

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Zoom Webinar
Thursday, May 20, 2021**

A regular public meeting of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities was held on Thursday May 20, 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

Rebekah Novemsky, Council staff has passed away in June after a long illness. Rebekah was a tireless advocate for families and persons with developmental disabilities, as well as the mother of a child with developmental disabilities. Condolences were sent to Rebekah's family at the time of her passing. Please join me in a moment of silence in Rebekah's memory.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Meeting Minutes

The February 11, 2021, meeting minutes were distributed. Kevin Nunez mentioned a vote was missing from the 5 Year Plan vote. The notes will be revised to include Phyllis Melendez abstaining.

ACTION:

Motion made by Gwen Orlowski to approve the amended February minutes.
Seconded by Kara Kushnir, meeting minutes are approved and will be amended before adding to the website.

Committee Reports

- ❖ State Plan Committee Report was given by Helen Steinbeg.

The committee recommends the 2022 - 2026 State Plan as presented to the full board for review and approval. The floor is open for discussion.

ACTION:

Motion was made by Peg Kinsell to accept the 5 Year Plan as delivered; Gwen Orlowski seconded. Motion approved with two opposed and two abstentions, Jacqueline Moskowitz and Phyllis Melendez.

- Ad Hoc Committee Equal Access to DD Services was given by Safiyyah Muhammad

- ❖ Executive Committee and Chair Report was given by Paul Blaustein
- ❖ Public Policy Committee Report was given by Kara Kushnir
 - Children and Youth Services Subcommittee report was given by Peg Kinsell
 - Health and Wellness Committee Report was given by Maria Leary, Council Staff
- ❖ Grant Committee Report was given by Kevin Nunez

Presentation:

The Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee presented a revised version of the Bylaws to the Executive Committee for their review. The Executive Committee recommends the revised version to the full board. The floor is open for discussion. All comments and questions should be emailed to either Mercedes Witowsky or Gwen Orlowski.

Nominations for Council Vice Chair and Executive Committee Member at Large will be collected and voted on during the August 12th Quarterly meeting. Send your nominations to Jacinta Williams.

Advocate Caucus

The Advocate Caucus report was given by Todd Emmons.

Executive Director Report given by Mercedes Witowsky.

Assembly Bill 5366 which extends the school year for graduating students will be heard this afternoon. Thank you everyone who reached out in the last 48 hours and moved this to the finish line. Any updates that come out will be shared.

Public Comment

36 comments were read from the Q & A section of the webinar regarding the 5 Year Plan presentation, thanking the Council for addressing issues for underserved areas.

Action

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 12:05pm by Todd Emmons.

All in favor

Minutes prepared by Jacinta Williams, Executive Assistant

Next Advocate Caucus is November 17, 2021 at 12pm
Next Council meeting is November 18, 2020 at 10:00am-Noon

ATTENDANCE

Self-Advocates, Family Members

Paul Blaustein	Walt Fernandez	Elizabeth Dalzell	Kevin Nunez
Andrew McGeady	Helen Steinberg	Kara Kushnir	Todd Emmons
Peg Kinsell	Safiyyah Muhammad	Myrta Rosa	Ryan Roy
Sarah Aziz			

Excused

Gary Rubin

DD Act Agencies Representatives & Government Agencies

Joyce Jelley, Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities
Gwen Orlowski, Executive Director, Disability Rights New Jersey
Kim Murray, Office of Special Education Programs
Dawn Mergen, 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
Paul Aronsohn, Ombudsman
Kyle Picone

Council Staff

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