

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADVOCATES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
June 24, 2024**

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 Zoom. 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-Chair; Randy Starkey, Secretary; Elizabeth Spaugh, Director; Diane Daniels, Director; Cara Pellerin, Director; Tony Sokolic, Director; Stacey Ismail, Executive Director DD Advocates; Dawn Warner, Executive Assistant DD Advocates; Dave Weiler, Director of Administration DD Advocates.

PUBLIC

PRESENT: Angie McGoveran, DD Advocates; Emily Brouk, DD Advocates; Nathan Patton, DD Advocates; Carol Otten, FACT; Stacey Elster, Lafayette Industries; Jodi Woessner, Pathways to Independence; Heather Lang-Portell, Pony Bird

- I. OPEN** – Amie Merz opened and led the regular session of the meeting of Developmental Disability Advocates Board of Directors at 6:30 p.m.
- II. MISSION STATEMENT** – Cara Pellerin read the Mission Statement.
- III. MISSION MOMENT** – A video mission moment was shown. Misty Simokaitis and an individual she serves made a video mission moment to share. He started employment services last year to work on his first job. He is very interested in sports and sports broadcasting. He is working at the Enterprise Center and is a Guest Experience Ambassador for the St. Louis Blues games. He said part of his job is to make sure the Blues' fans are having a good time and to assist if they need anything. He really loves this job and said it is a neat experience for him. He has been earning a paycheck and purchasing his own groceries. The same company he is employed with also hires this same position for St. Louis Cardinal games and he is looking forward to working at Busch Stadium this summer.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – The Regular Session minutes from May 20, 2024, were presented for approval. Tony Sokolic made a motion to approve Regular Session minutes from May 20, 2024, as presented. Cara Pellerin seconded. Motion carried and minutes approved.
- V. REPORTS**
 - a) Financial Report/JSI Review** – Dave Weiler presented the May 2024 Financial Report. The year-to-date percentage should be 92% of plan. County tax revenue has been strong this year and is currently showing at 104% of plan and is expected to gain another half percent by the end of June. All items which are expected to remain overbudget are flagged with arrows. Other items tracking temporarily overbudget are labeled “timing”. One item highlighted was Pony Bird Agency Supports - this item is over plan but is timing related and will be within budget by the end of the fiscal year as they cannot exceed their allocated amount. Total expenses through May are 8% below budget. The 6-month T-Bill is maturing in July, and the plan is to roll it over into a 12 month T-Bill. That will allow the two T-Bills to be staggered with one maturing every 6 months. Under checks written, a large check written to Valenti's for \$47,456 in May

was noted - this was a deposit on the Pomme 1 Apartments window project. Randy Starkey made a motion to approve DD Advocates' May Financial Report as presented. Diane Daniels seconded. Motion carried.

Dave Weiler provided a brief analysis of JSI reports. The JSI report for May showed strong sales but a large loss for the month because of three payroll cycles being paid out in May. JSI adjusts their accruals at fiscal year-end. JSI's days of cash decreased only modestly, though, from 58 to 54 days in May.

- b) **Executive Director Report** – Stacey Ismail distributed her Executive Director report for review and discussion.

AAIM Updates – DD Advocates has coordinated with AAIM to do an Employee Opinion & Engagement Survey. It will run from 6/17-6/28. This is included in the cost of the annual membership. There are 62 statements in the following areas: Executive Leadership Effectiveness, Supervisory Management Effectiveness, Communication, Pay, Benefits, Operational Effectiveness, Employee Development & Recognition, Work Life Satisfaction and Employee Commitment. As of Friday, 25 employees had completed the survey. The last time the organization did this was in 2018. Ms. Ismail would like to make it an every other year activity going forward. In addition, AAIM will be conducting an HR Audit. This is expected to take about 12 hours and costs \$1,500. It will review the organization's HR processes and provide recommendations. The audit will evaluate the following areas: recruitment, selection and onboarding; employee relations and performance management; compensation practices; employee benefits; leave of absence administration; employee separation; HR technology, employee records control and storage; training and development; handbook and policies (high level review); timekeeping and payroll.

Jefferson Foundation Grant Submission – The Jefferson Foundation has another round of grants coming up. The deadline to apply is July 18. DDA applied for a grant earlier in the year for capacity building. DDA was awarded 75% of the implementation cost of SETWorks. This round the application will be for a capital item. Improved outdoor and parking lot lighting at the Imperial building, JSI and Pomme apartments is the focus of this grant.

