Developmental Disability Advocates
Connecting Individuals with Resources
IN JEFFERSON COUNTY - SINCE 1978

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADVOCATES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
August 25, 2025

We create opportunities for people with developmental disabilities in Jefferson County to live fulfilling lives, by investing in services and building connections.

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: Amie Merz, Vice-Chairperson; Scott Brothers, Treasurer; Randy Starkey, Secretary; Elizabeth Spaugh, Director; Cara Pellerin, Director; Danielle Moskop, Director; Jon Casey, Director; Stacey Ismail, Executive Director DD Advocates; Dave Weiler, Director of Administration DD Advocates; Dawn Warner, Executive Assistant DD Advocates.

ABSENT: Dr. Marsha Mertens, Chairperson; Tony Sokolic, Director.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Emily Brouk, Jeff Niehaus, Nathan Patton and Donna Pulliam - DD Advocates; Sara and Crystal Norton – Service Recipients; Scott Skarstad and Scott Shelton - Lafayette Industries; Dawn Puzzo Michalski - Pony Bird; Jodi Woessner - Pathways to Independence; Christine Kennett - FACT.

I. **OPEN and INTRODUCTIONS–** Amie Merz opened and led the regular session meeting of Developmental Disability Advocates Board of Directors at 6:30 p.m. Introductions of all in attendance were done at this time.

II. **MISSION STATEMENT –** Danielle Moskop read the Mission Statement.

III. **MISSION MOMENT -** Donna Pulliam, Intake and Community Specialist for DD Advocates, introduced Sara and her mother Crystal. Sara thanked Donna for all her assistance helping her get settled in at her residence at Sunnyhill so she can live independently. She also is able to participate in a bible study and can come and go and participate in things as she wants. She loves that she can have independence. Crystal, Sara's mother also spoke and shared how her daughter has come so far with the assistance she has received. Both were so appreciative and thankful for all Donna. It was at this time, Emily Brouk read an email she received from another parent who was also helped by Donna. This parent stated that Donna truly saw her and her family and understood their needs. She was very grateful for Donna and DD Advocates for all their help and support.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES –** The Regular and Closed meeting minutes from June 30, 2025, were presented for approval. Scott Brothers made a motion to approve both the Regular and Closed meeting minutes from June 30, 2025, as presented. Cara Pellerin seconded. Motion carried and minutes approved.

V. **REPORTS**

a. **Financial Report –** Dave Weiler, Director of Administration, presented the June Preliminary and July 2025 Financial Report:

- The June report is for all of FY25 and is preliminary until the audit. There may be a few additional minor adjustments. However, Dave does not anticipate any significant changes. June was a strong month for service coordination to close out the fiscal year. Service coordination revenue was only 4% below plan. County tax revenue was strong in FY25 ending the year at 2% better than plan. Interest earned had been below plan most of the year but closed the gap towards the end and finished very close to budget. Operating expenses were up due to the amount of training being done. One example of this was the Diamond Pass through AAIM where Supervisors were being sent for very beneficial Supervisory Training. Office expenses were noted due to some software purchases. Under non-operating expenses Sunnyhill was over budget, however this was due to an additional request which the Board approved during the year. There was some underutilization including Promise Community Homes. They purchased a home, however it did not close prior to the end of the fiscal year.

- Year End Financial Position page shows a treasury bill matured in June and those funds moved to the money market account. $3M at 1.1% in July was moved to a CD for a better interest rate. On the year end "Checks Written" page a $600 credit card rebate was moved into the Barb McDowell fund.
- For July, service coordination started off strong. Building rents show over plan. "Building In Kind" rent was budgeted at $0 however timing of the building donation changed from June 30 to October to align with Lafayette Jeffco's fiscal year. County tax collection is low however that is normal for July. Wages are slightly over plan. This is due to the number of workdays in July. Insurance, Depreciation, and Repairs and Maintenance are high due to still having both the workshop and the Pomme Apartments as of July 1st. Total expenses are slightly better than plan through the end of July.
- On the Financial Position page, the 1.1% money market account has been moved to a sweep account which is at 2.1% interest. $1M from the treasury bill was added to a CD which is at 4% interest. In December, the other treasury bill will mature and also be moved.
- On "Checks Written" page a payment on 7/3 for legal services was noted. This was work done on the property donation contracts. There was $2,000 paid to Promise Community Homes which was a Board approved expense for an insurance deductible for storm damage on homes DDA helped to fund. A check for $100,000 to True Title was for the purchase of the new ISL home in collaboration with Promise Community Homes in August. However, they would not accept a company check so this was voided and in early August a check was made to Enterprise Bank to obtain a cashier's check to provide instead.

