

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADVOCATES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
October 27, 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: Dr. Marsha Mertens, Chairperson; Scott Brothers, Treasurer; Randy Starkey, Secretary; Elizabeth Spaugh, Director; Tony Sokolic, Director; Danielle Moskop, Director; Jon Casey, Director; Cara Pellerin, Director; Stacey Ismail, Executive Director DD Advocates; Dave Weiler, Director of Administration DD Advocates; Dawn Warner, Executive Assistant DD Advocates.

ABSENT: Amie Merz, Vice-Chairperson

PUBLIC PRESENT: Emily Brouk, Jeff Niehaus, Nathan Patton and Katrina Loveless - DD Advocates; Scott Shelton - Lafayette Jeffco; Annette Kendrick - Pony Bird; Jodi Woessner - Pathways to Independence; Rachel Svejkowski - FACT; J. Freeman

- I. OPEN and INTRODUCTIONS** – Dr. Marsha Mertens opened and led the monthly 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** – Randy Starkey read the Mission Statement.
- III. MISSION MOMENT** - Katrina Loveless, DDA Service Coordinator, shared about an individual on her caseload. His situation is the most challenging she has had since she started with the agency. However, it has turned out to be a very positive mission moment. He is 20 years old with several significant diagnoses, including Juvenile Huntington’s Disease and Autism. The young man’s mom passed away, his father is disabled with Huntington’s, so his grandfather was his primary caregiver. As his skills declined and his health became more compromised, Katrina sought a Medicaid comprehensive waiver for him to receive residential services. However, delays due to the Medicaid revalidation process, assigning him to the wrong “type” of Medicaid, and the DMH waitlist that started on July 1, 2025 complicated matters. Stacey and Emily advocated with DMH to see this situation as a crisis as his hospitalizations kept increasing and his grandfather could no longer care for him. Katrina kept submitting updated info to DMH as his condition worsened and thankfully he was awarded a crisis waiver as soon as the waitlist was lifted in March due to supplemental funding from the Legislature. A local provider agreed to serve him, however, two weeks before his move they declined due to his health status. A nursing home in Union that supposedly specialized in Huntington’s care agreed to take him, however, within 5 weeks he was admitted back to the hospital due to severe bed sores. Katrina diligently kept trying to find a place to care for him and MO Mentor stepped up to serve him. With much planning, he was able to move to a home with roommates on August 25 of this year. There have been a few ups and downs, however, he is now speaking a little and interacting more. He has been able, for the first time in a long time, to get out of his bed and spend more time in a chair. He shared that he wanted to go to the zoo to see the monkeys and elephants and the Board was treated to a great picture of him doing just that!
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – The meeting minutes from September 22, 2025, were presented for approval. Tony Sokolic made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 22, 2025, as presented. Jon Casey seconded. Motion carried and minutes approved.

V. REPORTS

a. Financial Report

- The September report represents 25% of the fiscal year. Service Coordination revenue is slightly better than plan. The building rents line looks unusual at 50%, however this is due to only budgeting for part of the year in anticipation of building ownership transfers that did not occur according to plan. In-Kind rental line was not budgeted for the year but is still being offset by donated rent as in previous years. These transactions will stop once the workshop building transfer is completed. Under operating expenses, insurance, repairs and maintenance, and depreciation is above plan. This is also due to the timing of the building transfers and DDA still being landlord. Promise Community Homes (PCH) has spent their budget on the purchase of a new home on 8/4. This was last years budgeted home that did not close until after the start of the new fiscal year. They are still working to purchase a home this year as well. Total expenses are just slightly over plan at this time.
- On the Financial Position page under the operating account there is \$2M dollars being “swept” daily earning 2.1% through September and will begin earning 2.9% in October. The change in net assets is due to the transfer of the Pomme Apts to Pony Bird.
- Details of checks written shows a pretty routine September. A large repairs and maintenance item noted was a payment to Reinhold Electric. This was for generator work needed at the Pomes on the backup generators prior to the building transfer.

