

**Background:**

Minutes of the July 26, 2012, Public Policy Committee meeting are included for your review.

**Public Policy Committee**

**Agenda Item 3.**

**Expected Action:**

The Committee will review, revise as appropriate, and approve.

**PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES  
JULY 26, 2012**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Joe Rivas, Chair	Mary Faithfull, DRT	Tricia Stinson, DARS
Kristen Cox, Vice Chair	Cindy Johnston	David Taylor
Hunter Adkins	Scott McAvoy	Lora Taylor
Patty Anderson, DRT	Katharine McCormick, DADS	Rick Tisch
Mateo Delgado	Penny Seay, CDS - UT	
Kevin Estes, HHSC	Amy Sharp, CDD TX A&M	

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mary Durham, Council Chair	Kathy Griffis-Bailey - DSHS
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**STAFF PRESENT**

Roger A. Webb, Executive Director	Melissa Loe	Lucy Walker
Belinda Carlton	Jessica Ramos	
	Melissa Rosser	

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Chynna Burwell

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Public Policy Committee convened on Thursday, July 26, 2012, in the San Antonio Room of the Renaissance Hotel – Austin, 9721 Arboretum Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78759. Committee Chair Joe Rivas called those present to order at 2:33 PM.

**1. INTRODUCTIONS**

Committee members, staff, and guests were introduced.

**2. CONSIDERATION OF MAY 3, 2012, MINUTES**

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the May 3, 2012, Public Policy Committee meeting. Public Policy Director Jessica Ramos noted that staff made a technical adjustment to the Service Coordination position statement to say “the Council supports” rather than “the Council believes” as directed separately by the Council.

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of the May 3, 2012, Public Policy Committee meeting as amended.

**MADE BY:** Rick Tisch

**SECOND:** Lora Taylor

The motion **passed** unanimously.

### **3. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Public Policy Chair Joe Rivas discussed progress with moving into his new home.

Executive Director Roger Webb noted that Kevin Estes is representing the Health and Human Services Commission, Katharine McCormick the Department of Aging and Disability Services, and Tricia Stinson the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services at these meetings. However, since they have not received the training as required by state law to be voting members of the Council, their input and participation for their agencies is welcomed but they are not eligible to vote in actions before the Committee.

### **4. MEMBER UPDATES**

Council Member Amy Sharp advised the Committee that the Disability Policy Consortium will be launching a website that will be public soon to display its issue briefs.

Rivas inquired whether bicycle lanes are accessible to individuals with wheelchairs. Amy Sharp said she would find out the answer to his question when she attends an upcoming Transportation Commission meeting.

Sharp also discussed a project she is working on called Disability 101 training, which will feature individuals with disabilities from around the state sharing their stories. She would be happy to collaborate with anyone who would be interested in assisting.

### **5. ADVOCACY DISCUSSION**

Committee members discussed previous advocacy efforts in which they have been involved. They also discussed prospective ideas for advocacy during the upcoming 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session, including the potential use of social media to contact legislators and legislative staff. Committee members and staff also discussed the importance of self-advocates sharing their stories with policymakers. Public Policy Director Jessica Ramos encouraged Committee members to contact TCDD staff for assistance in preparing testimony. Communications Coordinator Melissa Loe also discussed how to approach the traditional news media for advocacy purposes.

### **6. TCDD BIENNIAL DISABILITY REPORT UPDATE**

Public Policy Director Ramos reported on the progress associated with the 2012 Biennial Disability Report and reviewed focus areas of previous reports. The Committee reviewed preliminary recommendations for the 2012 Biennial Disability Report. By consensus the Committee indicated support for the recommendations as presented. Staff will continue to develop recommendations which will be considered for approval during the October 2012 meeting.

### **7. PUBLIC INFORMATION REPORT**

Communications Coordinator Melissa Loe reported to the Committee about public information and outreach activities. TCDD staff have been working with legislative offices to announce new grant projects in order to build relationships and inform those legislators about disability issues. Ms. Loe reviewed information about TCDD's social media outreach and increased connections with new grantees, disability organizations, and legislative offices. TCDD is in the process of transitioning to a new website platform and is conducting an audit of the current website to determine what information website visitors are viewing. Committee Chair Rivas asked whether the new website could include a way for users to evaluate the information they viewed on the website. Loe offered to find out if that will be possible with the new platform.

