



Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE)

Coordinating Committee (CC) Meeting | December 20, 2024, 1:00-3:00 pm

Minutes:

1:00: Welcome and housekeeping – *Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair*

Meeting called to order by Damiana at 1:16pm. Welcomed and wished happy holidays to all. Standard housekeeping items.

1:05: Roll call – *Elizabeth Gordon, GCDE Executive Director*

Members present: Damiana Harper (outgoing GCDE Chair), Cullynn Foxlee (Member-At-Large [MAL], Marsha Cutting (Community Outreach [CO] Chair), and Patti Dailey-Shives (Legislative [Leg.] Chair).

Staff present: Elizabeth Gordon (Executive Director), Emily Heike (Program Specialist), and Elaine Stefanowicz (Program Coordinator)

Absent: Yvonne Bussler-White (Awards chair/incoming GCDE Chair), Megan Mason-Todd (departing Membership Chair), Kristin DiBiase (Youth Leadership Forum Chair), and Steve Lewis (Accessible Communities [AC] Chair)

Quorum: 5 (not met, will share info and move forward as possible today, and reschedule)

1:10: Comings and goings – *Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair*

Boards & Commissions appointed Yvonne Bussler-White as the new GCDE chairperson for 2025-2026 on 12/19/2024. Patti Dailey-Shives has joined Coordinating Committee (CC) as chair of the Legislative Subcommittee as of last week, replacing Amy Cloud. Patti needs a list of people on the subcommittee to see if they're interested in being Vice-Chair and would be the best fit for the subcommittee. Elaine will email that to her. We don't currently have a chair for Membership. We need to think about filling it. Matt Nash and Megan Mason-Todd both left the committee. Damiana suggested having CC members serve as members of Membership subcommittee in 2025, for the 2026 appointments. She will talk about it with Yvonne. The budget freeze may not impact things, but the new administration might. It is a time-consuming recruiting process during the Fall, so we might have to set aside other work to complete it and prepare for a virtual New Member Orientation. Clarence Eskridge also resigned from GCDE and declined an exit interview.

1:15: 2025 Members at Large – *Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair*

We didn't have a quorum, so we couldn't vote on MALs. Damiana suggested we consider appointing the three candidates with the most votes at the rescheduled CC meeting. Cullynn accepted their nomination and is also interested in the AC Vice-Chair position.

1:25: **Statewide budget spending restrictions—overview and GCDE impacts** – Elizabeth Gordon, GCDE Executive Director

Discuss: Impact of current budget freeze for GCDE. How to plan our work going forward for this year.

Elizabeth shared a [PowerPoint](#) on the budget freeze, and how it affects each subcommittee, and our work overall. She is waiting to schedule a meeting on the subject with the Governor's office, as well. The hiring, travel, equipment, and contracting freezes will impact staff and members. An end date has not been determined.

Question from Marsha: does AC receive special funding from parking tickets?

Answer from Elizabeth: Yes, but we would still have to get an exception for writing a contract over \$10,000. We have already obligated funds for this year (from last year's contracts).

For Legislative: Virtual testimony is encouraged to continue due to cost savings (per Patti).

1:30: **Discussion on work over the next year within the budget limitations** – Facilitated by Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair, and discussion with all members

Marsha is open to holding CO as a hybrid event, with strong support from local partners.

GCDE staff has many other bodies of work to focus on with less staffing, so conversations will need to be had. We do work in advising state agencies, serving as a disability advocate, in disability leadership, and on statewide initiatives. We might consider pausing on some work until we get back to full staffing capacity (we will resume the recruitment for the open position once the freeze ends).

We cannot make any decisions at this time due to the lack of quorum and chair participation.

2:45: **Recap and next steps** – Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair

The meeting will need to be rescheduled for January due to lack of attendance. We will vote on MALs at that time (we have candidates). Some targeted dates include January 10th or 17th (these worked for those present), pending session work starting on the 13th. We will need to discuss with Yvonne prior to scheduling (1/24). The 2025 General Membership [GM] meeting dates haven't been set yet, but CC should meet again before the first GM meeting of the year (2/28). We can likely proceed with scheduling now those that Yvonne has been appointed as Chair (proposed). Elaine will email Patti the list of Leg. subcommittee members to see about appointing a Vice-Chair - Nancy has accepted (the freeze may not impact that work). Cullyn has accepted the AC Vice-Chair position (the freeze will impact that work). Damiana will discuss the Membership chair role and responsibilities with Yvonne. Elizabeth will discuss the budget freeze with the Governor's office. Marsha is open to holding CO as a hybrid event. Further discussion will need to be had about the impact of reduced staffing, until recruitment can resume when the freeze ends.

3:00: **Adjourn.** Meeting adjourned early at 2pm due to lack of quorum. Damiana was thanked for her service and is willing to help Yvonne – she will still be around. She will miss us, and us, her. She encouraged us to carry the work forward and has enjoyed serving on GCDE and as a mentor.