RFP for Strategic Planning – A request for proposal (RFP) has been announced on the website, social media and in the Leader newspaper. Once a facilitator has been selected, Ms. Ismail would like to have 2 Board members be a part of the strategic plan committee. Amie Merz has volunteered already. If anyone else is interested, let Ms. Ismail know. The last time this was done, it was during the pandemic. Key dates to remember for this project are: June 28 – Questions from Respondents are due; July 5 – DDA's responses to questions will be sent/published; July 15 – Proposals are due; July 18/19 – Interviews with selected respondents; July 22 – reach award decision for August 2024; August 2024 – Planning; August - December 2024 Execution of activities; January 2025 Plan completed; January 27, 2025 – Board approval of plan; February 1, 2025 – Plan Implementation. Ms. Ismail does expect multiple bidders based on the contacts she has already received.

Columbus (DMH) TCM Audit- The annual audit from DMH is August 12-14th. This previously was done by DMH and has now been contracted out to the Columbus Group. They are looking at information from 6/1/23 to 5/31/24.

CARF- The survey application was submitted on 6/21. Surveyors will be on-site in October or November.

Leader Article – Ms. Ismail has been working with the Leader newspaper to do a story on DDA announcing the FY25 funding awards similarly to what they have published for the Jefferson Foundation and the JCCMHFB. Tony Kraus is the writer from the Leader and he was interested in the 3 new services/providers being funded in the County.

Fiscal Year Picnic – The annual fiscal year picnic will be July 16 at the Arnold Rec Center from 11:30-1:30. Lunch is being catered by Pioneer Café. At the meeting the new budget is reviewed and levy funded services are discussed. The Board is welcome to attend. Let Dawn Warner know if you are coming in order to coordinate lunch.

- c) **Service Coordination Report** – Emily Brouk presented the Service Coordination report this month. Ms. Brouk shared that she has been with DDA for 19 years. She started as a Service Coordinator, then was promoted to Mentor and currently serves as Assistant Director.

Client Tally Report – This report is included in the Board packet. There were 14 new individuals and 7 individuals discharged for a net growth in May of 7.

Personnel - There has been no staff turnover since the last Board meeting.

SETWorks – Logging will begin in SETWorks on July 1st. Initial training took place at the Team meeting on July 18. The SETWorks steering committee continues to work on the development of the ISP and will meet again on July 10th.

Resource Specialist – Susan Beseda, a long-time Service Coordinator, has agreed to take the Resource Specialist position who will support all of DDAdvocates individuals without Medicaid under our new model. In July, she will be transitioning her Medicaid caseload to others and on 8/1 will begin this new role. Letters to individuals and families will be going out July 1 letting them know of the changes. Included in the Board packet is a copy of the new service description, a process map, and initial plan form. New incoming non-Medicaid referrals will be assigned to Susan and follow the process map.

DMH Audits – These are done quarterly, and reports are pulled by waiver type. Audit remediation was completed in May and there were no new audits in the month of May.

