

## COUNCIL HYBRID MEETING MINUTES Thursday, November 2, 2023

The fourth quarter of the regular public meeting for the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities was held on Thursday November 2, 2023 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Hamilton, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order by Paul Blaustein, Council Chair, who presided and declared a quorum present.

### INTRODUCTIONS

The Open Public Meeting Act and Council Vision were read. The meeting notice was published in the *Trenton Times and Star Ledger*. Everyone around the table introduced themselves.

Paul Blaustein, Council Chair would like to note for the record, his gratitude to the members and staff working together during COVID and attending today's meeting in person. Moving forward it is good to see everyone in person again and working together to do the great work of the Council.

A moment of silence was held as a show of respect for the passing of Beverly Roberts, Director of the Medical Mainstreaming for the Arc of New Jersey and Elizabeth "Betsy" Smith, past Advocate Council Member. Beverly ran a wonder conference of the same name and would answer every question asked to ensure the wrong information was not given. Elizabeth "Betsy" Smith. worked at the YMCA in Montclair, as well as owned a greeting cards business. Both will be missed dearly.

### MINUTES

The minutes from August 10, 2023 were distributed in the meeting packet.

### ACTION:

Motion made by Michael McCarthy to approve the minutes as presented; Seconded by Kevin Nunez. The meeting minutes are approved and will be posted on the Council Website.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

### PRESENTATIONS

**Grantee Report: LeDerick Horne Speaks, LLC** presentation was given by LeDerick Horne, Bill Davis, Co-Director and grantee activity participant, Ms. Cherry. The floor was opened for questions and answers. Everyone was thanked for their attendance and participation.

**The Arc of New Jersey, Planning For Adult Life Employment First** presentation was given by Jerisa Chiumbu-Maseko, Director, Planning for Adult Life. The floor was opened for questions and answers. Everyone was thanked for their attendance and participation.

**Disability Rights NJ: Nursing Home Report & Medicaid Upwinding** presentation was given by Gwen Orłowski, Executive Director. The floor was opened for questions and answers. Everyone was thanked for their attendance and participation.

## **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 Mercedes Witowsky in the absence of Chair, 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 Ryan Roy.

## **STAFF REPORT**

- ❖ Executive Director Report given by Mercedes Witowsky.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

Meeting adjourned

Members transitioned to the Lunch and Learn portion of the meeting.

Minutes prepared by Jacinta Williams, Executive Assistant

**Next Advocate Caucus is March 13, 2024 from 6:00pm-6:45pm**

**Next Council meeting is March 14, 2024 from 9:30am-1:30pm**

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Self-Advocates, Family Members In Person**

Paul Blaustein	Todd Emmons	Elizabeth Dalzell
Andrew McGeady	Sarah Aziz	Walt Fernandez, <b>Zoom</b>
Myrta Rosa	Ryan Roy	Peg Kinsell
Kevin Nunez	Safiyyah Muhammad	Helen Steinberg,
Michael McCarthy	Nantanee Koppstein	Annette Smith

### **Excused**

Karen Carroll, Director, Division of Voc. Rehab. Services

### **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  
Jonathan Seifried, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Developmental Disabilities  
Jacqueline Moskowitz, Division of Disability Services  
No Representative, Division of Medical Asst. & Health Services  
Kim Murray, Director, Office of Special Education Programs, **Zoom**

### **Public Member**

Laura Williams, Executive Director, Arc Ocean County

### **Personal Care Attendant**

Matthew McMullen, PCA for Andrew McGeady  
Page Bond, PCA for Kevin Nunez

### **Members of the Public**

Paul Aronsohn, Director of Ombudsman  
Christine Bakter, Executive Director, Ombudsman  
Julia Simko  
Ray Vercruysse  
Victor Yarman

### **Zoom Presenter Panelists**

LeDerick Horne, Director, LeDerick Speaks, LLC  
Bill Davis, Co-Director, LeDerick Speaks LLC  
Ms. Cherry, Grantee Participant

### **Council Staff**

Mercedes Witowsky	Jacinta Williams	Kerry McGrath
Bob Titus	Frank Latham	Jade Pollock
Kyoko Coco	Adam Kubler	Alison Malanak
Jodi Fox	Gary Brown	