started with us on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Council member resignations: James Trout – effective December 30, 2023, Traci Ritter – effective January 26, 2024, Joan Bergstrom – effective March 1, 2024  
The Council members are being honored for their service with a recognition plaque. She has reached out to the Governor’s Boards & Commissions Office and Commissioner’s Office regarding membership and new appointments.
- Participated in Model Employer initiative meeting with Division of Personnel and Office of Equal Opportunity on February 6.
- Participated in NEON Work Group (Employment First/Model Employer) meetings November 27, December 4, January 23
- Participated in OA Leadership Strategic Planning event – Lake Ozark – January 11-12
- FY24 budget – To date, we have spent/encumbered \$13,335 (50%) of our total E&E operational budget. The House hearing for the FY25 budget were held in January, and the Senate hearing is scheduled for March 6.

### Laura

- Attended meetings of the MO Brain Injury Advisory Council as well as the MO Disability and Health Collaborative. The MO Disability Health Collaborative is changing its name to MO Disability and Health Program to better align with CDC and the other states involved. The advisory council will have the name Disability and Health Collaborative. The projects, goals, etc. will not change.
- Listened to many House and Senate hearings and attends a weekly legislative call with various groups throughout the state. It is hosted by the MO Budget Project.
- Forty-nine people attended the January 11 Legislative Education Project webinar. Six attended the one held the night of February 8. There are two remaining in March, one on the 7<sup>th</sup> and another on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Both have at least 20 registrants.
- Has been publishing the Legislative Update each week.

### Reece

- Joined the Governor’s Council on Disability on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.
- Serves as the Chair of the Columbia Citizens Police Review and in that capacity, he reviews appeals of complaints made against officers, perform audits of past complaints, as well as recommend changes to policy and training. His term as chair expires 2/14/24, however the term he was appointed to by the mayor and city council as a general body member renews in November.
- On February 15, as a member of the Statewide Black History Month Planning Committee, he will be co-hosting this year’s Black History Month Celebration where Governor Parson, Lieutenant Governor Kehoe, and Missouri Supreme Court Justice Robin Ransom will be on the program.
- Solicitation for Volunteers & Staff for Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) went out 2/5/24 via LinkedIn, Facebook, Email, and targeted outreach is in progress, including three upcoming transition fairs. MO-YLF Planning Committee met 2/14/24. Staff/volunteer deadline is April 15 and the delegate application deadline is March 31. Keynote has been confirmed - Colleen Young, Paralympic Athlete from St. Louis with medals in Rio in 2016 and Tokyo in 2020. Colleen is a 2014 MO-YLF alum.
- On February 12, 2024, GCD staff received a \$5,000 sponsorship check for the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum from Veterans United during a company-wide event attended by hundreds of employees. The presentation was made by TJ Clime, a 2023 Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) delegate and recent graduate of Capital City High School in Jefferson City. This experience, his first independent trip away from home, significantly impacted his personal growth. His father, Craig Clime, who attended the closing ceremony, witnessed firsthand the positive change in TJ and felt immense gratitude towards the program. Moved by this transformation, Craig was further touched to discover that his employer, Veterans United, is a sponsor of MO-YLF. As TJ's disability progresses, his family faced increased financial strain due to necessary modifications to accommodate his changing needs, including a wheelchair-accessible vehicle. Recognizing this, Veterans United decided to extend their generosity beyond the sponsorship, surprising TJ and his family

with a gift of up to \$50,000 to assist with these crucial accessibility upgrades. The GCD staff was honored to be part of this special moment. The immense gratitude displayed by the Clime family and the spontaneous outpouring of support from Veterans United employees created an experience none of us will ever forget.

### **Jenn**

- We received 13 Inclusion Award nominations and 4 Youth Leadership Award nominations. Special thanks to the judges for this year which were: Matt Medley, Sue Orton, Katie Jones, Lesia Shelton, Wayne Crawford, Kim Lackey, and Stephanie Cooper.
- The winner of the Inclusion Award is Alisha Favazza from Hollister R-V School District, and the Honorable Mention is Kristi Kliever from Abilities First in Springfield. We had a tie for the Honorable Mention, so Ron Hack reviewed both nominations and served as the tiebreaker.
- The Youth Leadership Award winner is Lydia Olmsted from Columbia, and the Honorable Mention is Margot Epstein from St. Louis.
- The awards will be presented at the Power Up Assistive Technology conference on April 9 in Columbia.
- Jenn helped a group of Missouri Youth Leadership Forum alumni put together an Alumni Reunion Survey to figure out if there is interest in a reunion in celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> MO-YLF program year in July.

