



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 9, 2023

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

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

Meeting held via teleconference

MINUTES

The Executive Committee meeting of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (Council/ADDPC) was convened virtually September 15, 2023, notice having been duly given. Present and absent were the following members of the ADDPC.

Members Present

Melissa Van Hook, Chairperson
J.J. Rico, Vice Chair
Monica Cooper

Katharine Levandowsky
Janna Murrell
Vijette Saari

Members Absent

Kelly Roberts

Staff

Jon Meyers, Executive Director
Lani St. Cyr, Fiscal Manager
Michael Leyva, Grants/Contracts Coordinator
Jason Snead, Research and Communication
Specialist
Absent: Marcella Crane, Contracts Manager

Guests

A. Call to Order/Welcome:

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook welcomed everyone to the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC or Council) Executive Committee meeting. The meeting was called to order at 9:03 AM. Roll call and participant introductions were completed.

B. Minutes from September 15, 2023, Meeting:

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook asked for a motion to accept the minutes from September 15, 2023, Executive Committee meeting. The motion was made by J.J. Rico, seconded by Kathy Levandowsky. The motion carried.

C. Fiscal/Contract Update:

Lani St. Cyr gave the ADDPC Financial Update and explained the Council has fully obligated the FY 2021 award amount of \$1,535,342 and has met the original September 2022 obligation deadline. However, ACL has granted a one-year no cost extension for FY 2021 funds. This extension made the new obligation and project period through September 30, 2023, allowing an additional year for the work to be completed. The Council has until December 31, 2023, to liquidate FY21 funds but at this time all funds have been liquidated.

The Council has received the full allotment for FY 2022 in the amount of \$1,500,930, which is the amount previously estimated. This is level funding to FY 2021 excluding the Puerto Rico reallocation. The obligation and project periods are through September 30, 2023, with the liquidation of funds through September 30, 2024. Staff has requested a no-cost extension for the Refugee Research Project to allow more time for the Sonoran UCEDD to complete the project. We have received tentative approval through December 31, 2023. The Council has fully obligated these funds and will need to complete the work on all other projects by September 30, 2023. There is approximately \$157,881 remaining to be liquidated.

The Council has received a third allotment of FY 2023 funding in the amount of \$398. This brings the current FY 2023 total amount to \$1,501,328. There is approximately \$41,109 to obligate. The obligation and project periods are through September 30, 2024. The final report is due September 30, 2025.

The Council has received the first allotment for FY 2024 in the amount of \$196,284. The obligation and project periods are through September 30, 2025. The final report is due September 30, 2026.

Next, an update was given on the additional awards the Council has received.

First, the Council received \$84,288 for COVID-19 Vaccine specific projects. These funds are being tracked and reported on separately. ACL has also granted a one-year no cost extension for these funds, which the staff submitted a letter requesting. With the extension, the funds must be obligated, and work completed by September 30, 2023. To date the Council has spent \$77,867 and has encumbered \$5,496, through September 30, 2023. The remaining balance of the award will be used in partnership with NAU/IHD on a project to better understand the lived experiences of people with disabilities throughout the pandemic including barriers to health services such as awareness and access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Council received an additional award in the amount of \$95,319 to expand the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Network. The funds will also be tracked and reported on separately. The obligation and project period are through September 30, 2024. The contract for this project has been awarded and the funds encumbered, however no invoices have been received to date.

Next, the Council Funded Projects sheet was reviewed. All funding proposals approved during the June Council meeting have been added to the reporting sheet. Invoices are awaited from several projects completing by September 30, 2023.

Kathy requested an explanation of which years' allocations are being used for the various projects listed in the report. Lani explained there is not a clear-cut answer, as some funding crosses funding years to the multi-year allocation/encumbrance/liquidation process allowed by ACL. She referred the committee to the Budget Recommendation sheet for greater clarity.

The Budget Recommendation document was then reviewed. A column for FFY 2024 was added and the column for FFY 2021 removed. The 2024 column will generally reflect projects to be undertaken in FFY 2025; because a full slate of projects for FFY 2024 funds has not been finalized, the overall picture presented in this column is an estimate. The FFY 2023 column shows a small surplus of \$30,728; projects will need to be identified to utilize these funds.

D. Executive Director Report

COVID-19 Public Health Development special funding:

As previously stated, the COVID-19 Public Health Workforce Development funds of approximately \$95,000 will address the role of public health professionals in serving the aging/elder population with I/DD. Public health professionals leading the project will be staff from the Regional Center for Border Health/Western Arizona Health Education Center (RCBH/WAHEC), located in Yuma, and the Sonoran UCEDD is acting as the fiscal agent for the grant awards. As of October 24, five focus groups had been completed in various communities; more focus groups are being scheduled.