Trend Report – The purpose of the Trend Report is to provide data analysis of DMH audits and compliance information related to CMS(Medicaid) performance measures. It is like a report card. 99% of LOC's (Level of Care) completed timely and 100% of LOC's had supervisor and SLRO approval. This is the same as in last year's report. ISP reviews averaged .2 findings per review which is a decrease of .3 findings per review from previous year. The report showed 100% resolution of IQMFDs which was the same as the previous year. Overall, the service coordination team has done a great job, despite the turnover the organization has experienced.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Annual Board Site Visits** – Every year the Board does visits to the properties and buildings owned by DD Advocates. It is preferred that members rotate to different sites each year if possible, to allow them to see other locations which they may not have seen previously. Ideally, since the Pomme apartments are a large facility, three members are scheduled for that location and two members each for JSI, Plass Campus, and the Imperial office/warehouse. Mr. Weiler typically inspects the A Hwy property. Ms. Ismail asked that the members notify Ms. Warner of which location they would like to visit this year. Ms. Warner will coordinate scheduling those visits between the tenants and the Board members to accommodate everyone's schedule. The goal is to have these all complete, if possible, by August/September.
- b. **Board Officer Elections**- Each year the Nominating Committee connects with the officers of the Board to discuss their interest in continuing to serve in that role and if they wish not to continue, the Nominating Committee will work to find a replacement to bring forth for approval. Diane Daniels shared on behalf of the Nominating Committee that all officers are willing to serve another year and that the recommendation of the committee is to approve the following slate of officers for FY25: Dr. Marsha Mertens as Chair; Amie Merz as Vice-Chair; Randy Starkey as Secretary and Scott Brothers as Treasurer. Elizabeth Spaugh made a motion to approve the slate of officers as recommended for FY25 by the Nominating Committee. Tony Sokolic seconded. Motion carried.
- c. **Board Job Descriptions** – Annually the Board reviews the Board Job Descriptions and make changes if needed. The job descriptions presented contain no changes from the previous year. Ms. Ismail shared that part of the AAIM HR audit will review all job descriptions including the Board's and felt that no changes were necessary at this time. If the audit recommends changes, those will be brought to the Board later this year. All officers have two job descriptions to sign, one Director and one for the officer position they hold. The Board made no suggestions for changes and were asked to sign the documents and return to Ms. Warner.
- d. **Board Self Evaluation Summary** – The summary was presented for review. Overall score increased 0.5 from the previous year. There historically isn't large movement in the scores. Ms. Ismail reviewed the questions where the scores were lower than the previous year to determine what might improve those areas going forward. If there are questions or suggestions, members are welcome to bring those to Ms. Ismail or if they feel more comfortable, they can bring them to the Board Chair, Dr. Mertens. Question B.5 went from 4.0 down to 3.8 this year. This question was "The Board regularly reviews and uses the results of its outcome measurement system." Ms. Ismail shared that the Performance Measurement and Management Plan (PMMP) is shared with the Board each September/October. This report has all of the organization's goals and gives a representation of how the organization is doing at achieving their goals. It was mentioned

that the Board may not realize that this question refers to that and may be why it scored lower. The Board members don't always associate the questions to a specific report, especially if only done annually. Ms. Ismail plans to have the AAIM consultant look at this assessment and provide suggestions of questions and wording for future. Ms. Ismail cautioned that changing the assessment does make it difficult to compare year over year the first time used but that it is worth taking a look at it. It was suggested that next year, we do a more thorough discussion of the questions the month prior to the survey being distributed so Ms. Ismail can remind the Board what information they receive to score the items. Overall, the self-evaluation reflected that Board members feel the DDA Board is effective in its governance role and there is high satisfaction with serving on it.

- e. **FY25 Technology Plan** – Nathan Patton, Director of IT, presented highlights of the FY25 Technology Plan. This plan represents an overview of the goals and what was accomplished in FY24. The most important activity for the agency was the move into the Imperial building. The process allowed for updating of aged hardware, vendors, software and full separation from Pony Bird IT support. Last month the Board approved a new Artificial Intelligence Policy and all IT related policies are being updated and will be reviewed by AAIM. Transition to SETWorks as a data management and billing software system has been a major project that will cross over fiscal years. FY25 goals also include production of an updated website for the agency, a new password management solution that can be managed in-house, new spam and anti-virus software, and Magical software (to be used by DDA and DDR) to standardize entry of service coordination data for consistency, auditing and billing purposes. Tony Sokolic made a motion to approve the FY25 Technology plan as presented. Randy Starkey seconded. Motion carried.
- f. **Workers Comp Insurance Renewal** – The Worker's Compensation Insurance policy renews annually July 1st each year. The organization experienced an increase in claims this past year, so a rate increase was anticipated. The renewal is a 14% increase over the previous year going from \$8,800 to \$10,100. This increase was planned for in the FY25 budget. It was noted that DD Advocates is still lower than others in the industry with an experience rate of .9 and the norm in the industry is 1.0. Cara Pellerin made a motion to approve renewing with Missouri Employers Mutual for the organization's workers comp insurance at \$10,100. Tony Sokolic seconded. Motion carried.

VII. APPROVAL OF REQUISITION – The July 2024 requisition was presented for approval. The requisition is based upon the FY25 Budget. Randy Starkey made a motion to approve the July 2024 requisition as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT – There were no comments from the public.

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD – Amie Merz noted that there was a lot of positive information presented at the meeting tonight.

X. ADJOURN – Being no further business, Cara Pellerin made a motion to adjourn the regular session at 7:58 p.m. Tony Sokolic seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,


Randy Starkey, Secretary