### **State Liaison Reports:**

**Shawn Brice (DSS/MFP)** stated that the Show Me Home Program with Mo Health Net transitioned 135 individuals in 2023. That number was up from 87 in 2022. As of today, the program is pleased to report that they have transitioned 11 individuals, and 5 additional transitions are pending.

**Becky Davis (MCDHH)** stated they have the interpreters conference coming up in Kansas City. Hearings are being held for funding of the Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K) Bill (HB 447), passed in 2023, which requires DESE to develop a resource for parents to monitor and track expressive and receptive language acquisition and developmental stages toward American Sign Language and English literacy of children (ages birth to 5) who are deaf or hard of hearing. Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, DESE is required to issue an annual report that is specific to language and literacy development of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**Vicky Davidson (MO DD Council)** stated they have been working on dentistry and health for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. They have had First Responders Disability Awareness Trainings and Emergency Management Disability Awareness Trainings. March 13<sup>th</sup> is Disability Rights Legislative Day at the Capitol.

**Louis Gatewood (DESE/VR)** stated that Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) will host virtual [public hearings](#) regarding services currently offered by the VR program on March 18<sup>th</sup> from 10-12 and March 19<sup>th</sup> from 1-3. VR is asking for public comment on the goals and strategies currently used to serve persons with disabilities. Assistance in reviewing the topics provided is greatly appreciated. Everyone is invited to attend one of the upcoming hearings to share feedback. If you would prefer to share your comments in writing, they can be submitted through March 31, 2024, by completing the survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/24publichearingvr>. Email any questions to [info@vr.dese.mo.gov](mailto:info@vr.dese.mo.gov).

**Karen Gridley (MOSILC)** stated they are working on their three-year State Plan on Independent Living (SPIL).

**Deb Hobson (MOSIL/WILS)** stated she is on the [Master Plan on Aging](#) committee and the first of ten town halls will be starting on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Two virtual team hall meetings are scheduled for March 21. The Centers for Independent Living will have their Legislative Day on April 10<sup>th</sup> at the capitol.

**Lane Lakey (DSS/FSD)** stated they are coming off the Public Health Emergency in April 2024. All annual reviews of cases in MO HealthNet will return to normal after April.

**Forrest Luck (DNR)** stated that DNR has fully accessible virtual tours of state historic sites. The Bothwell tour is only 1 of 21, and soon DNR will have additional tours completed. The Bothwell Lodge tour is available at <https://mostateparks.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Bothwell+Lodge/index.htm>. This is a temporary link, which will be available for the next several months, but will not be available once DNR moves all the tours to their permanent location on mostateparks.com.

**Chiquita Small (DESE/MSSD)** stated they are providing special education training to their faculty and staff.

**Venice Wood (DHSS)** stated the Division of Senior and Disability Services is facilitating the Direct Service Worker (DSW) Workgroup. The goal for the DSW Workgroup is to enhance and expand the DSW workforce, develop standardized Personal Care Assistant (PCA) and Advanced Certification Training and increase DSW Safety. The Long-Term Goal is to collaborate with higher education to increase DSW as a career path. DSW Panel – they are hopeful the panel will begin this summer. The purpose is to gain a better understanding of the DSWs perspective and gain an understanding of what motivates them, what is needed to retain them, what makes them feel supported, etc. As a result of these discussion, the panel will propose suggestions or initiatives to work toward these areas.

**Presentations:**

Vicky Davidson, Executive Director for MO DD Council presented on Emergency Preparedness & Response for People with Disabilities. The presentation stressed the importance of how to get prepared for emergencies, how to get involved through volunteering and participation in exercises, available training, and resources.

**New Business:**

**Election of Council vice chairs and committee chairs**

Ron entertained a motion to have Wayne Crawford on the Executive Committee as a member at large. Sue Orton made the motion, Bob Wallace seconded. The motion carried.

Education Subcommittee Chair Vacancy – tabled until May meeting.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**Committee Reports:** None

**Council Member Reports:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 p.m.

The next regular Council meeting will be held **Friday, May 3, 2024**, at 10 AM at the Compass Health Center Administrative Office, Dogwood Room, 3515 Amazonas Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65101 or by WebEx/conference call.

Minutes by Jenn Pettit  
2/26/2024  
Approved by the Council  
5/3/2024