

**MINNESOTA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Wednesday, February 5, 2020
12:15 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.
Continuing Education and Conference Center
University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus
1890 Buford Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator John Hoffman, Chair
Ashley Bailey, Vice Chair
Michelle Albeck
Hanna Barr
Wendy Berghorst
Eric Kloos
Mary Martin
Noah McCourt
Jillian Nelson
Stacey Nelson
Kate Onyeneho
Dan Reed
Jacki Rightler
Reid Scheller
Lee Shervheim
Bonnie Jean Smith

STAFF PRESENT

Colleen Wieck
Mary Jo Nichols

MEMBER EXCUSED

Lisa Emmert
Jim Lovold
Randy Miller
Heather Tidd
Alan Wilensky

GUESTS

Department of Human Services:
Doug Annett, Deputy Assistant
Commissioner
Natasha Merz, Disability Services
Division
Bridges MN, RUMI:
Garrett Ackerman
Blake Elliot
Becky Graves.
Lana Mattonen, Support Person
Garrett Petrie, Department of Education

I. CALL TO ORDER

Senator John Hoffman, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Everyone present introduced him/herself.

COUNCIL PROGRAM

New leadership was recently named at the Department of Human Services. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Doug Annett, and Natasha Merz, Disability Services Division were invited for today's Council meeting program to introduce themselves, speak about their new roles and responsibilities, and any new initiatives or legislative priorities they could address.

Deputy Assistance Commissioner Annett recognized that there is a lot to do, a lot to implement, and would like to see more resources for the Disability Services Division.

His background is largely as a service provider and mostly in residential services. He's worked in group homes where individuals were supported in living units with 24/7 staffing, helped to close down one of the large residential facilities, Clara Doerr Residence, and is now seeing today where individuals are living in their own homes. He noted that, with the advances in technology, we need to learn how to use that technology to do a better job of supporting people where and how they want to live.

He also brings experience in employment and vocational services, working with private sector businesses, and has seen where job coaches, for example, can sometimes get in the way and not provide the supports that workers may need to do their job well and achieve their employment goals. He added that we need to help employers with onboarding people with disabilities.

He also shared some of his personal background. He's the parent of a nine year old with autism and also legal guardian for a family member. He said that working with service delivery systems from that perspective was a "wake up call." He felt lost in the system, and didn't know what to expect, or what services were available. This helped him to understand how important it is to launch things that make sense to people at the ground level.

Natasha Merz is now serving as director of the Disability Services Division following Alex Bartolic's retirement. She began her presentation by emphasizing the importance of assuring that services and supports make sense to people, helping them to better navigate the system, and using a more person centered approach.

She also shared some of her background. She is an attorney, a graduate of the University of St. Thomas School of Law, and practiced elder law in the Law School's clinics where she saw the need for guardianship reform. She became familiar with nursing homes and assisted living facilities while working at the Office of the Ombudsman for Long Term Care. She learned what's working and not working in these environments when addressing and resolving complaints about resident rights and services.

As a Regional Resource Specialist, she worked with a team regarding disability waiver policies and home care services, became knowledgeable about a regional approach to supporting lead agencies and providers, and was a trainer on person centered thinking and practices.

Merz also has a sister with developmental disabilities who has been a huge influence on her work, and has given her a family perspective.

Her PowerPoint presentation highlights where we are today and is attached to the Minutes. She added that she loves working with people and is excited about shaping a future direction for the Department and the Disability Services Division.

Jillian Nelson said that we want people to better understand their eligibility for services and how to create services that meet personal life goals. Merz spoke about efforts to move systems from protecting and having power over people to having power with people. She identified three top priorities – the Blue Ribbon Commission, looking at the system as a whole and creating equity; eligibility gaps; and working with racial and ethnic communities and interactions with law enforcement.

Kloos thanked both Deputy Assistant Commissioner Annett and Natasha Merz, and said we would identify additional topics and issues that they could maybe address at another time. Both said they would be happy to return for a future presentation and discussion.

Becky Graves introduced Bridges, a group home service provider, and RUMI, a technology platform and innovative approach to providing services for individuals who are on a waiver. RUMI received innovative grant funds from the Department of Human Services a year ago to introduce this concept. A video presented a case study that demonstrated how RUMI can offer and provide services in a different way.

RUMI can be a solution to the disruptive staffing changes in the current industry and can better realize the vision of Minnesota's Olmstead Plan where people with disabilities can move to more integrated living situations by operating on a shared economy model.

