



MINNESOTA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

April 1, 2026

The Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain
2025 East River Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Minutes

Members Present

Lee Shervheim, Chair
Jenny Arndt, Vice Chair
Luke Bourdeaux
Prince Cole
Lisa Jemtrud
Heather Kainz
Joel Liestman
Katie McDermott
Alan Morrison
Elizabeth Marsh
Carolyn Perron
Garrett Petrie
Mary Raasch
Kaylie Schmidt
Bonnie Jean Smith
Heather Stillwell
Sumukha Terakanambi
Garret Zayic

Members Excused

Amy Hewitt
Chris McVey
Jenny Santema

Guests

Heather Brown and her daughters
Nik Fernholz
Jake Hafften
Susan Elizabeth Littlefield
Nick Lunemann
Dan Reed
Sanjay Terakanambi

Staff Present

Stephanie Nelson

Paul Nevin

Colleen Wieck

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Shervheim called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Shervheim invited all present to introduce themselves.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Shervheim called for the agenda to be approved. **MOTION:** Smith moved, seconded by McDermott, that the agenda be approved. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES

Shervheim called for approval of the February 4, 2026 Minutes. **MOTION:** Leistman moved, McDermott seconded that the February 4, 2026 Minutes be approved. Motion carried.

V. PROGRAM PRESENTATION

Shervheim introduced guest Susan Elizabeth Littlefield, WCCO. The Council honors her work in the disability field. She presented stories about adult-changing tables, etiquette for interacting with those who use wheelchairs, and an Annandale weaving studio. Shervheim presented her with gifts from artists with disabilities. Susan Elizabeth said that she respected everyone in the room. She believes in listening. She wanted to tell stories because it is important for the public to understand disability issues. She is grateful to learn lessons from self-advocates because she had never heard the word “self-advocate” before coming to Minnesota. She said WCCO sees the disability community.

VI. DRAFT FIVE-YEAR PLAN (2027-2031)

Wieck reviewed the draft Five-Year Plan and the sections that were completed and those that remain. Wieck invited members to send questions and any feedback. The plan is due in August, so there is still time to adjust. Another version will be available for the June meeting.

VII. GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Shervheim gave an overview of the committee's work today.

- A. Review of the allocation memo and recommendations of the Grant Review Committee. All members of the Council received a copy of an allocations memo based on level funding of \$1,152,734.00. The Council has not received its Notice of

Award letter. The Committee discussed the proposed allocation by goal area and objectives and recommends:

1. Self-Advocacy \$150,000
 - A. Advocating Change Together (SAM Network) \$100k
 - B. PeaceMaker Minnesota (Ambassadors for Respect) \$50k
2. Partners in Policymaking (Odyssey Group) \$245,000
3. Cultural Outreach (Autism Sibs Universe) \$40k
4. Employment (MSS) \$90k
5. Publications, Online Courses, Websites \$196,914
6. Customer Research (MarketResponse International) \$50k
7. Continuous Improvement (Mary Harreld Consulting) \$25k
8. Training Conferences \$10k

MOTION: Zayic moved, seconded by Morrison, to approve the allocation of the FFY 2026 appropriation (based on level funding). Motion carried.

B. The Committee also discussed the RFP for Customer Research

VIII. PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Petrie and Terakanambi provided an overview of the committee meeting.

- A. Review of the proposed Olmstead Plan Goals. All members of the Council received a copy of the proposed Olmstead goals presented to the Subcabinet on March 13, 2026. The Council will submit a detailed letter of suggested improvements. Overall, the current document needs substantial improvement. The document does not meet the SMART Criteria or the Department of Justice criteria. It is not measurable; the results are vague; strategies are not specific; there are factual errors; the baselines are missing; and it is not transformative. There is no enforcement mechanism to hold state agencies accountable.
- B. Work around Medicaid legislation at the State and Federal levels. All members received three handouts. First, an article by the Kaiser Family Foundation featuring an interview with Sumukha Terakanambi. Second, a timeline of the implementation of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Third, a set of talking points for Council members to discuss the impact of Medicaid changes on people with disabilities. The latter two documents come from the Medicaid Coalition. Legislators have been told there is no impact on people with disabilities, and that is not true.

Discussion:

- a. Carolyn Perron from the Board on Aging identified this as an important crossover area between our two Councils. Older Minnesotans will be adversely affected by some proposals targeting counties and managed care organizations.
- b. Another question was asked about TEFRA fees. There is a proposal to reinstate fees for higher-income families, affecting 640 families.
- c. What is being done to address the increase in work for counties because they are already over capacity and have out-of-date technology?
- d. The new Medicaid work requirements are an issue across the US. Two states tried it and rolled back the requirements.
- e. The Legislature is using the terminology of continuity of care for people with disabilities to counter the unintended negative consequences of fraud proposals.

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Wieck reviewed highlights from the past months.

- The Federal Fiscal Year 2026 allocation received to date totals \$385,106.00. The final Notice of Award letter has not been received.
- The Governor's appointment staff have only a few appointments remaining, including a parent, a self-advocate, and the representatives from the Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Disability Law Center, and the Institute on Community Integration.
- As discussed at the October 2025 meeting, progress is being made on the Disability History Lesson Plan. Eleven self-advocates and family members participated in a user-centric series of discussions. A sample lesson plan was presented to the group, who provided suggestions for improvement, including adding personal stories, giving greater emphasis on how long people have had to wait for their rights, and strengthening the connections to broader civil rights movements. Work continues to finish a prototype for testing.
- Public feedback about the Olmstead Plan will be gathered through online community conversations and an online survey. The Council will collect comments and prepare a letter for submission.
- Five-Year Plan. The next steps are to receive feedback from Council members, prepare the final sections, review what has been written against the federal government's template, and submit the next version to the Council for the June meeting.
- The Treat People Like People campaign has had great success in outreach. The following numbers reflect the impact from July 1, 2025, to February 28, 2026:
 - 2,691,902 total ad views

- 127,262 total ad clicks
- 28,012 organic social media reach
- 2,022 organic social engagement
- 2,901 organic social total followers
- Mike Nichols, former council member, sent a photo of himself and his son at the California State Capitol during their lobby day.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Shervheim invited comments and announcements.

- A. Morrison is working on documenting the problems with access to the legal system and would like support/feedback.
- B. Disability Services Day at the Capitol was held last week and attended by over 1000 people.
- C. Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol will be held on April 29, 2026, with a rally in the Rotunda at 10:00 am.
- D. Monthly Disability Networking Meeting will be held at the St. Cloud Library, 10:30 am to 11:30 am.
- E. Family Support Organization Collaborative meeting on April 22, 2026, will feature a speaker from the Brain Injury Alliance.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Shervheim asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION:** Smith moved, seconded by Zayic, that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Wieck, Executive Director