Tony Sokolic made a motion to approve the September Financial Report as presented. Randy Starkey seconded. Motion carried.

b. Service Coordination Report – Jeff Niehaus, Assistant Director of Service Coordination, shared the following information:

- **Client Tally Report** – In September there were 9 new individuals, 7 discharged for a net growth of 2. Currently DDA is serving 1,167 individuals. 786 through Medicaid targeted case management (TCM) and 381 through the Non-Medicaid Resource Specialist (RS).
- **Personnel** – Since the last board meeting there was one part-time employee resignation whose last day with DDA will be 11/10. Three service coordinators have been hired recently. One to replace a vacancy and two for caseload growth.
- **Logging** – The September monthly team average was 74.8% with a YTD average of 78.2%
- **SNF Report** – This is an annual report on individuals served who are in a skilled nursing facility. Currently DDA serves 6 individuals in this situation. One recently passed away and a couple others should be moving soon.
- **DMH Update** –
 - The Columbus Audit was completed September 22-24th. Overall, the team did very well.
 - DMH is currently piloting an electronic intake application and a new electronic Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP). We hope the electronic intake will improve that process. A copy of the online PCSP was requested but has not been provided as of yet. DDA wants to see it to compare to the one we built in SETWorks.
 - The MACDDS Conference was held in October. 6 DDA staff attended. Lots of great information was brought back to be shared with the full team.
- **SETWorks Updates** – Setworks AI is a new feature they are launching. This will be implemented to assist with log notes, QA and other associated tasks. DDA Service Coordination leadership members continue to participate in the monthly SW webinars.

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

- **Sunnyhill Food Drive:** Sunnyhill is leading a food drive to benefit individuals with I/DD in the county who will not receive SNAP benefits. DDA is a drop off location for this. DDA is packing up items for individuals served by our organization and all other items will be picked up by Sunnyhill on 11/19 for distribution to others.
- **Lafayette Industries:** Stacey attended the Lafayette annual donor and volunteer recognition banquet on October 18. At the event, Rob Libera announced his retirement that is effective in

December and Stacey Elster has been named as his replacement. DDA was also presented an award at the event - Champion for Disability Employment. A lot of good conversation about all the great things happening in Jefferson County.

- **Legislative Update:** There is a legislative coffee on Monday, November 3 at 9 a.m. at the Sunnyhill Camp in Dittmer. Stacey emailed the flyer which includes a link for registration and asked that anyone planning to attend use the link to register for the event. Rep. Renee Reuter is the only legislator confirmed attending at this time. Additional emails were sent with information on proposed tax legislation.
- **DMH Update:** DDA is receiving new individuals of all ages with Medicaid. Approximately 28 to 30, 15–18 year-olds, will be transferred in increments of 5 per week. After a meeting last week with DMH it is anticipated that all of Jefferson County will eventually come to DDA.
- **Property Updates:** The Pomme Apartments closed on October 6th. Prior to that closing, there was a water main break at Pomme 2. DDA and Pony Bird met with the city of Arnold on remediation and Pony Bird is satisfied with the plan. The other properties, Lafayette Jeffco and the Plass campus will be discussed during closed session tonight.
- **Employee Appreciation Week:** It was a very fun week and Dawn Warner is responsible for all the planning and coordination. Several employees were recognized for years of service. Emily Brouk was recognized for 20 years with DDA. Elizabeth and Luke Spaugh joined the team for lunch on Friday. Many of the staff participated in Boxed in Escape rooms that afternoon as a team building exercise.
- **MACDDS Conference:** Six staff attended the MACDDS conference. There were many sessions around AI. DDA will be working on adding SETWorks AI to enhance many tasks done by the team. Stacey and Emily will be attending the Starling Conference in November in Branson. The Starling Conference is focused on leadership development.
- **Kades's Playground Expansion:** Stacey will be attending an informational meeting regarding Kade's playground (Herculaneum) expansion on November 1 at Main & Mill in Festus and will bring information to the next Board meeting. This is the only fully accessible playground in Jefferson County. When Kade's was originally built, the Board invested \$50,000. It is named after Josh Bauman's (prior board member/chair) son Kade, who had multiple disabilities and passed away at the age of 3 1/2.
- **Board Holiday Dinner:** We are working on plans for a dinner. If you haven't completed the doodle poll about dates, please do so. December 10th is currently looking like the best date.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- Public Awareness Committee:** A Board Public Awareness Committee meeting was held on October 2nd. The notes from the meeting were in the packet for review. Danielle Moskop is the Chair of the committee and will report to the Board going forward. Several ideas were given on how to enhance the materials produced by the organization. Donna Pullium, DDA's Intake and Community Specialist, provided great feedback for the committee. The agency brochure will be the first item to be updated.
- Insurance Coverage Annual Review:** Many of the organization's insurance policies are due to renew October 31st. An overview of coverages was provided in the packet. Property (Buildings and Personal Property) coverages do not include the Pomme Apartments which accounts for the decrease. Once the workshop property transfers and Plass campus is sold, DDA will receive a credit for those coverages. Liability umbrella is \$3M in coverage. DDA received a 19% increase on this. Dave is pushing back on that and will update the Board when he has more information. \$71,504 was budgeted for this expense, however it is \$93,677. This will get back in line once building transfers occur. Scott Brothers made a motion to renew the insurance coverages as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.
- Satisfaction Survey Results:** The results of the survey were presented. The survey was left open longer than originally planned as the team was doing a push to try and receive 300 responses. 236 responses were received from the 1,170 which were mailed out, resulting in a 20% return rate. This return is comparable to 2024. The timing of sending the survey changed this year from January to June. This is partly due to the timing of the Missouri and National Core Indicator data that it is compared to. This is the first year with the Resource Specialist service. Next year DDA will consider sending two surveys out - one for TCM and one for RS services, to better understand the satisfaction with the 2 different models. The Board was asked for