Cara Pellerin made a motion to approve the preliminary year end June 2025, and the July 2025 Financial Reports as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

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

- ***Client Tally Report*** – In June there were 8 new individuals, 3 discharged for a net growth of 5. Currently DDA is serving 1,147 individuals. 822 through targeted case management (TCM) and 325 through the Resource Specialist. Last July DDA served a total of 1,028 individuals. Sizeable increase last year, many of which are served by the Resource Specialist.
- ***Intake/Cold Calls/Community Outreach*** –
  - ***Intake*** - Each quarter the intake, cold calls and community outreach efforts are reported on. During that time, there were 6 transfers from the St. Louis Regional Office. Two of these were due to individuals turning 16 years old. There were 4 individuals transferred in from other Counties. There are many more that are in transition and their transfer has not yet been finalized. New clients through intake there were 15 over the last three months. Ten of these 15 were Medicaid and 5 were non-Medicaid.
  - ***Cold Calls*** - Donna takes the majority of the cold calls. If she is out, Emily Brouk or Jeff Niehaus covers them. For the quarter, Donna had 37 cold calls. 30 were referred to DMH-DD Intake. DDA is tracking how families hear of our agency. 9 saw our website, 12 were referred by a community agency, 4 were by word of mouth and 12 were through other sources. One from the other category saw our building sign.
  - ***Community Outreach*** – Donna made a presentation to DeSoto HS. The team is trying very hard to push in to all the schools, so they are aware of our organization and make referrals. Donna also presented to the St. Louis Respite and Resource Coalition. She attended the Lafayette Jeffco Open House and hosted a booth at the Back-to-School Fair held at Hillsboro Primary.
- ***Personnel*** – There have been no resignations since the last board meeting however, DDA did separate with one Service Coordinator on 8/25. Four out of six of the Service Coordination team leaders have been to Supervisor training through AAIM. The others will hopefully complete by

the end of the year. Emily has taken the first 3-day course a few years ago and plans to sign up for the additional 3 day course that was not offered at that time.

- ***Logging*** – July team average was 77.6% (goal of 75%) and 77.6% YTD.
- ***DMH Audits*** – The Columbus Audit, which is an annual TCM audit, will be held September 22-24. All information that was requested has been provided as requested. An ISP audit that was due September 8th that has been completed. There was a HRST audit done on August 11th. This was a new audit for DDA. The HRST is an assessment that is given to individuals in the waiver program and talks about their health risks.
- ***DMH Update*** - The DMH waitlist saw movement August 18th and 1 Partnership for Hope waiver slot was awarded. The agency joined the Health Information Exchange (HIE) which is through the Lewis and Clark Information Exchange (LACIE). It is a way for our team to access health information on individuals served. It is free and will help with ISP development and the HRST.
- ***SETWorks Updates*** - DDA's billing manager has completed the re-billing for previously denied Medicaid billing for 2025 and will hopefully recoup additional revenue. Leadership has been attending informational webinars on SETWorks.

