

Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities Fall Council Meeting Minutes

October 12-13, 2023

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Attendees: Tianna Faulkner, Maria Pinkelton, D'Arcy Robb, Lisa Eaves, Charlie Miller, Harry Nelson, Charlotte Densmore, Isabel Knofczynski, Tonya Fair, Felicia Dillon, Starr Bruner, Eric Foss, Wesley Ford, ASL Interpreter D'Lisa Robinson, Nandi Isaac, Deborah Hibben, ASL Interpreter Mandy Bracken, Mark Crenshaw, Lisa Newbern, Lori Campbell, Rena Harris, unidentified caller (229-457-3247), Evan Nodvin, Jeff Allen, Sharia Stripling, Melissa Barwick, Zolinda Stoneman, Jean Kloker, Ramu Kaladi, Evan Keesey, Kisha Smith, Ryan Shindler, Brian Dowd

Council Chair Lisa Newbern begins the meeting and calls the meeting to order and welcomes everyone in attendance. She said there will be a moment of silence and then she will read the GCDD gathering place statement. There is a moment of Silence for Kim Person and Becky Brightwell who we lost this year, Kim in July and Becky in October. Council members and staff introduce themselves to the group and everyone shares a fun fall fact about themselves. Lisa addresses what's going on in Israel because of what Rena Harris shared during her introduction.

Lisa gives announcement. The next meeting will be virtual and is scheduled for February 1st and 2nd 2024. Lisa welcomes others to share announcements. Zoe Stoneman speaks about the Disability History Symposium that took place in Athens, Ga on October 3, 2023. It was a hybrid event. GCDD was a sponsor and Zoe Stoneman says they are in the process of planning next year's event. D'Arcy Robb shares a couple of announcements. She was contacted by the Georgia Chamber and spoke with Tasha Allen and D'Arcy Robb will be on a panel to speak about disability, which has never happened before. The event is scheduled for November 1, 2023. D'Arcy Robb's second announcement is that Kim Person's family is starting a scholarship in her honor for students who attend Hampton University.

Lisa Newbern goes over the meeting agenda for the next two days, including a morning break, general updates from D'arcy Robb, a corrective action plan update, there will be a discussion about items that will be voted on, and then there will be a lunch break. This afternoon, there will be a public policy presentation given by Charlie and Charlotte. Then there will be another break. After the break, committees will meet and then the committees will give their committee reports. Tomorrow's agenda includes state agency reports, a project spotlight based on the new evaluation work, and a presentation from Maria Pinkelton about storytelling and equitable dinners. Then D'arcy Robb will go over the programmatic dashboard, followed by the consent agenda vote and the vice chair vote. After that, there will be an opportunity for public comment and then the meeting will end.

The meeting is being recorded. The next part of the meeting D'Arcy Robb will go over Council business. Council members and staff members received these documents prior to the meeting. First, she will go over next committee meetings and then ADHOC work, then a staffing update,

then speak on an award based on idea that the staff had, and then cover elections. The Winter Council Meeting will be a virtual meeting. The April 2024 meeting she says GCDD is planning to host in person and have training at that time, which they are planning to have at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in downtown Atlanta. D'arcy Robb then speaks about the ADHOC committee. She and Felicia Dillon are both on the committee and are looking at changes to the GCDD application. They last met in September. They have looked at other councils and NACDD for feedback regarding this work. Also, they will give members the opportunity to promote the Council, including video or audio testimonials. 23 East Group will use footage to help promote the membership campaign. D'Arcy Robb then spoke on the Dottie Addams Committee. Lisa Eaves and Harry Nelson are overseeing this committee. Charlie Miller is also involved as a staff member. The committee is going to review how the Dottie Addams scholarship currently works and D'Arcy Robb shares details of people who can apply for the scholarship. She then gave a staffing update. Currently there is an opening for the office manager and membership coordinator and she asked members to help spread the word that GCDD is looking to fulfill this position. D'arcy Robb then shares with the group an idea from the staff about creating an award on behalf of Kim Person, who worked for GCDD for 18 years. The award would be a disability award for someone who is not in the spotlight and works behind the scenes and has the spirit of Kim Person. Postings have gone out on GCDD's social media and website. There will be a space for the group to discuss this award and the staff is asking for the Council's support of the idea. D'Arcy Robb speaks on council member elections, which are typically held in summer. She reached out to Sheryl Matney with ITACC. Elections will be held next summer (2024). There will be an opportunity to discuss the elections in the meeting today. Next, there will be a vote at the meeting to vote on selecting a new Vice Chair to complete Nick Perry's term, now through the summer of 2024. D'Arcy Robb said Lisa Newbern already contacted individuals who qualify to run for that office and she then spoke about who qualifies to be in that role and the whole elections process. The vote for Vice Chair will happen tomorrow. The nominees are Nandi Isaac, Evan Nodvin, and Sharia Stripling.

