

**Governor's Council on Disability  
Quarterly Council Meeting Minutes  
May 2, 2025**

**Council Members Present/Participating:**

Steve Ahrens, Betty Davidson, Stacey Elster, Ron Hack, Katie Jones, Kim Lackey, Sue Orton, Jason Schott, Bob Wallace

**Council Members Absent/Not Participating:**

Chuck Comstock, Wayne Crawford, Elijah Mayfield, Andrew Sartorius, Lesia Shelton

**Department Liaisons Present/Participating:**

Ashley Anderson	Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD)
Kim Buckman	Department of Mental Health (DMH/DD)
Tyrone Davidson	Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Becky Davis	Missouri Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)
Tom Green	Missouri Department of Economic Development (MDEC/MHDC)
Chad Hinkle	Department of Mental Health (DMH/BH)
Chad John	Department of Conservation (MDC)
Joshua Shewmaker	Department of Revenue (DOR)
Chiquita Small	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE/MSSD)
Venice Wood	Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS)

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

**Guests:** None

**Call to Order/Introductions:** Council Chair Ron Hack called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Roll call was taken. There was a quorum for the meeting with 9 Council members in attendance. The meeting was held by in person and 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 February 21, 2025. The approved minutes will be posted on the GCD website.

**Public Comment:** None

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

Ron stated that he continues to follow what is coming out of Washington DC regarding legislature that could potentially affect services or funding for individuals with disabilities.

**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**

**Council business:**

- Council member Chip Hailey resigned – April 9
- Outreach to Governor's Office, Boards and Commissions (Keri Stuart) – Meeting scheduled for May 5

**Boards/Committees:**

- National Association of Governor's Committees on People with Disabilities – monthly meetings – March 28

**Conferences/Exhibits/Presentations/Events:**

- Participated in Talent Showcase, Jefferson City – February 25
- Participated in Disability Rights Legislative Day – February 26
- Attended Black History Month Training Session & Celebration – February 27
- Attended MOCIL Advocacy Day and celebration of 35 years of the ADA at the Capitol – March 25
- Attended Department of Corrections Re-Entry Conference, Jefferson City – April 22
- Attended Missouri Association for Workforce Development (MAWD) Conference, Branson – April 23-25

**Meetings/Outreach:**

- Outreach/Collaboration:
  - Meeting with National Disability Institute – LEAD Center RE: STEM career project – February 28
  - Invitation to participate in panel discussion at APSE-MO Conference, Columbia – July 24-25

**GCD programs/activities:**

- **GCD Inclusion and Youth Leadership Awards** – winners announced – awards presentation at MRA conference on May 29
- **GCD Poster Contest – National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)** – we have launched our annual poster contest this week on social media and the listsrvs. Please share to let people know about it.

**Budget Update:**

FY26 budget request – submitted to OA. House - approved, Senate - pending

FY25 budget – To date, we have spent/encumbered \$19,348 or 77% of our total E&E operational budget of \$25,283.

**Laura**

- Attended the final meeting of the Long-Range Planning Advisory Council at the end of February. She also attended the Missouri Brain Injury Advisory Council. The Missouri Disability and Health Program is continuing to assess the federal landscape and chose not to have their normal quarterly advisory council meeting. Disability Rights Legislative Day, which was held in February, had an attendance of more than 500 people.
- A total of 95 people attended the Legislative Education Project webinars this year.
- The Legislative Update has been produced each week for the legislative session.
- Several representatives and senators have been invited to participate in the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) legislative day activities. The deadline to RSVP is the last day of the legislative session (May 16).

**Reece**

**Meetings/Outreach:**

- February 28 – Meeting with Yvonne Wright to discuss National Disability Institute
- April 14 – Radio Interview on 93.9 FM *Wake-Up Missouri*
- April 18 – Meeting with Frank Taylor to discuss NaviLens

**Exhibits/Presentations**

- March 11 – Maryville Transition Fair
- March 12 – Raytown Transition Fair
- March 19 – Farmington Transition Fair

**GCD programs/activities:**

- MO-YLF Applications have closed. We have received 20 delegate applications; 18 delegates have been accepted, two are in progress (pending interviews). They represent areas as far as Fredericktown (Madison), Monticello (Lewis), Maryville (Nodaway), and Sparta (Christian). With additional from St. Louis County, Greater Kansas City, St. Charles County and Mid-Missouri.
- Dates for MO-YLF are July 15 – July 19

- Colleen Young, YLF Alumni and Medal Winning Swimmer on the United States Paralympic Team, has agreed to return as Keynote Speaker.
- We are thrilled to have a new partnership this year for MOYLF – NaviLens. They have agreed to help make this year's forum an interactive and accessible experience with free use of their product.

**Boards/Committees:**

- Monthly YLF Planning Committee Meetings
- April 8 – Missouri Interagency Transition Team Meeting

**Jenn**

**Inclusion and Youth Leadership Award**

- Notified winners and sent correspondence to nominees and nominators.
- Winner announcement
  - Inclusion Award Winner: True Manufacturing, O'Fallon
  - Inclusion Award Honorable Mention: Kit Brewer, Project CU, Inc, St. Louis
  - Youth Leadership Award Winner: Arabel StandingBear, Neosho
  - Youth Leadership Award Honorable Mention: Lucas Fritsche, Perryville
- Ordered the Inclusion and Youth Leadership Awards and getting ready for the awards presentation at the MRA conference on May 29

**Youth Leadership Forum**

- Sent paperwork to people to interview the delegates.