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

- ***Legislative Update:*** Representative Ken Waller passed away over the weekend. He was a very strong advocate in Jefferson City for Jefferson County. He was supportive of our mission and the agency is doing a social media post in honor of him. Governor Kehoe vetoed appointed a Committee on Tax Reform, which Rep. Cecilie Williams from Jefferson County is part of, that is conducting public hearings around the state regarding SB 3. SB 3 impacts DDA in that it allows for ballot initiatives to be put to the voters in April 2026 to freeze property taxes at the 2024 rate if passed. If passed this would mean no growth in tax revenue for the County. The Committee is expected to file a bill to clean up what was not constitutional. Stacey and Dave attended a public hearing in Clayton last week and are scheduled to attend a roundtable about it in DeSoto this week with other taxing entities.
- ***DMH Update:*** July 1 DD Advocates agreed to take all referrals which would expand who is served by the agency. The new strategic plan has DDA positioned to perform service coordination for all of Jefferson County. Unfortunately, the agency is not yet taking all the referrals under the age of 16 but have gotten some. It is anticipated that a transfer of approximately 20-26 individuals will be transferred in October between the ages of 15-18. DDA has been told that full caseloads cannot be transferred from the DMH Jefferson County office until Central Office decides that is the direction they want to go, and they have requested additional match money. DDA is in a holding pattern until the Regional Office makes additional decisions. There is good communication at the local level.
- ***Promise Community Homes:*** DDA closed on the home at 3111 Valley Oaks Dr. Imperial on 8/4. Emily Brouk represented the agency at the ribbon cutting event. The next home is contingent on a Jefferson Foundation grant that they won't know about until November.
- ***Two Employee Engagement Events:*** The Fiscal Year Picnic was on July 15th and the annual Bill Knittig Back to School Pizza Party was held on August 13th with staff and their kids. The Kona Ice Truck was a huge hit with all the kids.
- ***Clarification on Board Binder:*** At last month's meeting it was discussed how DDA might better provide information to the board and whether agency emails should be issued for board members. Discussion included how the packet is supplied and other pertinent reports and plans. Stacey has checked with some other boards and several of them have a Google drive or a portal and members are given a login which allows access to documents and information. However, some of them still print a packet out for members to use at the meeting. Nathan Patton, IT Director, indicated that DDR uses a Sharepoint site for board members to log into using their own technology. He also has shared with Stacey that Chromebooks issued to board members will not work as we operate on a Microsoft platform. He suggested agency owned and assigned iPads if we want to go fully electronic so that proper security could be included. A binder was also discussed last meeting. A binder could be a cumulative month over month or only the current month and it could house all the agency plans and other important documents so that the board members don't have to hunt for them to refer back to them if needed. It could be stored at DD

Advocates or members could take them home. Stacey asked the board to think about options and what works best for them. It doesn't have to be a one size fits all. Amie suggested it be revisited next meeting when Dr. Mertens and Mr. Sokolic are present.

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Board Committee Assignments:** The current committee list was presented for review. It is good timing with having a couple of new board members to reassess if you are on the right committee or if a member has interest in another committee. The agency by-laws state that each committee needs to have a chairperson. The Chair is the one who calls and facilitates the meetings. The Executive Committee consists of the officers of the board with the Board Chair being the Chairperson of that committee. Jon Casey agreed to be added to the Public Awareness Committee. Cara Pellerin agreed to Chair the Nominating Committee. Scott Brothers who serves as the Board Treasurer agreed to Chair the Finance/Audit Committee and Danielle Moskop agreed to Chair the Public Awareness Committee. The Public Awareness Committee is due to meet. The strategic plan process led to revision of the Mission, Vision and Values which needs to be updated in many of our materials. In addition, the agency's service coordination model has changed and possibly the ages we serve. The committee needs to review all agency public awareness materials for updates. Dawn will send a Doodle poll to get a meeting scheduled. Once scheduled, materials for discussion will be emailed out ahead for review.

b. **Tax Rate Hearing Date and Rate Discussion:** There is a requirement to set the tax levy rate by October 1st. Dave is recommending the board set the September 22, 2025 meeting as the tax levy public hearing that is required. If approved, a public notice will be placed on the agency website and in the Leader Newspaper. Due to current assessments and the Hancock Amendment the tax rate is to be set at 0.0848 vs. the current rate of 0.0857. This is a 1% adjustment. Scott Brothers made a motion to set the September 22, 2025 board meeting as the Tax Levy Public Hearing. Randy Starkey seconded. Motion carried.

c. **Conflict of Interest Policy Review and Declaration Form:** The board annually reviews the conflict-of-interest policy. Stacey is not recommending any changes at this time. This is a CARF required policy and review. In addition, each board member has been provided a conflict-of-interest declaration form which needs to be completed, signed and returned to Dawn for recording.

