

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADVOCATES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
March 24, 2025**

The mission of Developmental Disability Advocates is to provide resources to create opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities in Jefferson County to live full and enriched lives.

This meeting was held as a hybrid meeting in person with a virtual option through Microsoft Teams. The link and phone number to access the meeting virtually were posted more than 24 hours prior to the meeting per Missouri Sunshine Law.

PRESENT: Dr. Marsha Mertens, Chairperson; Amie Merz, Vice-Chairperson; Tony Sokolic, Director; Elizabeth Spaugh, Director; Cara Pellerin, Director; Danielle Moskop, Director; Stacey Ismail, Executive Director DD Advocates; Dave Weiler, Director of Administration DD Advocates; Dawn Warner, Executive Assistant DD Advocates.

ABSENT: Scott Brothers, Treasurer; Randy Starkey, Secretary

PUBLIC

PRESENT: Josh Bauman, Former DD Advocates Board Member; Emily Brouk, Jeff Niehaus, and Nathan Patton, DD Advocates; Andrea Lesniewski, FACT; Rob Libera, Scott Skarstad and Scott Shelton, Lafayette Industries; Jodi Woessner, Pathways to Independence.

- I. OPEN and INTRODUCTIONS**— Dr. Marsha Mertens opened and led the regular session of the meeting of Developmental Disability Advocates Board of Directors at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Mertens asked the newly appointed board member Diane Moskop to introduce herself and share a little of her background with the group during this introduction time. All other attendee introductions were also done at this time
- II. MISSION STATEMENT** – Elizabeth Spaugh read the Mission Statement.
- III. RECOGNITION** – Josh Bauman, former Board member who also served as Board Chairperson for several years was recognized and thanked for his service to the Board. Stacey Ismail presented him with a commemorative clock from the organization.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – The Regular and Closed Session minutes from January 27, 2025, were presented for approval. Tony Sokolic made a motion to approve both the Regular and Closed Session minutes from January 27, 2025, as presented. Cara Pellerin seconded. Motion carried and minutes approved.
- V. REPORTS**
 - a. Financial Report** – Dave Weiler presented the February 2025 Financial Report:
 - At two-thirds of the way through the fiscal year, Service Coordination revenue is 6% under plan. Logging numbers are improving, and we are getting ready to do some re-billing. When we converted over to using SETWorks for our billing, there were some difficulties with regards to re-billing due to our Medicaid status. This has been corrected and the re-billing will help close this gap. County tax revenue is on track at almost 97% of the annual amount. Under non-operating expenses, UCP and Mercy supported employment have had higher utilization. The other supported employment providers which are funded, Pony Bird and Mers Goodwill are under plan

so the overall supported employment funds should break even for the year. Total expenses are 6% better than plan year to date.

- On the Financial Position page the CDs and Treasury bills look good and are hovering around 4%.
- On the Checks Written a couple of checks were noted for clarity. There was a check to Illumilab, in the amount of \$7,500 - this covers the final one-third of the strategic plan project. A check for \$12,500 to MACDDS is our annual membership fee paid once each year and \$8,000 paid to Crouch, Farley and Heuring covers the recently completed annual audit.

Amie Merz made a motion to approve the February 2025 Financial Report as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

b. Executive Director Report – Stacey Ismail distributed her Executive Director report for review:

- **JSI/Lafayette Industries:** Lafayette Industries took over management duties of JSI on 2/3/25 and have re-named to Lafayette Jeffco. They are planning to hire a Programs Manager to replace the previous Work Life Manager that DD Advocates has funded historically. They plan to grow the number of employees to 100 and they have adjusted the workday to better fit the times that employees are on the premises. DDA met with them on March 13 to discuss some ongoing maintenance projects to be completed. The transfer of ownership of the building will not take place until all the maintenance projects are completed. JSI previously sent DDA a report monthly and reported in person quarterly. The plan for Lafayette Jeffco would be to come quarterly to give a report to the board which will begin with the June 2025 meeting.
- **CARF:** DDA's CARF survey was February 20-21. The survey went well. The final report will be sent to us when complete. DDA expects to receive 3 recommendations and 3 consultations. Recommendations will need corrective actions submitted; the consultations are suggested actions.
- **Waitlist Ended:** The waitlist has ended for the remainder of FY25. However, the FY26 DMH budget passed through the House does not include full funding for growth and no rate increases as of now. April 1st is MACDDS legislative advocacy day at the Capitol. There are several property tax bills to watch and will likely not be narrowed down until the end of the session.
- **Finance Committee:** The Board Finance Committee is meeting on April 30th to review funding requests for FY26. Stacey and Dave have been meeting with providers to discuss their requests. There are no new service requests or providers for FY26.
- **Executive Director's Performance Evaluation:** Stacey's Performance Evaluation is due in May. All of the needed documents will be sent to Dr. Mertens this week. Since there is no board meeting in April, there will likely need to be a special board meeting called or at least an Executive Committee meeting.