D'Arcy Robb now goes over the corrective action plan update. She gave a quick overview of the corrective action plan, based on areas where GCDD was not in compliance by the administration on disabilities, the office of intellectual and developmental disabilities, and our federal partners. The plan is based on years 2020 and 2021. The past year, the Council Chair and D'Arcy Robb meet every three months with federal partners. Council membership, staff, diversity and inclusion, and grants are the CAP topics. There are five areas that GCDD still has to work on. D'arcy Robb said federal partners are satisfied so far with improvements. D'Arcy Robb goes over the areas GCDD is working on to improve based on the four CAP topics areas, including areas that meet satisfaction and work that is still ongoing.

Lori Campbell and Lisa Newbern gave positive feedback regarding GCDD's CAP progress and opened the floor for anyone who had any questions. Now is the time in the meeting to go over the consent agenda. July meeting minutes, the quarterly financial report, the programmatic dashboard or council elections. Lisa Newbern asks if anyone has any questions about any of

these topics, as well as questions about the Spirit of Kim Award. Items will be voted on tomorrow about the July meeting minutes, the quarterly financial report, the programmatic dashboard or council elections as well as vote on the Spirit of Kim Award. Now they will talk about the Vice Chair elections, which will be voted on tomorrow.

Meeting breaks for lunch.

The meeting continues. Charlotte Densmore and Charlie Miller go over the public policy agenda, including advocacy days, vision for 2024 legislative session, and awards ceremonies. The proposed public policy agenda will be voted on tomorrow. Supporting or opposing legislation in the state. Does it go in the direction of the five-year plan on public policy and vision? How will the policy affect the disability community, and what is the fiscal impact on the disability community were the questions asked during the presentation. Everything is submitted to the ACCUPI committee for support, which is their ad hoc committee. Charlotte Densmore goes over the public policy survey results. The top two items are waivers and wages, then employment, housing, protection from abuse, mental health, and IPSE. The waiver ask is about 2400 and an increase in service rates. Employment areas are state as model employment, minimum wage, and ending 14C. The team is supporting legislation around housing and making it more accessible and safer and conducting projects outside. GAO is working with them on housing efforts. They are talking about a mental health partnership with Georgia legislatures and focusing on IPSE. The next legislative session, they will lead on other projects, and continue past legislative efforts. They will continue with a hybrid advocacy day model, the first day will be a virtual call to give tips and help people get ready to advocate. Day two will be advocating in person at the capitol. There will be a day focused on Project Search (Advocacy Day 1) IPSE (Advocacy Day 2), DSPs-waivers and wages (Advocacy Day 3), and employment (Advocacy Day 4). They will also have a planning committee for advocacy days. Currently, there are tentative dates set for advocacy days. The days will be confirmed closer to the beginning of the legislative session. Charlotte Densmore speaks on equitable dinners, hybrid events scheduled around advocacy days on waivers and wages and employment. Maria Pinkelton was a big part of getting the equitable dinners planned and scheduled. Charlie Miller proposed a virtual advocacy awards ceremony-legislature of the year award, someone who really takes on a disability issue. Then there will be an advocate of a year award to someone who advocates above and beyond on key issues outside of advocacy days. The third award will go to the organization of the year who advocates, works for and with the disability community. Planning for the awards is still taking place. A rubric will be used to help nominate the best candidates. Charlotte Densmore spoke about the public policy and advocacy fellowship. The new public policy fellow is Ryan Shindler and he introduces himself to the group. Project Search funding is coming to an end. The goal was to make sure they had a highlighted advocacy day. This will be a mini advocacy day. IPSE will also have a mini advocacy day. These days will have more targeted advocacy. D'Arcy Robb makes comments about the two targeted advocacy days. D'Arcy Robb answers questions from the group. She adds there are items that are priorities and items that GCDD is supporting. Isabelle

Knofczynski and Charlotte Densmore also addressed group questions. Lisa Newbern thanked the public policy team for their presentation.

There will be a short 10-minute break. Then committee members will go into committee meeting break out rooms. After the committee meetings, each committee will present their report.

