A regular public meeting of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities was held on Thursday, May 11, 2023 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Hamilton, NJ and as a Hybrid 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 Star Ledger and the Trenton Times.

**Public Comment**
There was one public comment, received in advance of the meeting, that was read aloud by Paul Blaustein, Council Chair.

**Meeting Minutes**
March 9, 2023, meeting minutes were distributed in advance.

**ACTION:**
Motion made by Todd Emmons to approve the meeting minutes;
Seconded by Elizabeth Dalzell, motion passed
Meeting minutes are approved and will be added to the website.

**Presentations:**
The Long-Term Care Ombudsman is a resident focused advocacy program that advocates for human rights of older individuals in institutions. The presentation was given by Amy Brown, LTCO Senior Policy Advisor and.

The Ombudsman for Individuals w/Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families was established in December of 2017 and provides information about services and supports for individuals and their families. The presentation was given by Paul Aronsohn, Ombudsman

The Special Education Ombudsman’s role is to serve as a resource that provides information and supports to parents, students and educators. The presentation was given by Cynthia Hoenes-Saindon and Alexandra Pensiero.

The floor opened for questions and answers. All presenters were thanked for their participation.
**Nominations on the floor:**
Vice Chair:
- Myrta Rosa nominates herself
- Ryan Roy nominates Myrta Rosa and she accepts
- Todd Emmons nominates himself
- Andrew nominates Kevin Nunez and he accepts

Executive Committee member At-Large:
- Myrta Rosa nominates herself
- Todd Emmons nominates himself
- Kevin Nunez nominates Andrew McGeady, he accepts
- Safiyyah Muhammad nominates Annette Smith, she declines

**Committee Reports:**
- Executive Committee and Chair Report was given by Paul Blaustein.
  - Advocate Advisory Subcommittee Report was given by Ryan Roy.
- Public Policy Committee Report was given by Nantanee Koppstein.
  - Children and Youth Services Subcommittee Report was given by Peg Kinsell.
  - Health and Wellness Committee Report Elizabeth Dalzell.
- State Plan Committee Report was given by Helen Steinberg.
  - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee Report was given by Sarah Aziz.
- Grants Committee Report was given by Kevin Nunez.

**Advocate Caucus Update** was given by Andrew McGeady.

**Executive Director Report** given by Mercedes Witowsky.

**Other Business**
- Partners In Policymaking, PIP, is in the planning phase of an alumni event. More information will be available soon.

**Public Comment**
- Many questions typed into the Zoom Q&A were addressed by the Chair and agency representatives.

Meeting adjourned

Minutes prepared by Jacinta Williams, Executive Assistant

**Next Advocate Caucus is November 1, 2023 from 6pm-8pm**
**Next Council meeting is November 2, 2023 from 9:30am-2:30pm**
ATTENDANCE

Self-Advocates, Family Members In Person
Paul Blaustein       Todd Emmons       Elizabeth Dalzell
Andrew McGeady      Sarah Aziz, Zoom    Annette Smith
Myrta Rosa          Ryan Roy          Peg Kinsell
Kevin Nunez         Safiyyah Muhammad, Zoom Helen Steinberg, Zoom
Nantanees Koppstein

Excused
Gary Rubin
Kara Kushnir
Walt Fernandez
Michael McCarthy

DD Act Agencies Representatives & Government Agencies
Joyce Jelley, Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities
Gwen Orlowski, Executive Director, Disability Rights New Jersey
KidaneMariam Meshesha, Division of Family Health Services, Zoom
Karen Carroll, Director, Division of Voc. Rehab. Services, Zoom
No representative, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Developmental Disabilities
No representative, Division of Disability Services
No representative, Division of Medical Asst. & Health Services, Zoom
Alexandra Pensiero, Office of Special Education Programs, Zoom

Public Member
No representative, Executive Director, Arc Ocean County

Invited Guests and Public
Matthew McMullen
Cynthia Hoenes-Saindon, Ombudsman
Amy Brown, LTCO Senior Policy Advisor
Paul Aronsohn, Ombudsman
Christine Bakter, Deputy Director, Ombudsman
Suhani Purohit
Fanny Ochoa
Edna Bond
Neng Wang
Melinda Carnassale, Deputy Director SCOC, Zoom

Council Staff
Mercedes Witowsky       Jade Pollock
Bob Titus               Adam Kubler
Kyoko Coco             Jacinta Williams
Jodi Fox                Maria Leary
Gary Brown             Kerry McGrath
Frank Latham           Alison Malnak