



MINNESOTA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

June 4, 2025

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

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present

Lee Shervheim, Chair
Jason Blomquist
Amy Hewitt
Lisa Jemtrud
Heather Kainz
Joel Liestman
Katie McDermott
Chris McVey
Alan Morrison
Christine Mueller
Mike Nichols
Jenn Purrington
Mary Raasch
Connie Rabideaux
Bonnie Jean Smith
Sumukha Terakanambi

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Jenny Arndt
Dupree Edwards
Lesli Kerkhoff
Elizabeth Marsh
Abdi Matan
Garrett Petrie
Jennifer Santema
Erin Schwab

Guests

Tom Pearson

Lynn Schreifels
Derek Pearson (virtual)
Justin Page
Louie McGee
Emma Blaszyk

Staff

Stephanie Nelson
Paul Nevin
Colleen Wieck

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Lee Shervheim, Chair, 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 approval of the agenda.

MOTION: Smith moved, seconded by Blomquist to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES (April 2, 2025)

Shervheim called for approval of the April 2, 2025 Minutes

MOTION: McDermott moved, seconded by Morrison to approve the April 2, 2025 minutes. Motion carried.

- V. UPDATE FROM THE US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**—Justin Page, Assistant US Attorney, is a full-time employee in the Civil Rights Division in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The views expressed during the meeting represent his own viewpoint and not necessarily the viewpoint of the Department of Justice.
- Page described the type of work done by the US Attorney's Office. They have conducted reviews of hotels, stadiums, and restaurants for compliance with the ADA.
- They have also responded to individual complaints including:

- physical access and barrier removal
- access to programs or services
- service animal related cases (ADA covers those that perform a specific task and not emotional support animals)
 - denial of entry
- Enforcement tools: litigation of both Title II and Title III of the ADA.
 - LA fitness in Los Angeles case.

- Effective communication such as interpreters (i.e. doctor's offices, schools)
- Parking issues
- Paratransit issues
- Testing sites and accommodations for standardized tests
- Accessible web content rules will be implemented by April 2026 or 2027 depending on the population of the local or state government.
 - Closed captions
 - Color contrast
 - Accessible forms
 - Alt text for images

Individuals can file a complaint at ADA.gov or they can contact Justin Page directly. Page will take your complaint by phone, letter, or email. The centralized intake process takes longer than a direct contact.

Page was asked if he has experienced any restrictions on his work and he said no. He has been told to keep doing what he has been doing. Some cases that have been filed may slow down. Many staff members have left the US Department of Justice.

VI. FINAL RESULTS OF THE SURVEYS FOR THE NEXT FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Tom Pearson, Derek Pearson, and Lynn Schreifels presented the results of the latest survey from MarketResponse International. Council members received a digital version and a hard copy version of this study. [2025 Quality of Life Assessment Tracking Study for People with Developmental Disabilities](#)

VII. GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Shervheim reported that the Grant Review Committee met this morning, and is bringing forward several recommendations.

- A. There is a small amount of funds from Federal Fiscal Year 2024 that needs to be allocated. The Committee recommends that \$1,876.00 be allocated to the Publications, Online Courses, and Website program goal. **MOTION:** Smith moved, seconded by Hewitt that \$1,876 from 2024 federal funds be allocated to the Publications, Online Courses, and Website program goal. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
- B. Federal Fiscal Year 2026 is the fifth and final year of the current Five-Year Plan. The Council is asked to reaffirm the program goals of the Five-Year Plan annually. Shervheim asked for a motion. **MOTION:** Nichols moved, seconded by Smith that the current program goals of the Five-Year Plan be reaffirmed. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.

- C. The Grant Review Committee spent the remainder of their meeting discussing the allocation of grant funds for FFY 2026. The Committee made the following recommendations.
1. **Self-Advocacy. MOTION:** Nichols moved, seconded by McDermott to fund the Self-Advocacy program goal at \$150,000 with \$100k for the SAM network and \$50k for Ambassadors for Respect (an increase of \$10k). Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 2. **Cultural Outreach. MOTION:** Rabideaux moved, seconded by McVey to fund the Cultural Outreach program goal at \$70k. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 3. **Leadership Development (Partners in Policymaking). MOTION:** Smith moved, seconded by Liestman to fund the Leadership Development program goal at \$210k. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 4. **Employment. MOTION:** Raasch moved, seconded by Rabideaux to fund the Employment goal at \$90k. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 5. **Training Conferences. MOTION:** Mueller moved, seconded by Blomquist to fund the Training Conferences program goal at \$20k. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 6. **Customer and Market Research.** The Committee recommended that the level of funding be reduced to \$50k from \$100k and that the \$50k be divided between two other program goals (Self-Advocacy and Publications, Online Courses, and Websites). The Council does not have any repeat studies planned for FFY 2026. **MOTION:** McDermott moved, seconded by Smith to fund the Customer and Market Research program goal at \$50k. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 7. **Publications, Online Courses, and Websites. MOTION:** McDermott moved, seconded by Rabideaux to fund the Publications, Online Courses, and Websites program goal at \$196,914.00. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.
 8. **Quality Improvement. MOTION:** Smith moved, seconded by Nichols to fund the Quality Improvement program goal at \$20k. Motion carried. There were no abstentions.