RUMI matches people with disabilities with potential roommates where both are looking for mutual support. It offers real choices in terms of who one wants to live with, in what community or location, and considers the interests and activities that both enjoy – it can be a game changer.

A lot of professionals are attracted to this model, including special education teachers and nurses; it keeps people in their respective fields of work and promotes long term relationships. RUMI presents opportunities for people to live more independently and reduce costs.

Bridges works with case managers to identify the right services and, depending on the specific waiver, what the necessary supports that an individual might need will actually look like. To date, 100 people have completed profiles and about 300 people are interacting with each other in some way. RUMI gives people more options about how they want to live their lives, with whom, and who supports them.

Becky Graves and her team were thanked for their presentation. A brochure about RUMI is attached to the Minutes.

The Council business meeting was continued.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 4, 2019

Senator Hoffman asked for approval of the Minutes as written for December 4, 2019.

MOTION: Jillian Nelson moved, seconded by McCourt, to approve the Minutes as written for December 4, 2019. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

There was no Chair's report.

VI. GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Lee Shervheim presented funding recommendations based on the Committee's review and evaluation of applications received for cosponsorship funds for

training conferences. Members were reminded about the Conflict of Interest policy, each member had a copy, and the Conflict of Interest Form. Shervheim explained that the Form is signed by members who don't have a conflict with the applicant organization.

Motions were brought separately for each funding recommendation for each applicant organization so that abstentions could be recorded.

1. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Adaptive Recreation and Learning Exchange** for **\$1,800** for a "Disability Awareness Conference: Municipalities Including People with Disabilities" scheduled for April for 75 to 125 participants.

MOTION: Jillian Nelson moved, seconded by Berghorst to approve funding for **\$1,800** for the application submitted by **Adaptive Recreation and Learning Exchange**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. McCourt abstained.

2. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Advocating Change Together, Inc.**, for **\$3,000** for "Disability Power Day" mini-conferences featuring six different topics and scheduled from March through August for about 40 participants at each mini-conference (total of about 480 participants).

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Jillian Nelson to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Advocating Change Together, Inc.** Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes or abstentions.

3. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **All Star Academy** for **\$3,000** for "Career Readiness: Experiential Learning Opportunities for People with Developmental Disabilities" scheduled for April for about 50 participants.

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Jillian Nelson to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **All Star Academy**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Onyeneho abstained.

4. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **The Arc Minnesota Southeast Region** for **\$2,375** for a "Power of Self Advocacy" Conference scheduled for May for about 100 participants

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Jillian Nelson to approve funding for **\$2,375** for the application submitted by **The Arc Minnesota Southeast Region**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Stacey Nelson abstained.

5. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Arc Northland** for **\$3,000** for a "Regional Self Advocacy Conference" scheduled for May or June for about 75 to 100 participants.

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Albeck to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **The Arc Northland**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Stacey Nelson abstained.

6. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by the **Autism Society of Minnesota** for **\$2,950** for the "25th Annual Minnesota Autism Conference" scheduled for April 22 – 25, 2020 for about 600 participants.

MOTION: Reed moved, seconded by Onyeneho to approve funding for **\$2,950** for the application submitted by the **Autism Society of Minnesota**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Jillian Nelson abstained.

7. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Community Involvement Programs** for **\$3,000** for a series of workshops, "What Really Matters: Creative Writing to Build Human Rights," scheduled for June and July; and a book release event scheduled July for 10 self advocates (about 50 people at the book release event).

MOTION: Jillian Nelson moved, seconded by Stacey Nelson to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Community Involvement Programs**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Scheller abstained.

8. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by the **Congolese Community of Minnesota** for **\$3,000** for "Job Opportunities for People with Learning Disability" scheduled for June for about 40 participants.

MOTION: Bailey moved, seconded by Martin to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Congolese Community of Minnesota**. Motion carried; there was one dissenting vote; there were no abstentions.

9. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Lifeworks Services, Inc.** for **\$2,850** for "Putting Choice into Action: Self Directed Advocacy Conference" scheduled for Summer 2020 for 50 to 75 participants.

MOTION: Jillian Nelson moved, seconded by Smith to approve funding for **\$2,850** for the application submitted by **Lifeworks Services, Inc.** Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Albeck abstained.

10. Shervheim asked for a motion for the application submitted by **Minnesota Organization of Habilitation and Rehabilitation (MOHR)** for **\$3,000** for their Annual Conference scheduled for May 14 -15, 2020 for 200 to 250 participants.

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Jillian Nelson not to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Minnesota Organization of Habilitation and Rehabilitation (MOHR)**. Motion carried; there was one dissenting vote; there were no abstentions.

11. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Northeast Contemporary Services, Inc.** for **\$2,500** for a series of workshops, "Writer's Workshop for Self Advocates," scheduled for June and July, and a book release event scheduled for July for 15 self advocates (about 50 people at the book release event).

MOTION: Jillian Nelson moved, seconded by McCourt to approve funding for **\$2,500** for the application submitted by **Northeast Contemporary Services, Inc.** Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes or abstentions.

12. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Phoenix Alternatives, Inc.** for **\$2,500** for a series of workshops, "Writer's Workshop for Self Expression and Self Advocacy," scheduled for June and July, and a book release event scheduled for July with 16 self advocates (about 50 people at the book release event).

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Stacey Nelson to approve funding for **\$2,500** for the application submitted by **Phoenix Alternatives, Inc.** Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes or abstentions.

13. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Somali Parents Autism Network** for **\$3,000** for a conference, "Beyond Autism Awareness," that is scheduled for April for 400 to 500 participants.

MOTION: Bailey moved, seconded by McCourt to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Somali Parents Autism Network**. Motion carried; there was one dissenting vote; there were no abstentions.

14. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Sounds Powerful Productions** for **\$3,000** for a workshop, "Create Your Own Radio News Story and Podcast Piece," that is scheduled for April 18, 2020 for five to seven participants.

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Jillian Nelson to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Sounds Powerful Productions**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Reed abstained.

15. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Southside Services** for **\$3,000** for a series of workshops, "Creative Writing 101," scheduled for June and a book release event scheduled for July with 12 self advocates (about 30 people at the book release event).

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Bailey to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Southside Services**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes or abstentions.

16. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Special Olympics Minnesota** for **\$3,000** for a "Leadership University" that is scheduled for July 19 – 21, 2020 for about 200 participants.

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Bailey to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Special Olympics Minnesota**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes. Martin, Jillian Nelson, and Reid abstained.

17. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Strive Publishing** for **\$3,000** for a workshop series, "Writer's Workshop for African American Adults," scheduled for June and a book release event scheduled for July with 10 self advocates (about 50 people at the book release event).

MOTION: McCourt moved, seconded by Rightler to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Strive Publishing**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes or abstentions.

18. Shervheim asked for a motion for the application submitted by the **University of St. Thomas, School of Education** for **\$3,000** to create and launch an online course, "Autism Spectrum Disorder: Evidence Based Practices," that would be developed between May and August, and launched before August 26, 2020.

MOTION: Smith moved, seconded by Martin not to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by the **University of St. Thomas, School of Education**. Motion carried; there were five dissenting votes; there were no abstentions.

19. Shervheim asked for a motion to approve the application submitted by **Valley Friendship Club** for **\$3,000** for a workshop series, "Writer's Workshop – Finding Your Voice," scheduled for June and a book release event scheduled for July with 15 to 20 self advocates (about 50 people at the book release event).

MOTION: Jillian Nelson moved, seconded by Stacey Nelson to approve funding for **\$3,000** for the application submitted by **Valley Friendship Club**. Motion carried; there were no dissenting votes or abstentions.

VII. PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Kloos reported for the Committee. Lindsey Horowitz Department of Education; Natasha Jerde, State Services for the Blind (SSB); and Amanda Jensen-Stahl and Chris McVey, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS - DEED) led a panel discussion on employment issues. Changes in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and related rules, Project SEARCH, and employment as it relates to transition were presented.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Colleen Wieck provided the following updates from monthly reports:

- A. The Council received a final Notice of Award letter for FFY 2020 funds in the amount of \$1,047,086.

- B. Council appointments are still pending; applications are being reviewed differently and by more than a single person so the process is delayed.
- C. Kim Moccia retired from the STAR Program, effective February 4, 2020.
- D. Joan Willshire resigned from the Minnesota Council on Disability.
- E. Council member comments about Minnesota's Olmstead Plan and the Amendment process were submitted on January 30, 2020.
- F. The next Status Conference regarding the Jensen Settlement Agreement is scheduled for April.
- G. Per US District Court Order, an External Reviewer must be selected to determine the use of mechanical restraints at Anoka Metro Reginal Treatment Center and the Forensic Mental Health Program (formerly the Minnesota Security Hospital) with a report due prior to March 13, 2020.
- H. A disability working group has been created as part of Minnesota's Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census; the group meets monthly.
- I. Recruitment for Partners Class 38 is underway.
- J. The new Five Year State Plan must be submitted in August 2021. The first set of survey results will be presented at the April Council meeting (Provider Survey and General Population Survey).

VIII. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Wieck
Executive Director