**- Approved -**

**CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**Regular Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 10:05 a.m. – 12:02 p.m.**

**(Online via Microsoft Teams)**

The 246th meeting of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities was held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, from 10:05 a.m. to 12:02 p.m. on Microsoft Teams.

**Presiding:**  Doris Maldonado Mendez, Chair

**Recorder of Minutes:**  Microsoft Teamsw

**Members Present:**  Emily Ball, Michelle Baughman, Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair; April Burke, Laurie Cantwell, Andy Cirioli, Kevin Daly, Antonia Edwards, Michael Finley, Lynn Frith, Karen Healy, Shannon Jacovino, Kaitlynn Ramos, Graziela do Carmo Reis, Kathie Strout, Jennifer Switalski, Fran Traceski

**Members Absent:**   Bryan Klimkiewicz, Amy Soto,

**Members of the Public:** Rachel Mirsky, Siobhan Morgan, Dori Papi-Santini

**Staff:**  Walter Glomb, Executive Director

1. **Call to Order:**  With a quorum present, Doris Maldonado Mendez, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.
2. **Public Comment:** Siobhan Morgan, Interim Executive Director of the Connecticut Family Support Network introduced herself to the Council.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** Doris Maldonado Mendez, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Fran Traceski motioned to approve the agenda. Andy Cirioli seconded the motion. The agenda was approved.

1. **Approval of Minutes from September 12, 2023, Annual Council Meeting:**  Karen Healy motioned to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Antonia Edwards. The minutes were approved. Shannon Jacovino abstained.
2. **Comments by the Chair:**  Doris Maldonado Mendez, Chair, called attention to the fact that this past October 31, marks 60 years since President John F Kennedy signed the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. The DD Act chartered the *LifeCourse* and the vision of what a good life with a developmental disability should be.

Doris stated “The law empowered people with developmental disabilities and their communities to shape policies that impact us, and it's served as the blueprint for many subsequent laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities and promotes independence, integration, and inclusion in their pursuit of happiness. The progress to advance disability rights since the DD Act has been intentional, collaborative and person centered, led by the people with disabilities for people with disabilities.”

“As a Council, we are focused on training and supporting the next generation of disability leaders and allies and families in pursuit of our common goal of independence for all people with developmental disabilities. In the past, the Council and the communities we serve have benefited from new connections and collaboratives, statewide and nationally, through relationship building with mental health communities, community health workers, faith-based communities, Latino leaders, and other life course catalysts.”

Recently, Doris was interviewed and has moderated discussions and panels surrounding integration and equity from marginalized communities with disabilities along the life course, from prenatal to adulthood. And as a former awardee of the Hispanic Community Leaders of Connecticut, Doris was interviewed a second time by *Identidad Latina Multimedia*. The interview focused on domestic violence awareness in all communities and orientations, but specifically among people with disabilities.

She went on to share that the Council was represented at the *2nd National Latino with Disabilities Conference* with United Cerebral Palsy, which presented three panel discussions with Graciela do Carmo Reis, who presented the Yale D-Lean training project funded by the Council. Graciela's colleague, Mark Costa, M.D., was a two-time panelist representing Yale PRCH and an integrated employment discussion. As DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access) leaders, the Yale team was the first to represent Brazilian Communities as Latinate that speak Portuguese, not Spanish.

In order for the Council to expand on their recent training endeavor with the Community Health Workers Association (CHW) through Health Equity Solutions, Doris introduced them to the Association on Infant Mental Health at Yale.

While cultivating relationships with the Connecticut Oral Health initiative (COHI), Doris referred them to some of the Council’s grantees for collaboration. Representative Gary Turco is the Community Engagement Specialist for COHI, and has accomplished commendable work along with their staff of 3 and a very dedicated board.

Nationally, and at the NACDD Conference, Doris has continued to focus on working with colleagues, legislators and systems leaders while educating on the widespread disregard for the 1964 Civil Rights Act Title Six Language Access and Executive Order #13166 and subsequent Plain Language Executive orders enacted in 2010, to ensure siloed work is discontinued, and to lead by example in providing limited English proficiency communities with equity, inclusion and access, legally mandated for federal funded aid entities.

Lastly, after reading Doris’ Op Ed in the CT Mirror, Shannon Jacovino, the Ombudsman at the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and fellow Council member, invited Doris to meet with her and Cheryl Ellis, the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at the DDS, to discuss further language access for limited English proficiency communities.

1. **Report from the Council Executive Director on State Plan Activities for Fiscal Year:** Walter Glomb, Council Executive Director, said the Council has enough federal funding to roll over to start the new year, in spite of the federal government not yet passing a budget. He sent the Council a detailed report on all the Council’s activities, an astonishing 32 items!

The Bridging Aging and Disabilities Community of Practice has been progressing very well and continues to meet every other Tuesday at 3:00 pm on Teams. The recent activity has been focused on person-centered planning tools. Representatives from the University of Chicago and the Arc of the USA have come in and shared their tools at the forums.

For the next meeting, the Department on Aging will discuss how they have provided *LifeCourse* training for Navigators in their Aging and Disability Resource Centers and to people at the CT Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

Recently, Walt received a note from Andrea Palm, the Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, congratulating the Council on the work completed in the Bridging with Aging and Disabilities Community of Practice, and on the way work has been done with the Age Well Collaborative, particularly with *LifeCourse*.

Jill Jacobs, the Commissioner of the Administration on Disabilities at the Administration for Community Living (ACL), told Walt in person she didn't think she would ever see *LifeCourse* applied in the aging communities during her lifetime. The Council is doing it now!