feedback about the survey questions and how to improve the return rate. They indicated that the questions seem clear and easy to answer and the use of a text reminder service, QR code, and possibly entering people to win something if they return it were all ideas generated. Some other suggestions about the data were:

- Adding the percentage of return and breakdown of how the survey was completed/returned to first page
- If people say their home is not accessible, ask them to share their name so we can better assist them
- Need to think more about what we can do with the data about the community not being accessible
- Need to prioritize unmet needs based on the number of times it was mentioned – rank

One response noted needing help paying their electric bill. Danielle Moskop shared that Ameren has a program to assist with that. Info can be found on the resource page of the Ameren website. This will be shared with the team.

- d. **FY25 Performance Measurement and Management Plan (PMMP) Annual Review:** This is the 4th year for this particular plan, which allows for great comparative data. CARF made a recommendation that we add more information on the reliability and validity of the data as an introduction and suggested scaling the plan back a bit to not be so ambitious. Many of the indicators on the PMMP were selected to align with items from the annual DMH audit, however, since the Columbus Group has started doing these on behalf of DMH, it does not line up as well as it did. Additionally, we have struggled to get even 20 responses to our provider satisfaction survey, so we have stopped doing it. We still would really like to get this feedback from our providers so it was suggested to try a text option or possibly incorporate into the ERA portal. The year over year data comparisons for turnover rate and logging are trending in the directions we would like to see and demonstrate data that supports initiatives in these areas. The assistive technology/remote supports and employment data are difficult to obtain and need to be re-worked. Overall, a plan reset is needed and will be developed for 2026.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Policy Approval – Suicide Awareness & Prevention** – Amie Merz assisted Stacey with refining the language for this policy. This is also in response to a recommendation from CARF. DDA has an Employee Assistance Plan which is embedded in the health insurance. It was suggested by Amie that we should compare an embedded EAP with a stand-alone EAP provider to determine if a more robust plan is needed. She also mentioned that the company she works for contracts with several other SB40 Boards. We will refer this topic to the agency Benefits Committee for review and discussion. Scott Brothers made a motion to approve the Suicide Awareness and Prevention Policy as presented. Elizabeth Spaugh seconded. Motion carried.

- VIII. **APPROVAL OF REQUISITION** – The Requisition for November 2025 was presented for approval. This requisition is based upon the FY26 budget. Scott Brothers made a motion to approve the November 2025 requisition as presented. Cara Pellerin seconded. Motion carried.

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

- X. **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD** – Elizabeth Spaugh applauded the great work that Katrina, Emily and Stacey did for the young man presented during the mission moment.

- XI. **CLOSED SESSION – Missouri Sunshine Law RsMO610.021 (2) Real Estate** – Tony Sokolic made a motion to go into Closed Session at 7:58pm pursuant to Missouri Sunshine Law RsMO610.021 (2) Real Estate. Jon Casey seconded. Marsha Mertens called for a roll call vote to go into Closed Session. Randy Starkey, yes; Danielle Moskop, yes; Tony Sokolic, yes; Elizabeth Spaugh, yes; Cara Pellerin, yes; Jon Casey, yes; Scott Brothers, yes; Amie Merz, absent; Marsha Mertens, yes. Motion carried.

- XII. **ADJOURN** – Being no further business, Cara Pellerin made a motion to adjourn the regular session at 8:39 pm. Scott Brothers seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Starkey, Secretary

