



WORK PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday, March 8, 2024

9:00AM – 10:30 AM

3839 North 3rd Street, Suite 306, Phoenix, Arizona 85012

Meeting held via teleconference

DRAFT MINUTES

The Work Plan Review Committee meeting of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (Council/ADDPC) was convened virtually March 8, 2024, notice having been duly given. Present and absent were the following members of the ADDPC.

Members Present

Kathy Levandowsky, Chairperson
Monica Cooper
Melissa Van Hook

Members Absent

Meghan Cox
Bianca Demara

Staff

Jon Meyers, Executive Director
Marcella Crane, Contracts Manager
Lani St. Cyr, Fiscal Manager
Michael Leyva, Contracts/Grants Coordinator
Jason Snead, Project Specialist
Sarah Ruf, Communications Director

Guests

Ashley Alcaraz, ADDPC Intern

A. Welcome & Introductions:

Kathy Levandowsky welcomed everyone to the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC or Council) Work Plan Review Committee meeting. The meeting was called to order at 9:07 AM. Roll call was completed.

B. Approval of Minutes – November 3, 2023:

Minutes from November 3, 2023, Work Plan Review Committee were reviewed. Kathy asked if there were any changes to the minutes. None were offered. Monica Cooper made the motion to accept the minutes, and Melissa Van Hook seconded the motion. The motion carried.

C. FFY2023 Annual Work Plan – Brief Wrap-up:

Jon stated that the activities under the FFY 2023 annual work plan have been completed and reported in the annual Program Performance Report (PPR). Grantees that were funded to do research reports are finalizing those reports due to some delays in reviewing and providing feedback, but all other funded projects ended on time.

Once ACL has reviewed the PPR, Jon will brief the Council on any feedback provided. We don't have a timeline of when they will notify Councils.

D. FFY 2024-2025 Annual Work Plan Updates:

i. FFY 2024 Objectives & Activities – Progress to Date:

Jon stated that he believed that FFY 2024 annual work plan activities are on track for the year. Staff meet at the beginning of the year to update the work plan and there is some internal debate about some activity deadlines, and if some projects can be completed by September 30, 2024, or should be moved to FFY 2025. Every year we have those discussions and it's about reassessing the work on an ongoing basis. As Sarah stated, we're doing an awful lot. Jon further stated that in the future, development of the annual work plan should be scaled back so that everyone is comfortable with the amount of work to be done and adequate progress is made to report on.

Marcy provided a short recap of the following grants: New – Conference Sponsorship and Training grant solicitation was due March 7, 2024; \$50k was available. Ten (10) applications were received and will be reviewed by an outside evaluation committee. The Council will approve their recommendations in June. The start date is expected to be July 1, 2024, for a one-year contract.

The next grant solicitation that is being finalized is Internet Safety and Resource Development. That RFGA will be released March 14, with \$100k available. Multiple awards may be made. This is geared as a pilot project and second-year funding may be allocated based on project performance and funding availability.

Another project the staff is working on is the Legal Options Manual proposal from the Sonoran UCEDD. Staff provided feedback to Jacy Farkas on the proposal and once finalized, this project will be on the agenda for the Council to approve. The Legal Options Manual has not been updated since 2016 and with Supported Decision-Making now as an alternative to guardianship, the manual needs to be updated with current information. The budget is estimated to be less than \$30k.

NAU/IHD is providing staff with a proposal to support SIP-C college students with assistive technology devices they can use as they attend college. The budget amount is \$50k and if the Council approves the proposal, the contract will be in place for one year.

Marcy stated that a new scope of work will be developed to continue the work that has been done under The Arc's collaborative project on sexual violence response. She reminded the committee that staff did not recommend a third year of funding to The Arc of the U.S. but instead will build upon their achievements. The grant solicitation will most likely be released in June 2024.

Marcy also stated that five (5) projects will submit renewal information for staff to review. These include The Arc of Arizona's two projects – Supported Decision-Making and Self-Advocacy. The contractors that were awarded the Pregnancy and Parenting grants will also be considered for second year funding. Narrative reports for all projects have been submitted and all projects are progressing according to their implementation plans.

