

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Zoom Webinar
Thursday, August 12, 2021

A regular public meeting of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities was held on Thursday August 12, 2021 and was held as a virtual Zoom Webinar Meeting. The meeting was called to order by Paul Blaustein, Chairperson, who presided and read the Open Public Meeting Act and Council Vision. The meeting notice was published in the Newark Star Ledger and the Trenton Times.

Announcement

- ❖ Paul thanked the Council for the continued efforts with conducting business during this health emergency.
- ❖ Paul thanked Executive Director Mercedes Witowsky and the Committee chairs for the start of the Legislative Disability Caucus. There have been three sessions to date.
- ❖ Paul thanked all involved in getting the State to use funding they received from the federal government to allow those individuals missing a key year in education to add another year.
- ❖ The Council has been invited to participate in the workshops offered during the upcoming NACDD Conference.
- ❖ Paul recommended a way the Council can memorialize those who have lost their battle with COVID, Paul is asking everyone to pledge themselves into encouraging vaccinations to those who are not. Jonathan Seifried, Assistant Commissioner for DDD is also working on encouraging vaccinations.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Meeting Minutes

The May 20, 2021, meeting minutes were distributed.

ACTION:

Motion made by Kevin Nunez to approve the May minutes after amending Phyllis Melendez abstaining.
Seconded by Helen Steinberg, meeting minutes are approved and will be amended before being added to the website.

Presentation:

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University Update: An evaluation of New Jersey's "Employment First" policies and practices and develop a comprehensive advocacy plan to increase meaningful competitive employment and day services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in New Jersey, given by, David Hoff, Program Director, UMass Boston. David was thanked for attending and giving the update.

Nominations & Vote:

During today's meeting, the members were asked to vote for a Council Vice-Chair and One At Large Members. Candidate statements were included in the meeting packet.

The nominations are as follows:

Vice-Chair: Myrta Rosa	One At Large: Safiyyah Muhammad
Kevin Nunez	Ryan Roy
Todd Emmons	Myrta Rosa
	Todd Emmons

Congratulations to Vice Chair Kevin Nunez and Executive Committee Member At Large, Safiyyah Muhammad.

Committee Reports

- ❖ By-Laws Review Ad Hoc Committee
Amendments to the Council By-Laws

Action:

Motion made by Kevin Nunez to accept the amendments to the Council By-Laws as presented on May 19, 2021; Motion seconded by Safiyyah Muhammad.

The amendments to the Council By-Laws have been approved, with an effective date of January 1, 2022.

- ❖ Executive Committee and Chair Report was given by Paul Blaustein.
- ❖ Public Policy Committee Report by Kara Kushnir was included in the packet.
 - Children and Youth Services Subcommittee report was included in the packet.
 - Health and Wellness Committee Report was included in the packet.
- ❖ Grant Committee Report by Kevin Nunez was included in the packet.
- ❖ State Plan Committee Report was given by Helen Steinberg.

Advocate Caucus

Due to scheduling conflicts, this meeting was cancelled.

Executive Director Report given by Mercedes Witowsky.

The highlight of the report is the proposed budget for FY22, which was included in the meeting packet and reviewed.

ACTION:

Motion was made by Andrew McGeady to accept the FY22 Budget as delivered; Gwen Orlowski seconded. Motion approved.

Public Comment

Five public comments were read and addressed from the comments section within the Zoom platform.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm.

Minutes prepared by Jacinta Williams, Executive Assistant

Next Advocate Caucus is November 17, 2021 at 6pm-7pm
Next Council meeting is November 18, 2021 at 10:00am-Noon

ATTENDANCE

Self-Advocates, Family Members

Paul Blaustein	Walt Fernandez	Elizabeth Dalzell	Kevin Nunez
Andrew McGeady	Helen Steinberg	Sarah Aziz	Gary Rubin
Peg Kinsell	Safiyyah Muhammad	Myrta Rosa	Ryan Roy

Excused

Todd Emmons
Kara Kushnir
Kim Murray, Office of Special Education Programs

DD Act Agencies Representatives & Government Agencies

Joyce Jelley, Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities
Gwen Orłowski, Executive Director, Disability Rights New Jersey
No Representative, Division of Family Health Services
Karen Carroll, Division of Voc. Rehab. Services
Jonathan Seifried, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Developmental Disabilities
Jacqueline Moskowitz, Division of Disability Services
Phyllis Melendez, Division of Medical Asst. & Health Services

Public Member

VACANT

Guests

Annette Smith
Jill Hoegel
David Hoff, Program Director, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston
Maria Heidkamp, Director, Heldrich Center, Workforce Development, Rutgers University
Paul Aronsohn, Ombudsman
Kyle Picone
Charlotte Glover

Council Staff

Mercedes Witowsky
Jacinta Williams
Bob Titus
Kyoko Coco
Frank Latham
Jodi Fox
Gary Brown
Maria Leary
Brenda Considine