Shervheim concluded his report by discussion the need for contingency planning in the event of any cuts to federal funds. The Committee discussed top priorities including historical preservation and archiving work; Partners in Policymaking; and Ambassadors for Respect.

VIII. PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Terakanambi summarized the Public Policy meeting discussions.

The Office of Legislative Auditor asked for input on a new program evaluation study of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Their evaluation questions have not been finalized. The Committee members provided feedback about staffing issues, abuse, private equity purchases, restraints, etc. Council staff will send follow-up information about individual complaints.

Naveh Eldar, The Arc Minnesota presented an 8-minute video about the May 3rd rally to save DD Act funding. Eldar also showed two Medicaid stories. Terakanambi asked members to please keep up the calls and emails to members of Congress about DD Act funding and Medicaid cuts. Share personal stories especially in Republican districts. Keep engaging and let your friends and family members know. June is a critical month because the bill is being pushed through before July 4th. Push back on misinformation such as Medicaid cuts will strengthen the Medicaid program.

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Wieck gave an update to the Council

Federal and State Funding:

- The 2025 federal allocation was received on May 13, 2025. The total was \$1,152,734 which is \$2754 less than 2024 allocation.
- Federal funds were reinstated for Councils and the P&A system in the proposed FFY 2026 HHS budget.
- The Legislature appropriated \$222k per year and Admin provided \$7k increase.
- We did not receive Legacy funding from the State Legislature.

Congressional Contacts:

- The summary of testimony was finalized, posted, and then distributed. The Congressional constituent representatives shared the testimony with others in their offices. We received thank you notes from the constituent representatives. Congresswoman McCollum invited Sumukha Terakanambi to speak at a roundtable on May 31, 2025 and Raeanne Brown (Class 41 Partners graduate) spoke at a Town Hall with Congresswoman Morrison.
- We were able to visit with the constituent representatives at the April weekend of Partners in Policymaking and share news about elimination of funding of the DD Act.
- The May 3rd rally poster was shared with all Council members.
- Several nonprofits signed onto a joint DD Network letter sent to members of Congress about the DD Act funding. This letter was shared with Council members.
- Several state and national groups have been formed to save Medicaid. The Council has joined these efforts.
- Sumukha Terakanambi has been involved with action alerts, speaking at Congresswoman McCollum's Roundtable, and participating in coalition efforts.

- During the week of May 18th efforts intensified before the US House approved the bill that week.
- During the Medicaid Vigil, a Minnesota story was read as part of a roll call of states.

Treat People Like People campaign

- The Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities will be providing additional funding until June 30, 2025.
- The Minnesota Council on Disability will provide funding for the campaign during SFY 2026.

Partners in Policymaking

- Joseph Shapiro, National Public Radio, spoke on Friday afternoon. His disability reporting experience dates to 1987. Jillian Nelson, Jenny Arndt, and Sarah St Louis presented as a graduate panel. Upstream Arts presented on Saturday morning. Each graduate was asked to speak about their experiences. Graduation was held on Saturday afternoon. Recruitment of Class 43 is underway.

Contingency Planning (if Federal Funds are Reduce or Eliminated)

- MMB and Admin have asked for the worst-case scenario planning.
- In response, we have answered questions about federal requirements for obligations, liquidations, final reports, etc.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Shervheim opened the floor for public comment.

- All Council members are encouraged to share The Arc Minnesota Capitol Rally video on their social media accounts.
- Nichols announced that WACOSA is staging a play on June 26, 2025 at the Paramount Theater at 11:00 am in downtown St Cloud. Forty individuals with disabilities and some volunteers will be performing. Eric Putman and the St Cloud Mayor have bit parts! The performance will be recorded for those who are unable to travel to St Cloud.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Shervheim asked for a motion to adjourn. **MOTION:** Smith moved, seconded by Kainz that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting ended at 2:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Wieck, Executive Director