c. Service Coordination Report – Emily Brouk, Director of Service Coordination, shared the following information:

- **Client Tally Report** – We received 3 new individuals in February. In addition, 7 individuals were discharged for a net growth of -4 for the month. Toward the end of the month, it was realized that DMH had not sent the next group of non-Medicaid individuals. Emily reached out and requested they send the balance of the individuals from Jefferson County. So far in March we have received 51 individuals so you will see a large change on next month's report. 808 are being served through Targeted Case Management (Medicaid) and 278 are served through the Resource Specialist (Non-Medicaid).
- **Personnel** – No resignations or changes since the last Board meeting. There are two staff members scheduled to attend the Charting the Life Course Showcase in April. Two staff members will be attending the Aging with Developmental Disabilities conference in St. Charles in May. As a part of our partnership with AAIM, we will be sending the Assistant Director of Service Coordination and the Mentor team to Supervisory Training this spring.
- **Logging-** The team average for the month of February was 78.7% vs. a target of 75%. The Q2 FY25 billing review was completed. There were 125 case notes reviewed across 25 Service Coordinators. There were no retractions needed.

- **DMH Audits** – There were no audits in February.
- **DMH Updates**- The waitlist began moving on March 12th. We had 7 individuals awarded waiver slots - 2 individuals for the comprehensive waiver, 4 for the community support waiver and 1 for the Partnership for Hope waiver.
- **SETWorks Updates**- Adobe Sign for digital signatures was rolled out in January. The Magical app was implemented in February. This application allows Service Coordinators to use templates and also has a feature which allows automation between two of our systems (CIMOR and SETWorks). The Magical app should help provide better consistency and accuracy going forward.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Committee Structure:** At the January board meeting Stacey mentioned that she and Tony Sokolic had attended a pre-conference workshop at the MACDDS conference on Board Basics which had a lot of great information on the ways in which boards conduct business. One of the items discussed was board committees. Stacey shared the DDA board committee list and briefly went through the list of committees, what they do, how often they meet, etc. Nominating and Financial/Audit committees meet once per year. Nominating to discuss officers and Financial to review funding requests in order to make a recommendation to the full board for the next year's budget. Public Awareness committee has not met in a while and is more of an ad hoc committee. Structural/Construction committee is one which Stacey recommended be eliminated or be ad hoc also. With the strategic plan working towards DDA no longer owning multiple properties and being a landlord, there likely would not be a need for this committee going forward. Stacey will check the by-laws to see whether eliminating the committee requires a vote and if so, will add to a future agenda. A spreadsheet showing a comparison to the other ERA boards shows that they rely heavily on committees and a consent agenda to conduct their business. Each of them does something slightly different. All of this was presented as something for the board to think about. Having committees do a lot of the work, would increase the number of meetings board members would have to participate in, however it would shorten the length of the regular, monthly board meeting. DDA's current structure gives the full board more insight on discussion/action items as they all receive the information vs. a smaller committee discussing and making a recommendation to the full board. The other ERA boards do have a virtual option for their meetings if anyone would want to watch/listen and see how they conduct their business. A retreat later in the year might be a good time to discuss this in more detail.
- b. **Sunshine Law Policy Annual Review:** At a recent MACDDS meeting there was a presentation by Jay Turner from the Missouri Attorney General's office on the Sunshine Law. Each year we have this on the agenda. As a political subdivision we are required to follow the Sunshine Law. Dawn watches to see if there are any changes to the Sunshine Law which effect the way we do business and if there is it is brought to the Board. The Sunshine Law mainly covers records and meetings for transparency. Stacey reviewed highlights of the presentation including what constitutes a public meeting, two types of meetings - open and closed, posting for meetings, etc. If there is a virtual option for your meeting, you must post notice online in addition to door of the in-person location. You must post 24 hours in advance. Roll call votes are outlined by the Sunshine Law as well. There are only a few reasons for which you can close a meeting. Our most commonly used are legal, personnel and real estate. A custodian of records has to be assigned and our custodian of records is Dawn Warner. The presentation also stated that best practice is that all the members of the governmental body have a governmental issued e-mail account. We have not done this and may need to look at doing it. Stacey is revising DDA's Sunshine Law Policy for the board to review and approve and will present at the May meeting.
- c. **Board Self-Assessment Questions:** Last year's assessment questions were reviewed to determine if they were still relevant, and if there were questions that needed rewording for clarity. In addition, if there were any that might need to be added. Dawn will make the necessary changes and email to the board for completion. These will get completed in May and results shared at the June meeting.
- d. **AAIM Human Resources Audit Table:** The AAIM HR Audit report was shared and discussed at a previous meeting. However, we had not shared what the final plan was for the action items. A table was shared that addresses all of the items identified, what the priority level is, a timeline and responsible party(s). The main item currently being addressed is the separation of the employee handbook from the policy manual as well as revised job descriptions and succession plans. Another major project is to look into

