

## **COUNCIL HYBRID MEETING MINUTES**

### **Thursday, May 11, 2023**

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  
Safiyah 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**

- ❖ Financial Disclosure Forms are due Monday May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- ❖ 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, <b>Zoom</b>	Annette Smith
Myrta Rosa	Ryan Roy	Peg Kinsell
Kevin Nunez	Safiyyah Muhammad, <b>Zoom</b>	Helen Steinberg, <b>Zoom</b>
Nantanee Koppstein		

### **Excused**

Gary Rubin  
Kara Kushnir  
Walt Fernandez  
Michael McCarthy

### **DD Act Agencies Representatives & Government Agencies**

Joyce Jelley, Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities  
Gwen Orłowski, 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