1. **Report by the Executive Director on the Fiscal Year Council Budget:** There is severe water damage at the Council Offices and staff will be working remotely until renovations are completed.The Council’s Disability Policy Specialist is on medical leave, the budget is on track and staff continue to look for opportunities to save money and cut back on costs whenever possible.
2. **New Business:** Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair, has been in contact with Russell Blair, Director of Education and Communications at the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission, learning how the Council can stay in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). He presented complex information to the Council on how they can be compliant with FOIA. A separate handout will be provided to Council members on the topic, as it was too detailed to include in the meeting minutes.

Chuck opened a discussion with the Council on the benefits of a hybrid Council Meeting. In a hybrid meeting at least one member of the Council needs to physically be in attendance at the physical space for the hybrid meeting. If a Council member wishes to physically attend the Council Meeting at the meeting space, transportation for them and their staff will be provided. Also, the Council will provide a meeting assistant if requested.

At larger in-person meetings in the future, the Council has the “Owl” on standby. Basically, the “Owl” is a camera system that interfaces with computers and Microsoft Teams. It will automatically turn the camera towards someone speaking during the meeting.

Shannon Jacovino made a motion for the Council to move to a hybrid meeting schedule for the upcoming fiscal year. Fran Traceski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair, made a motion to amend the motion and to have all future meetings of the Council be in the hybrid format. Shannon Jacovino amended her motion. Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

1. **Council Committee Reports:** Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair, and Proposal Review Committee (PRE) Chair, said the Proposal Review Committee held a brief meeting to consider 4 grant proposals for Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health (PRCH); Yale Child Study Center (Autism Ethnography Project); Rocky Hill Public Schools iDream Café; and the Asperger Autism Network.

Charles Bergamo, Council Vice Chair, made a motion for the Council to adopt the recommendations of the Proposal Review Committee. Michelle Baughman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair, made a motion for the Council to approve funding for the projects for Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health (PRCH) for $20,000; Yale Child Study Center (Autism Ethnography Project) for $21,968; Rocky Hill Public Schools iDream Café for $33,000; and the Asperger Autism Network for $10,337. Michelle Baughman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Antonia Edwards, Membership Committee Chair, said the Committee held extensive interviews with candidates for Council membership. The Committee is recommending the Council accept Emily Cowen and Rene Lambert to fill vacant seats on the Council.

Michelle Baughman made a motion for the Council to approve Council Membership for Emily Cowen and Rene Lambert. Shannon Jacovino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Emily Ball asked about the membership confirmation letters from the Governor’s Office. Walter Glomb, Council Executive Director, said people will be receiving an email from the Governor’s Office with an official letter of membership included as a pdf attachment. The new members names and contact information will be forwarded to the Governor’s Office, who will then email the new members a background form to fill out and return to the Governor’s Office. After their approval, they will receive an official letter welcoming them to the Council.

Kaitlynn Ramos, Advocacy, Public Information, and Education Committee (APIE) Chair, said the Committee is planning their next meeting to continue work on the Council’s Annual Report. She welcomes help from all members of the Council in producing the Report.

Fran Traceski, Legislative Policy and Planning Committee (LPP) Chair, thanked Walt Glomb, Council Executive Director, for his very useful training on the legislative process. Walt plans to do another training session in the future for new Council members and members who missed the session.

The LPP Committee reviewed the Council’s Legislative Agenda from 2023 and is creating a new one for fiscal year 2024. Action steps were discussed at the Committee’s last meeting. One of the goals Fran would like to see is for the Committee to develop a set of potential strategies and legislation related to access to healthcare. Planning for the Council’s Annual Legislative Breakfast is also underway with a target date of Thursday, February 29, to coincide with CT Arc’s and the IDD Caucus’ Family Action Day at the State Capitol.

Charles Bergamo, Vice Chair, has been engaged in work on home services and Medicaid. He stated they are in the process of being amended and there is a 30 day comment period. Walter Glomb, Council Executive Director, clarified there are ten (10) 1915C Waivers in Connecticut; only three of them are at DDS, and the law only applies to DDS. It does not apply to the Katie Beckett, ABI, PCA, Autism or any of the other 1915C Waivers.

**The Ten (10) 1915C Waivers are:**

Acquired Brain Injury I

Acquired Brain Injury II

Comprehensive Supports

Employment and Day Supports

Home and Community-Based Services for Elders

Home and Community-Based Services for Persons with Autism

Individual and Family Supports

Katie Beckett

Mental Health

Personal Care Assistance

Walt noted the waivers are scattered across different state departments and under various cabinet positions.

Siobhan Morgan, Connecticut Family Support Network Interim Executive Director, said she was the DDS Director in charge of Waivers for 10 years. She commented that the manual is the same for all 1915C waivers regardless of where they are housed. The directions for filling out the waivers are identical. She believes it’s a matter of advocacy and asking what is the rationale, and to look at what’s being done in other states. She’s open to discussing the issue further outside of the meeting.

1. **Announcements:** Doris Maldonado Mendez, Chair, wished Karen Healy a happy birthday and congratulated her on her new job. Doris also encouraged Council members to visit the website for the Connecticut Public Radio interviews that are streaming online. The Able Lives website is up and running and everyone should share the link with their communities and organizations. Sunday, December 3, is the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Michelle Baughman added that an Autism Community event is being recorded in Australia by “Autism from the Inside”, and Council members can listen to it.

**Adjournment:** Doris Maldonado Mendez, Council Chair asked for a motion for adjournment. Shannon Jacovino, made a motion for adjournment. Fran Traceski seconded the motion. The meeting concluded at 12:02 p.m. The next Council meeting will be a hybrid meeting held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024.