The first committee to report is the ACCUPI committee. Jeff Allen spoke on the targeted legislative activities for the 2024 legislative session regarding IPSE and Project Search and spoke about the committee going over as a group what was mentioned in the public policy presentation report.

Brian Dowd of the state plan committee said the group focused on the evaluation consultants who are going to do a presentation tomorrow. They looked at the full evaluation report that was sent out to Council members and the state plan committee. There were a lot of good questions about tools that were suggested to be developed to capture data. They are going to review the entire evaluation report by Halloween.

Mark Crenshaw spoke for the DEI committee. The first topic was the updated guidance related to the implementation of data collection and data collection for councils as well as implementation challenges of collecting this data. The committee saw revised information related to what the Council will be asked to collect from program participants. Program participants will not be able to opt out of answering questions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. They had a brief conversation about the spring 2024 council meeting and partnering with the National Center on Civil and Human Rights. They also talked about people they could nominate and reach out to provide perspectives that do not exist on the council already.

That was the end of the committee reports and Lisa Newbern opens the floor for anyone who has any questions or comments. Debbie Hibben made suggestions based on the DEI committee meeting to broaden the list of people who are involved in DEI. Lori Campbell also shared that she can support helping GCDD's communications team to spread the word for new people to participate in DEI.

Lisa Newbern asked for a motion to end today's meeting. Evan Nodvin motioned and Nandi Isaac seconded the motion. There was a vote to adjourn the meeting early. All of the meeting agenda items were addressed for the day.

Meeting adjourned

Friday, October 13, 2023

Attendees: Tianna Faulkner, Maria Pinkelton, Charlie Miller, D'Arcy Robb, Starr Bruner, Evan Nodvin, Nandi Isaac, Wesley Ford, Deborah Hibben, Sharia Stripling, Brian Dowd, Harry Nelson,

Charlotte Densmore, ASL Interpreter-Mandy Bracken, ASL Interpreter-Dlisa Robinson, Isabel Knofczynski, Lisa Eaves, Mark Crenshaw, Ramu Kaladi, Lisa Newbern, Lori Campbell, Melissa Barwick, Tonya Fair, Rena Harris, Felicia Dillon, Nalini Isaac, Ann Price, Jenn Ballentine, Elana Meyers Taylor

Lisa Newbern begins the meeting and gives a quick overview of the day's agenda. The meeting will begin with agency updates. Then there will be a quick break and then the project highlight to discuss the storytelling in the equitable dinner, then we will go over the programmatic dashboard, the consent agenda vote, and vice chair votes.

Lori Campbell gives update. DBHDD has a lot going on. They have stakeholder work groups, there are three major areas of discussion, including the planning list (over 7000 people on the waiting list). There are presentations being done regarding processes and coming up with the planning list (waiting list) and determining the best approach to ending the waiting list. Focusing on individuals who are left in the emergency rooms (people with disabilities) where people are not receiving the proper services and supports. Currently there is no provider pool where individuals can be accepted back into the community. The main issue is that individuals with IDD do not need to be in emergency rooms in the private sector when they don't have a medical issue. The third item they are focusing on is the workforce issue. They completed a rate study last year, which has not been approved. She shared great appreciation for those who really advocated that the study be fully funded. The workforce group is a long-term multifaceted workgroup that has been together over a year. They are developing three pilots where people will hear more about DBHDD provider meetings and bulletins. They are working with the department of labor and calling it a mentorship program. NAS DSP is a long-standing virtual training platform where people can enter in their training. All three pilots will mirror the CMS required trainings. Another virtual training platform is through the College of Direct Support for individuals to receive and test evidence competency. There will be set modules for DSP or DSP 2. There will be additional training and support and salaries that are commensurate with training and support. Lori Campbell answers questions from the group. D'Arcy Robb said she is in one of the workgroups. Lori Campbell shared that another stakeholder workgroup that is focused on provider enrollment. She is involved in that. They are working with DFACS with a program called Transitioning Age for youth ages 18-22 who may be on the waitlist.