a new HRIS system. This will likely start in the second half of FY26. We will talk first with our payroll company, Paycor, to see if they have a system. In addition, SETWorks has an HRIS component. Training is another topic. Since most of our employees are in the Service Coordination Department, our training is very focused there. AAIM has supervisor training which we are sending our Mentors and Assistant Director of Service Coordination through now. A training checklist will be created for each position going forward. A "Diamond Pass" training pass was purchased with AAIM to accommodate an increased focus on supervisory training.

- e. **Sunnyhill Redirect Request for FY25:** Sunnyhill is asking to modify their capital funding request for FY25. Originally, they were granted almost \$56,000 for mattresses at the ALF and parking lot work for the camp. They have purchased the mattresses, which was \$16,500. For the remaining \$39,398, they are requesting permission to redirect to more urgent needs at the camp for the upcoming season. They are trying to get a day habilitation site up and running at the camp and the Fire Marshal is requiring just over \$13,000 to meet some safety codes needs that they would like to complete as soon as possible. The camp pool also needs work. The filter needs to be replaced at a cost of \$13,500 and the liner removal, sandblasting, patching, and resurfacing of the pool was bid at \$41,000. This is \$28,954 over what their funding is this year. They are asking the Board to approve a redirect of the current funding (\$39,398) and also increase their FY25 amount by \$29,000 to cover these costs. Amie Merz made a motion to approve the redirect of \$39,398 of approved FY 25 funding and provide additional funding as requested in the amount of \$28,954 to cover the urgent needs at the camp. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried. There was also concern noted by Board members about the need for Sunnyhill to get repair work done on the driveway and parking lot at the camp so Dave will provide that information back to Sunnyhill for their FY26 request.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Strategic Plan Update:** Stacey recently emailed details of the new draft Strategic Plan to the Board. The committee working on the plan with consultant Sarah Buek consisted of Stacey, Dave, Emily, two Service Coordinators - Brandi Weinland and Jill Guerra, Service Coordinator Mentor - Tracy Sherman, Board members Scott Brothers, and Amie Merz. Dr. Mertens also attended some meetings. This draft was provided to the Board members for questions and input before finalizing. This will become an ongoing, flexible plan that will be actively reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Leadership Team and every 6 months by the Board. On the goals and strategy page, there are year one action steps which have been developed and will be shared when the full plan is voted on. It was agreed that we should not do a new strategic plan in the same year as CARF, so this plan will cover 2025-2028 as the next CARF review would be December 2027. Mission, Vision and Values have been updated through this process also. The Board liked the plan and had no recommended changes. The full, final plan will be presented to the Board in May for approval.

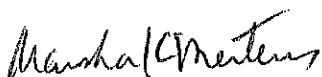
- VIII. APPROVAL OF REQUISITION** – Due to no April Board meeting the requisitions for April and May 2025 were presented for approval. These requisitions are based upon the FY25 budget. Tony Sokolic made a motion to approve the April and May 2025 requisitions as presented. Cara Pellerin seconded. Motion carried.

- IX. PUBLIC COMMENT** – Rob Libera, Lafayette Industries commented that he really appreciates the partnership with our organization and is looking forward to expanding their mission in Jefferson County. As far as the earlier discussion on committees, he applauded us for reflecting on the committee structure. In his experience, doing more committee meetings in lieu of a longer, full Board meeting consume a lot of staff time in preparation.

- X. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD** – There were no additional comments from the Board.

- XI. ADJOURN** – Being no further business, Tony Sokolic made a motion to adjourn the regular session at 8:36 pm. Amie Merz seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Marsha Mertens, Chairperson