Michael provided an update on a webinar series that will take place in May, titled "A Life Full of Possibilities". Michael is in the process of seeking speakers for the series and asked Sarah to review the titles of each webinar. Sarah asked for feedback from Melanie Soto of The Arc of AZ, and Ryan Barry from The Arc of Tempe. Sarah will work with Michael on this activity and revisit the titles of each webinar to ensure participants learn the best information on transition planning and the titles are accurate and engaging.

Jon mentioned that Sarah has been with the ADDPC for only a month and is getting up to speed on all the work that is going on with staff. They are working on a Communications Plan that will address outreach, awareness, various communication methods that people use to learn and gather information, updating our website and newsletter. Sarah is quickly learning all the work being done by staff and has met The Arc of Tempe staff to collaborate on ways to support their communication efforts with self-advocates.

Kathy thanked Sarah and stated various generations learn from different methods and technology is changing fast, so the Council must keep up with what is happening. Sarah agreed and her approach will be to use new and old methods to communicate the Council's work.

ii. Funding Status:

Lani presented an overview of what projects are currently identified in FFY 24 (not in-house projects) that currently do not have a dollar amount identified or a timeline of when a project might be funded. Any of the projects discussed most likely will take place in the last quarter of FFY 24 and the bulk of the work will be completed in FFY 25. As a reminder, FFY 2025 starts October 1, 2024, and ends September 30, 2026.

Lani covered each Goal and projects that are currently identified and funded, as well as those that still need to be addressed by the Council and staff.

Self-Determination Goal:

Sel-Advocacy grant: The current contract is with The Arc of Arizona, and first year funding ends on June 30, 2024. They are projected to receive level funding for year 2, as shown in the FFY 25 column.

Supported Decision Making grant: The current contract is with The Arc of the U.S., through The Arc of Arizona, and first year funding ends on June 30, 2024. They are projected to receive level funding for year 2 as shown in the FFY column.

Conference Sponsorship & Training grant solicitation: As Marcy mentioned, the RFGA closed on March 7 and ten applications were received. The full amount of the award is \$50K. We're under the evaluation process at this time and Council will make a final determination on these proposals at its June meeting.

Marcy stated that the Council should have a broader discussion on this activity to see if it is of benefit to the disability community. This can be done when the new five-year plan is developed.

Kathy stated she would be interested in additional data collected beyond satisfaction reporting. Marcy said at this time, grantees provide two reports, and the final report is a summary of their event with the required demographic and survey information. Currently, that is all they are required to collect for the PPR.

The Special Education Advocacy Project, or SEAP, is in the third and final year funding through a contract with Disability Rights AZ. They currently are funded at \$120K and the contract will end on September 30, 2024.

The Legal Options Manual is listed to be funded as a new project. If approved, the ISA will be developed with UA Sonoran UCEDD and Disability Rights AZ will be a subcontractor. We're currently addressing the budget with Jacy Farkas but plan to have their proposal ready for the Council's June meeting.

As previously mentioned, Jon added that we would like to have this project funded this spring. The Legal Options Manual is a key document that many families and constituent calls ask for.

Kathy asked if the manual is also available electronically. Jon said yes, but we also receive requests for hard copies. The Native American Disability Law Center (NADLC) calls several times a year for hard copies to send to them.

Meaningful Careers/Employment Goal:

Lani said right now we have no funded projects or contracts in place for Meaningful Careers. But this doesn't take into account the various internal projects Michael works on, including some of the activities that are handled by Karla Krivickas.

Lani discussed the FFY 25 projects that have not been identified specifically. Those are the research projects that just ended. No specific funding has been identified until the

Meaningful Careers committee decides how to move forward with recommendations from each report.

Melissa stated that she and Michael will schedule a Meaningful Careers Committee meeting sooner rather than later to flesh out the recommendations and what can be supported by the Council. She asked Lani when the projects should begin. Lani stated any project should begin by October 1, if possible, but recognizes these may be long term projects, and may continue in FFY 2026. She also said part of the discussion is to determine what is the scope of the project, the timeline and what funding amount is appropriate to budget for.