Brian Dowd with Department of Community Health gives his agency report. He oversees policies. Three major things he wants to go over. There were questions he got around why were the COMP and NOW put up for final adoption. The reason is by the code of federal regulations any time there is an amendment, they have to go out for public comment for a full 30 days. It takes three months to get through the public health comment process, present it to the board, put it to all DFACS offices. There is some press around it. The written comment for the waivers end next week. There is nothing wrong with the NOW and COMP waiver amendments that are out. It goes to CMS November 10, 2023 and will keep those provisions from Appendix K for providers that had a 10% increase. He mentioned that DCH is about six months through with

the year process of eligibility of the Medicaid redeterminations. There was an ad campaign and outreach and people were paid to update their addresses. They are still seeing a lot of Medicaid terminations from individuals and families. He's doing a lot of coordination with DFACS because they determine Medicaid eligibility. People can apply for a fair hearing and continue benefits pending their fair hearing. People have 90 days to submit information if they got a denial for coverage. An RFP was released for their care management organizations contracts: CareSource, Peach state and Amerigroup. LTSS and long term supports and services and waiver services are not included in the target populations. He opens the floor for questions. The GAMMIS system which links to the Gateway system has information for people to apply for Medicaid.

Jeff Allen from GVRA was unable to attend today's meeting. He left comments with Lisa Newbern. The comments are as follows: Starting next week, GVRA will post our proposed policy manual revisions for public comment. One of the biggest changes is the removal of a Financial Need Criteria; also, the requirement that a student attend a post-secondary school within 35 miles of their home the first two years. The public comment period will run for 30 days after it posts, and there will be a press release and social media blasts about it. D'Arcy Robb mentioned that there is interest in folding in waivers and or long term services and supports into managed care and she anticipates that there will be other ways for members to be involved.

Melissa Barwick with the Department of Human Services said she wants to second what Lori Campbell said. The goal is to breakdown those agency silos. Since April the Medicaid unwinding has been going on. They are still actively hiring eligibility workers that they need to process all of the redeterminations in addition to their usual SNAP. A lot of their county offices in rural areas are only opened one day a week and they are working to get the offices open two to three days a week and helping people navigate the GAMMIS Gateway system online and working to get the offices open five days a week. They are very focused on the implementation of the family's first prevention services act and really preventing out of home placements in situations where they're not necessary or not the best outcome. They are also focused on recruiting and retaining foster care and out of home providers. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for any questions for Melissa Barwick.

Rena Harris from GAO gives report. She showed appreciation for the work from Families First. They are back to in person monitoring for institutions where people, children, and adults with developmental disabilities are being served. This is securing the future of a workshop of parents of young adults with disabilities ages 14 to 25. She shared that GAO is also doing work helping individuals and families being left in emergency rooms or being discharged to unlicensed facilities. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for questions.

Mark Crenshaw from CLD gives an update. They are very busy and in transition of leadership. There are two interim codirectors. Erin Vinosky Thomas is the associate clinical professor and her work is around disability and health. She operates the state disability health program which has a cooperative agreement through the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention. There are provider trainings that he will put in the chat. They are also working with the state

department of Education to train about 800 teachers and school professionals on the functional behavioral assessment process and behavioral intervention plan process related to supporting students with disabilities that exhibit challenging behavior. Their IDEAL program currently has 22 students in their program (IPSE). They have peer mentors in the program. GSU homecoming is this weekend. The football game is Saturday evening. The IPSE consortium front to make sure the council knows things about what the consortium represents regarding programing and transition fairs and talking to special education teachers about IPSE as an option. The LEND program is in its 13th cohort going through its yearlong interdisciplinary leadership training program. GCDD's new public policy fellow is Ryan Shindler and he is in the LEND program. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for questions and shares a personal testimony that may be helpful to the group about families and individuals transitioning from high school to adulthood.

Zoe Stoneman with IHDD, Sharifa Peart with the Department of Public Health and Wina Low with the Department of Education not in attendance.

There is a quick break. The next thing on the agenda is the evaluation presentation.

Ann Price and Jenn Ballentine give an evaluation presentation. They will talk about the work they have been doing in building the evaluation capacity of GCDD. They will talk about the project timeline. Ann Price is a community psychologist and evaluator. Jenn Ballentine has her own nonprofit consulting company. She and Ann Price have partnered together to do the evaluation work for GCDD. The Timeline of the project began March 2023 and will wrap up now. Evaluations inform the work people do and let people know what's working and what is not working. Anne Price says evaluation is all about learning and improving. They have come on board to help GCDD with direction. Ann Price speaks about evaluation capacity and the training they did for GCDD staff a few months ago. They also did a logic model and literature review to give insight on equitable data collection for people who have developmental disabilities. She gives a presentation about the logic model. Jenn Ballentine then talks about evaluation planning. They met with GCDD programmatic teams at different times to get information and goals about their projects and determining the questions and answers they want to know, and what are the methods, and who is responsible, i.e. evaluation methods. The evaluation plan is a guide on how to evaluate a program. Jenn Ballentine then talks about technical assistance training they have been doing for the GCDD staff. Ann Price then talks about developing measures for grantees. Lisa Newbern shares with the group her appreciation for the evaluation work and opens the floor for questions and comments.