d. **Conflict of Interest Resolution (MEC):** According Missouri state statute, political subdivisions such as DD Advocates may adopt a conflict-of-interest ordinance or resolution identifying positions required to file a Personal Financial Disclosure. The resolution must be re-adopted every two years by September 15, and a certified copy must be filed with the MEC within 10 days of the adoption or re-adoption. An annual filer is an individual from the state or a political subdivision with an annual operating budget (AOB) over $1 million that is required by law to disclose their financial interests by virtue of the position they hold. This resolution eliminates the need for separate financial disclosures from all board members and limits filers to employees who are authorized to promulgate or adopt rules and regulations or who serve as the chief administrative officer, chief purchasing officer, or general counsel. For DD Advocates, this would include Stacey Ismail, Executive Director, and David Weiler, Director of Administration. The language has not been changed from the prior resolution adopted in 2023 and is based upon a template provided by the MEC. Cara Pellerin made a motion to adopt the Conflict-of-Interest resolution as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

e. **Policy Approval – Suicide Awareness & Prevention:** During the 2024 CARF survey, DDA did not have a policy on suicide and suicide prevention so this was a recommendation. Stacey presented a draft policy for the board to review and approve. Scott Brothers made a motion to approve the policy as presented. Cara Pellerin seconded. Amie Merz asked for some discussion on the policy document. On #5 of the proposed policy regarding communication, it was asked if something should be added ensuring confidentiality and privacy. Some additional clarifying questions and suggestions were presented. The motion was rescinded, and Scott Brothers made a new motion that Amie Merz work with Stacey to reword/update the Suicide Awareness and Prevention policy to be brought back at future meeting for approval. Jon Casey seconded. Motion carried.

f. **Strategic Plan Quarterly Review:** Previously, progress on the strategic plan was only reviewed on an annual basis, however Sarah Buek encouraged us to look at it as a living, nimble document that can change as the environments we operate in change. Best practice would be to review progress quarterly to allow for any course correction if needed.

   i. Goal #1 regarding the agency expanding its footprint to provide service coordination to all of Jefferson County – most of this update was given during the Executive Directors report.

Planning and budgeting are in place and are moving forward. However, the agency is waiting on some decisions from DMH. This goal may not move forward as fast originally intended.

ii. Goal #2 to divest real estate holdings is in progress. Timing isn't lining up exactly with the plan however the building donations are still taking place. Lafayette Jeffco requested the donation timing line up with their fiscal year and should be complete in October. The Pomme Apartments should be completed in September. This was delayed due to some revisions to the legal agreement. Discussions about donating the Plass Campus have not been fruitful so will likely list commercially for sale. Would like to have all this accomplished by calendar year end. There is a mold issue in Plass B basement that needs to be addressed, however we are waiting until Pony Bird clears out the basement. The A Highway property will be addressed after property donations are completed and may also be listed commercially if the adjacent developer is not interested. These all should be on target to complete by end of fiscal year.

iii. Goal #3 regarding developing and sharing proactive strategic funding priorities. This goal timeline was set fairly aggressive to be ready for the FY27 funding cycle which starts in February. Stacey will bring some sample funding priority announcements to the September board meeting. We can really move as fast or slow on this depending on multiple factors such as federal, state and county funding changes.

iv. Goal #4 is a transportation goal to more effectively and efficiently use tax dollars to serve more people. Dave and Stacey met with EZMO to discuss caps for FY26 so not all the money goes to a few people who have very long commutes. EZMO has changed their policy July 1st and mileage reimbursement for drivers now starts at their first pickup location to the destination and they are not paid from their home to first location. This should address the concern that DDA had.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a. **By-Laws Annual Review and Approval:** The By-Laws were presented for review at the June meeting and per the document the board is to have 30 days to review and present any suggested updates to the document. Since there was no board meeting in July, they are being 2nd read tonight. There were no suggested changes presented beyond those discussed at the June meeting. Scott Brothers made a motion to approve the By-Laws as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

VIII. APPROVAL OF REQUISITION – The Requisition for July and August was presented for approval. This requisition is based upon the FY26 budget. Scott Brothers made a motion to approve the July and August 2025 requisition as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – There were no comments from the public in attendance.

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

XI. CLOSED SESSION – Missouri Sunshine Law RsMO 610.021(2) Real Estate – Scott Brothers made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to RsMO 610.021 (2) Real Estate at 8:30 pm. Cara Pellerin seconded. Amie Merz called for a roll call vote. Randy Starkey, yes; Danielle Moskop, yes; Elizabeth Spaugh, yes; Tony Sokolic, absent; Scott Brothers, yes; Cara Pellerin, yes; Amie Merz, yes; Jon Casey, yes; Dr. Marsha Mertens, absent. Motion carried.

XII. ADJOURN – Being no further business, Jon Casey made a motion to adjourn the regular session at 9:00 pm. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Starkey

Randy Starkey, Secretary