**8. FUTURE PROJECTS / STATE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Communications Coordinator Melissa Loe led a discussion about the new TCDD State Plan objective regarding Public Awareness Activities. Goal Three of the State Plan calls for the Council to conduct two ongoing educational activities in collaboration with other organizations and businesses to provide culturally responsive services for people with disabilities. At the May 2012 meeting, the Council approved the topic of accessible parking for the first of these two public education and outreach campaigns. Loe informed the Committee that staff are working to determine the best way to implement the campaign. Staff will prepare an executive summary regarding the project for consideration at the October 2012 meeting.

**9. REVIEW OF POSITION STATEMENTS**

Ramos and Webb led a discussion regarding possible revisions to the following Council's position statements on Employment, Transition, and Education. The Committee reviewed proposed changes from Council members and staff and proposed additional changes to be considered by the Council.

**MOTION:** To approve proposed changes to the Employment position statement and present the revised position statement to the Council for consideration.

**MADE BY:** Kristen Cox

**SECOND:** Amy Sharp

The motion **passed** unanimously. (Attachment 1 as revised)

**MOTION:** To approve proposed changes to the Transition position statement and present the revised position statement to the Council for consideration.

**MADE BY:** Hunter Adkins

**SECOND:** Amy Sharp

The motion **passed** unanimously. (Attachment 2 as revised)

**MOTION:** To approve proposed changes to the Education position statement and present the revised position statement to the Council for consideration.

**MADE BY:** Penny Seay

**SECOND:** Lora Taylor

The motion **passed** unanimously. (Attachment 3 as revised)

**10. TCDD PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES**

Public Policy Director Ramos presented the first draft of the TCDD 2013 Public Policy Priorities for initial consideration by the Committee. No action will be taken until next quarter. Council Chair Mary Durham recommended narrowing the focus of the Public Policy Priorities to a couple of key areas. Ramos stated that since many of the priorities revolve around appropriations, the priorities

could be refocused on ensuring that funding for programs benefiting individuals with disabilities are not reduced. Durham also recommended that the document be reduced to only one page. Staff will present revised Public Policy Priorities for consideration at the October 2012 Council meeting.

## **11. PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES**

### **A. State Policy Issues**

Public Policy Specialist Belinda Carlton reported that when the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs was directed to cut its budget, the Amy Young Barrier Removal Program was not cut. The department found other ways to reduce funding in order to avoid cuts in the Amy Young program which allows home owners or renters to apply for a grant to have architectural barriers removed from their home.

Ramos gave an update on the budget requests for health and human services agencies. The Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) will request a 20 percent increase in funding to reduce interest lists in its Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR). The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) requested funding to address forecasted caseload growth and funding to expand the autism program to three new regions.

DADS and the Texas Center for Disability Studies are hosting a series of focus groups around the state to learn from Home and Community-based Services waiver participants about what is working in the waiver as well as what needs improvement. At the time of the meeting, 150 persons had applied to participate in the focus groups, but more applicants were needed in Lubbock and Longview.

### **B. Update on State Supported Living Center Monitoring Activities**

Ramos reported that DD network partners have submitted a proposal to DADS to incorporate person-centered thinking practices at the state supported living centers. Council member Penny Seay discussed the proposed Austin State Supported Living Center pilot wherein the Institute on Person-Centered Practices (IPCP) would train DADS staff to become certified trainers in person-centered planning.

### **C. Federal Policy Issues**

Ramos informed the Committee of Affordable Care Act (ACA) opportunities for the state, including the Balancing Incentives Program which allows states to modernize long-term services and supports systems. The BIP program also requires a core standardized assessment instrument and conflict-free case management. DADS plans to utilize some of the enhanced funds to implement strategies to address behavioral support needs for individuals living in the community. The Community First Choice Option also would allow the state to provide habilitation services to 12,000 persons currently waiting for services on waiver interest lists.

## **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Committee Chair Rivas adjourned the meeting at 4:57 PM.

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Roger A. Webb  
Secretary to the Council

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Date