Maria Pinkelton gives an update on the Storytelling and Equitable Dinners highlight. She has been working with LARCH Atlanta since 2018 on the storytelling project. There have been countless stories that have been collected over the years to highlight the lives of individuals throughout the state of Georgia who have developmental disabilities. LARCH Atlanta is working alongside Story Muse, an independent story collector, to do the equitable dinners. Equitable Dinners brings people together to talk about complex issues. It is based on three short films of individuals and their direct support professionals and the people who work alongside them. The

goal is for people to discuss differences and find unity and common areas in conversations. An overview of the Georgia DSP crisis will be given along with small group discussion about what they learned from the three short films. People will be able to share their own experiences. The conclusion is a call to action of legislative advocacy that will be explained to all of the attendees. There will be a virtual (Tuesday, February 27th) and an in-person event (Tuesday, February 6th). Table leads and the small group leads will be great voices and advocates from across the state. Stakeholders, DSPs, disability advocacy leads, leadership in the community as well as legislators will be invited to attend the events. They will be collecting 16 short stories at the in-person event. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for questions for Maria Pinkelton.

D'Arcy Robb goes over the programmatic dashboard. Council members and staff received the document last week. The dashboard is an update on all of GCDD's projects. D'Arcy Robb opened the floor for questions. Debbie Hibben asked if the White Papers were available for review. Maria Pinkelton said she can have Devika Rao from 23 East Group, Inc. upload the most recent information about the whitepapers to the website and make it available to council members. Charlotte Densmore and Isabel Knofczynski can also share their white papers.

Now is the time in today's agenda to vote. Lisa Newbern needs someone to motion or second the vote for things on the consent agenda. Evan Nodvin gives a motion and Nandi Isaac seconds to vote on the consent agenda. Lisa Newbern asks if anyone is voting against the consent agenda and asks if anyone is abstaining from voting. The consent agenda passes.

Now is the vote for Vice Chair, three candidates to two candidates and then two candidates to one candidate. The votes only go to D'Arcy Robb and Lisa Newbern. The three nominations are Evan Nodvin, Nandi Isaac, and Sharia Stripling. Lisa Newbern said there were six people who are eligible for the role of vice chair and opened the floor for those individuals to self-nominate. Debbie Hibben gave a motion to vote for the position of vice chair. Mark Crenshaw seconded the motion to vote for vice chair and voting has begun. Lisa Newbern and D'Arcy Robb privately tally the votes. There is going to be a runoff between Evan Nodvin and Sharia Stripling because they had the same number of votes. The person between the two of them will go against Nandi Isaac for the position of vice chair. Nandi Isaac and Sharia Stripling are the top two who will run for the vice chair position. Everyone will vote one more time. Nandi Isaac is the new Vice Chair through the summer of 2024, when all roles will be voted on again.

Debbie Hibben has resigned her position, which has opened up a position on the executive committee. There will be a vote for that role. Council Members can self-nominate or someone on the council can nominate someone else for the role. The Role of the Executive Committee: Because the full Council meets on a quarterly basis, its Executive Committee is empowered to speak for and act on its behalf between regularly scheduled meetings. This means that the Executive Committees can make decisions pertaining to policies, programs, funding and personnel. There are two nominations: Rena Harris and Wesley Ford. Lisa Newbern gives them the opportunity to speak on why they should be nominated. Then there will be a motion to vote. Rena Harris speaks on her work with the Council and serving on several committees.

Wesley Ford speaks. Evan Nodvin gives a motion to vote and Nandy Isaac seconds the motion to vote for the new executive committee position. This is another silent vote. Rena Harris will be joining the executive committee and is the candidate that the members selected. This will be voted on again next summer. Lisa Newbern is the Chair and Nandi Isaac is the Vice Chair. Rena and Evan Nodvin are executive committee members.

Now is the time in the meeting for public comment. No one gave public comment. Maria Pinkelton has a written email statement (public comment) from Brittany Daniels that she will share with the group (read out loud). Maria Pinkelton passes the meeting over to D'Arcy Robb. Public comments are not addressed in the council meetings but are shared with the executive committee to discuss.

Lisa Newbern closes the meeting. Nandi Isaac motioned to end the meeting. Evan Nodvin seconded the motion. Lisa Newbern asked if anyone is opposed to or abstaining from the meeting.

Meeting adjourned