**Transition Fair**

- I attended the Eastern Jackson County Transition Fair in Independence MO on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Presentation:**

Kelly Ast from New Growth Transit provided a presentation about New Growth Transit, an on-demand micro transit program that provides transportation to individuals in crisis and those without transportation resources. New Growth Transit provides ride coordination for its customers year-round through a network of trained volunteer drivers. More information on the program is available at [newgrowthmo.org/transit](http://newgrowthmo.org/transit).

**State Liaison Reports:**

**Ashley Anderson (DHEWD)** stated that the department continues to serve all its employees and customers and provide reasonable accommodations within their current budget.

**Shawn Brice (DSS/MFP)** stated that the department does not anticipate any changes or cuts in the funding for the Money Follows the Person/Show Me Home program. They currently have no correspondence with CMS. The department has a lot of new program initiatives that they are going to submit for funding. The Show Me Home program is geared for individuals that are in a nursing facility, receive Missouri Medicaid, and have been in the facilities for more than 60 days. If they are interested in and capable of living on their own, the department will assist them with moving into their home or apartment and receive services in the community, which will save the state lots of money per person.

**Kim Buckman (DMH/DD)** announced that Sheila Wunning is the new Director of the Developmental Disability Division. Catherine Cronin is the new Director for Provider Relations in the St. Louis Area. Kelly Kemna is the new Director of Communications and Engagement.

On March 17<sup>th</sup> the Governor signed a supplemental budget that allowed DMH to have funding to start to move people off the waiting list for the in-home support program. They currently have 18,000 individuals actively enrolled in the health home program and anticipate about 4,500 more to come on in the next quarter. The division is operating as usual. They continue to support individuals to achieve their employment outcomes.

**Becky Davidson (MCDHH)** stated MCDHH has been focused on 2 bills this year: HB 1308 that focuses on removing the cap for funding for their DeafBlind Services grant that was written in the legislation. The other

was legislation focused on establishing Communication Access Services to cover immediate needs for state and local agencies and businesses when working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. The first was sent to the General Law committee and the other was referred to committee in both the House and the Senate, but did not get a hearing on either side and is not likely to.

Last month MCDHH held its first Deaf Education Symposium 2025 featuring speakers from Texas and invited schools, parents, teachers, paras, and educational interpreters. It was a successful event, and MCDHH plans to repeat it next year.

June 13-15 MCDHH will be hosting its first Deaf and Hard of Hearing family camp for families of deaf and hard of hearing children. In many cases, the first Deaf person someone meets is their own child when the doctors tell them their child's test results. From there, families can be plummeted with information about how to raise a deaf or hard of hearing child and much of that information can be conflicting. This camp is for them to have the opportunity to network and learn a bit about the importance of language acquisition. Camp information is available at:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc9NH5wIMXYGxTfKLz1DnhD\\_djR3rHtsjW95hwhOB1WHTrg/viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc9NH5wIMXYGxTfKLz1DnhD_djR3rHtsjW95hwhOB1WHTrg/viewform?usp=header)

**Tom Green (MHDC)** stated that currently there is some uncertainty about future developments and changes on how the housing being built affects people with disabilities. However, as of now it is a priority to build housing for the disabled through the program.

**Chad Hinkle (DMH/BH)** stated they have an evidence-based supported employment program called Individual Placement Support (IPS) for individuals with mental illness or core occurring mental illness/substance use disorder. They have 33 sites across the State of Missouri. They are continuing to expand throughout the State of Missouri.

The National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) workgroup is halfway through the award period for this year and is continuing to work with subject matter experts on initiating the Employment First Act. The agencies that provide employment services to individual disabilities will develop their own employment first policies. This award ends in September and while the group may not have every agency policy completely finalized at that time, it will be well on the way with the guidance of the subject matter experts to have something in place very soon after the deadline.

**Joshua Shewmaker (DOR)** stated that his department is following several bills – HB572, HB799, HB 378 and HB 969 that have a good chance of being passed.

**Chiquita Small (DESE/MSSD)** stated they have a new Superintendent that starts on July 1, 2025. On May 28 there will be a Children and Youth Disaster Conference in Jefferson City. They are still needing vendors for the conference, if you are interested, please let her or Claudia know.

**Venice Wood (DHSS)** stated that work continues establishing Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care (PPEC) as a state plan service. PPEC licensure will be required effective 8/28 for any facility providing PPEC services. A one-pager and PP presentation, which is in the newly added [PPEC information](#), can be found on the [HCY Program webpage](#).

The Show Me Home Program was awarded two new contracts to NEILS and Circle of Care, the third contract is pending.

**New Business:** None.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**Committee Reports:**

**Executive (Ron Hack)** – No report.

**Finance (Bob Wallace)** – No report.

**Personnel (Sue Orton)** – No report.

**Advocacy (Katie Jones)** – No report.

**Housing (Sue Orton)** – No report.

**Education (Betty Davidson)** – No report.

**Employment (Katie Jones)** – No report.

**Transportation (Steve Ahrens)** – No report.

**Programs (Betty Davidson)** The presentations for the remaining 2025 Council meetings are: Tabernacle Community Housing Program in August and NaviLens wayfinding technology in November.

**Healthcare (Kim Lackey)** – No report.

**Council Member Reports:**

None

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

The next regular Council meeting will be held **Friday, August 15, 2025**, at 10 AM at the Compass Health Center Administrative Office, Dogwood Room, 3515 Amazonas Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65101 or by WebEx.

Minutes by Jenn Pettit  
5/20/2025

Approved by Council  
8/15/2025