The work will be completed with a final report that will include recommendations. The report is due by December 31, 2023. When the report is received, staff and the System Access and Navigation committee will review it and develop policy recommendations for the Council to consider.

Communications Director search:

The Communications Director position description was updated and included in committee members' meeting materials. Posting of the position was expected in early November but delayed due to HR approval requirements, but Jon is optimistic the position will be filled by early in the new calendar year.

Council Vacancies/Appointments/Re-appointments:

Boards and Commissions remains a challenge with respect to filling vacant or expired positions on the Council, primarily due to staffing changes in the B&C office. Jon has spoken with the Governor's policy advisors for Human Services and Health, both of whom indicated they would intercede on behalf of the Council, and he will report on any progress at the next meeting.

I/DD Service System updates:

Several new initiatives are underway at DDD and AHCCCS to improve the system of care for Arizonans with I/DD. The first to note in the Parents as Paid Caregivers of Minor Children program, a Medicaid flexibility permitted during the pandemic to help meet the need for caregivers. Prior to 2020, parents in Arizona could not be paid to be habilitation or attendant care providers for their own children but the shortage of caregivers during the pandemic made this a valuable program. Although slated to expire in late 2023, AHCCCS and DDD acceded to the wishes of the parent and provider communities to request CMS approval to make the program permanent. Preliminary approval was granted in early November; full approval is expected no later than March 2024.

On the Behavioral Health front, AHCCCS and DDD are conducting a statewide survey to gauge interest in bringing the Systematic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources, and Treatment (START) program from the University of New Hampshire's UCEDD to Arizona as a new model of services to address systemic shortcomings here. START is a tertiary care, evidence-based, and evidence-informed model of community-based services for individuals ages 6 and older with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs. Attitudes toward the START program are mixed within Arizona's I/DD community. Jon will share results of the state's survey once they become available.

DDD is finalizing a series of Positive Behavior Supports, or PBS, trainings to be offered to provider and DDD staff and family caregivers starting early in 2024. The initial phase will include train-the-trainer sessions, followed soon thereafter by online programs for the larger community. Few details are currently available but more are expected soon. Related to this, DDD and AHCCCS are in the process of planning two two-day training conferences for BH provider clinical staff to be held in April and September 2024. One will be held in Tucson, the other in the Phoenix area. The agencies are seeking volunteers to assist with the event planning and selection of agenda topics.

Full Council agenda – November 17, 2023:

Jon welcomed committee members' input on the agenda for the upcoming full Council meeting. The primary focus will be a presentation by Therese Yanan of the Native American Disability Law Center in recognition of Native American Heritage Month. Kathy Levandowsky expressed gratitude for this presentation.

E. Behavioral Health & Crisis Response survey:

Melissa shared an overview of the work done with Noble Predictive Insights to create a survey for statewide distribution regarding members' and caregivers' experience with the behavioral health and crisis response systems in Arizona. Member of the BH/Crisis core group requested a number of changes to the survey, including adding plain language phrasing to be more accessible to the I/DD community. Because of these requests, as well as delays getting NPI's state contract renewed due to adoption of a new contract management software platform at ADOA, the timeframe for issuing the survey has been adjusted and results may not be available prior to the end of the calendar year, as originally hoped.

Melissa noted the coincidence of AHCCCS and DDD paying new attention to this topic at the same time ADDPC and others are raising awareness about the severity of the problems in meeting BH needs of the I/DD population in Arizona.

Jon added mention of the work being done by ACDL to monitor members with complex needs in DDD-funded group homes under a new contract with the State. J.J. noted the problems his team are identifying, which include inadequate documentation, medication errors, abuse and neglect in various forms, failure to comply with service plans, and inaccurate reporting by DDD on the location of members receiving supports. Melissa invited J.J. and his monitoring team to present a report to the Full Council at the January 2024 meeting, at which time he can present an update on the program through December 31, 2023. J.J. agreed to be added to the agenda.

Discussion followed about challenges being faced by ACDL, further steps needed to ensure compliance by providers and DDD, contractual limitations on the ability of providers or other contractors to act on findings, and potential legislative action that may be necessary to provide enforcement authority. Janna suggested media attention to the issues may become necessary if the state will not address them adequately.

F. Announcements

J.J. noted that over the next several months ACDL will be changing the name by which it is known to the public from Arizona Center for Disability Law to Disability Rights Arizona. The latter is its legal name already and the change is being made to make its public image more consistent with the name used by most of its counterparts in other states.

Janna added Raising Special Kids will be changing its name, as well, over the course of 8-9 months. RSK is working with an outside agency, self-advocates, and youth advisors to determine the best and most appropriate name for the organization. An announcement of the new name is expected in early 2024.

G. Call to the Public

No members of the public were present.

- H. Adjourn:**
The meeting adjourned at 10:04 AM.

Dated this 8th day of January 2024
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

DRAFT