Marcy clarified a few points that Lani made. Both research reports will have several recommendations that the Council may consider but it would be important to prioritize which projects should be funded and by what annual work plan year. It might be important to figure out what activity can be funded this October, if possible.

The other point Marcy made is to remember that any of these recommendations that the Council may consider from both research projects, must be considered as a Systems Change effort and to plan for these in multiple federal year work plans. She said that not everything needs to be done all at once, so the Council needs to be thoughtful on how these issues are approached.

Marcy also said that Jon, Lani, and herself met to prepare for this meeting, Michael wasn't in the office that day, but there is urgency to finalize these unknown projects and identify the funding so that the federal funds can be obligated. The Council's meeting in June will be heavy with approving the recommendations from the Conference Sponsorship, Internet Safety, Legal Options Manual, and five renewal contracts. Any new grant solicitation(s) will have to be released in June and then the Council's meeting in September will include a vote on further projects. If the June deadline is not met for any new grant solicitations, those projects will need to move into the FFY2025 fiscal year to address.

Melissa will coordinate with Michael on when to convene the next meeting and thanked Lani and Marcy for that clarification.

Inclusion Goal:

The Data Hub contract with Dr. Alex Kurz ends on September 30, 2024. Staff is addressing several concerns with Dr. Kurz to ensure the Data Hub continues. At this time, it is not budgeted to receive continued funding, thus the contract will end on September 30.

Staff continues to meet with Dr. Kurz on the work of the Data Hub and to discuss options to sustain the project. No progress has been made on this effort. Dr. Kurz requested to have a no cost extension through January 31, 2025, so that he can update the Data Hub with U.S. Census Data. The data will be released in December 2024. Dr. Kurz is also awaiting approval by DES/DDD to release DDD data (non-identifiable) on the Data Hub. Jon reminded the committee that the ADDPC entered into a data share

agreement for DDD data to be added to the Data Hub, but the approval process has been slow going.

Lani stated the request for a no cost extension presents a problem because staff would have to ask for approval from ACL to extend the period of performance. The other issue that makes this complex is the Continuing Resolutions by Congress to approve the federal budgets. This also impacts on our ability for project planning.

Jon said the importance of the Data Hub is the value that it provides to the community. He said that to be as creative as necessary we need to do whatever is necessary to keep this moving forward. We had great success last year getting a data share agreement in place with DES, and Dr. Kurz has been able to create the page on the Data Hub that will show the DDD data. Currently, he is just waiting for a final sign off by DES for the information go live.

Kathy made the important point that the Council needs to think about data as part of our standard operating funds if possible and not as a special project. It's just part of the Council work and current data is necessary to inform the work. Kathy asked Lani if you could get it as part of the standard operating practice, would you have to go for these extension requests to ACL each time?

Lani said the concern is finding the person to update the Data Hub and unlimited funding for projects. Council funding is not meant for ongoing projects without a way for them to be sustained. Dr. Kurz continues to meet staff for ongoing updates.

Transportation is the next project discussed. Lani stated that no funding or scope of work has been identified at this time. Jason stated that the transportation brief is being developed and that he is working with the Maricopa Association of Governments or MAG on this issue. This is an activity that will most likely carry over to 2025 to finalize the next steps.

The Parenting/Pregnancy Education grant is also under Inclusion. Three (3) contractors are addressing this topic (ASU, NAU, UA) and all three are expected to apply for second year funding. The total amount awarded through June 30, 2024, is \$179K. Staff will review their renewal proposals and their final amounts may change because part of the funding for each contractor was designated for research.

Kathy asked what each contractor was doing. Marcy and Jon provided a brief update, however, Kathy asked for additional information to be attached to the minutes. Marcy said that she and Sarah will meet to discuss the best way to showcase the narrative reports, the layout may change from what is currently shown.

Kathy also wanted to know if any of the contractors are addressing or could address infant mortality rate for people of color with I/DD, as it's a national issue.

Next, there is a place holder for a project with NAU/IHD for an AzTAP project. NAU proposed several ideas with staff in the previous year, however they were too broad and could not be finalized in time.

Jon said that he and Marcy have met with Kelly Roberts to flesh out project ideas and one area that might be considered is using assistive technology for post-secondary education and for the SIP-C student cohort. As a reminder, the Council provided 4 years of funding for this project. Kelly will speak the project director, to get her feedback on how this could work and see if students with /IDD will show positive educational outcomes by utilizing assistive technology. A draft proposal will be forthcoming.

Safety Goal:

The first project identified for funding is the Internet Safety grant solicitation. Jon and Marcy are finalizing the scope of work. The grant solicitation is targeted to be released the week of March 11th, with \$100K available for to award multiple grants.

The next project was previously mentioned by Marcy, The Arc 2.0 Alternative. The work that The Arc of the U.S. did, collaboratively, was not funded for a third year. A new scope of work needs to be developed to release the RFGA in June. Jon and Marcy are discussing next steps and ideas to draft a scope of work.

The next two project ideas, Trauma Informed Care and Crisis Response also fall under the Safety Goal. Both ideas have not been fleshed out for funding or a specific scope of work. A determination of what to do about these two ideas will need to be decided soon or they will have to move to FFY 2025.

Lani mentioned that Noble Predictive Insights has completed their Behavioral Health and Crisis Response report for the Council, and they will be presenting their findings in the following week to the behavioral health committee.

System Access & Navigation Goal:

Refugee Research was undertaken by the Sonoran UCEDD. The project report was delayed as they asked for no cost-extension. Thus, the draft report has been shared with staff but is still under review. Lani stated that identifying any budget or type of project hasn't occurred yet until the Council approves any recommendations from this report. Any project may have to be completed in FFY 2025.

The Native Disability Center, through the Sonoran UCEDD, is in its third year of funding of a five-year contract period. The project is budgeted for level funding at \$120k through FFY 2026. A key component of this project is that it is undertaking the Targeted Disparity requirement, with a focus on Navajo youth to assist them in employment transition planning.

Kathy asked if reports are submitted under the Native Disability Center. Both Lani and Marcy said yes. Jon expanded on the project and the new hire as Project Director, Agnes Attakai, who is Navajo. Ms. Attakai has worked for the University of Arizona for quite a long time in different capacities. Jon has worked with her on various initiatives

over his time with The Arc of Arizona and he has been impressed with her. She recently provided an overview of the Native Disability Center and the other Native American projects under the Sonoran UCEDD. They are doing amazing work and outreach to the tribal communities in AZ. Jon agreed that it was a great decision to hire Agnes to lead this project.

Lani wrapped up the discussion with the budget sheet showing \$42,000 as a surplus. Lani said this amount is a moving target, as she is working with estimates and does not know when the Arizona will receive its full funding award letter. Also complicating matters is the Continuing Resolutions that partially fund the government.

Jon added that if a CR is not approved by March 22, there is a chance that automatic 1% cuts to all federal programs could occur. So, we'd like to believe that that's enough to motivate House members to make some progress. We don't know that for a fact but if that isn't achieved then we may see an automatic 1% decrease to our budget and then whatever further discussions take place may result in other cuts or Congress may say we're going to disregard that rule and give ourselves a little slack. We just never know.

iii. Proposed Commitments & RFGAs:

Discussed above, no new information.

iv: Grant & Contract Timelines:

Marcy suggested to Jon that any future research grant is given a 15-month project period. That will give the contractor 12 months to complete the research and the final 3 months to write the report, submit the draft to Council staff for feedback and then the contractor will have time to make further edits and finalize the reports.

What we learned this past year is that each of the three funded research projects required more time than anticipated. Changing their award period will properly address these concerns. Keep in mind that this is for future research and the awards need to be made by July 1.

E. Committee Input on Work Plan Activities:

Melissa said she wants to think clearly about how to review the recommendations from the Vocational Rehabilitation report and discuss next steps with the Council.

No other feedback was provided. Each committee member thanked the staff for all of their work.

F. Call to the Public:

None

G. Schedule of Next Meeting / Adjourn:

The next Work Plan Review Committee meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2024, at 9 AM – 10:30 AM.

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 AM.

Dated this 19th day of March 2024
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council