



STATE OF WASHINGTON

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT

Employment Security Department ■ P.O. Box 9046 ■ MS: 6000 ■ Olympia, Washington ■ 98507-9046

Olympia (360) 890-3778 ■ Toll Free Fax 844-935-3531

GCDE Coordinating Committee Meeting

Friday, February 10, 2023

9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Zoom

Minutes

9:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. – Welcome, Housekeeping, and Opening Remarks: Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair

WELCOME: *Damiana said she was excited to have the first Coordinating Committee meeting in this new shorter, more frequent format, and asked Elaine to take roll call.*

ROLL CALL: *Present were Elaine Stefanowicz, Damiana Harper, Ryan Bondroff, Emily Heike, Marsha Cutting, Clarence Eskridge, Warren Weissman, Megan Mason-Todd, Elizabeth Gordon, Cullynn Foxlee, and Yvonne Bussler-White. Absent were Kristin DiBiase (excused – sick), Amy Cloud (excused – conflicting work meeting), and Candace Dickson.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *Damiana asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the last meeting on 12/2, and hearing none, the minutes were approved as written.*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *Damiana asked if there were any additions to the agenda for today, and hearing none, it was approved as written (and folks were reminded that Emily sent the link to the meeting materials on Friday).*

HOUSEKEEPING: *Damiana quickly reviewed housekeeping items and asked people to please raise their hand prior to making comment, state their name before speaking, and talk slowly and 1 at a time for the interpreters and CART captioner.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS: *Damiana briefly reviewed announcements and welcomed Marsha to the Coordinating Committee as Community Outreach Chair which is exciting (Andy Song will be her Vice-Chair and will attend these meetings in the future if Marsha is unavailable), and confirmed that Yvonne had attended her first Coordinating Committee meeting as Awards Chair in December. Hearing no other announcements, Damiana moved to the next agenda item.*

9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. – New Member Orientation and Mentorship Discussion: Megan Mason-Todd, Membership Chair and Elaine Stefanowicz, GCDE Staff

Megan let everyone know that the Governor's Boards and Commissions (B&C) office has not yet approved GCDE's recommendations for new member appointments. They have let Elaine and Elizabeth know that there was likely going to be a delay, but that they hoped to have them appointed in the next week or so.



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Vote: The decision has been made to move the New Member Orientation (NMO) again to be held on 3/15, and Megan reminded everyone that we would like the Chairs to be involved if possible, but can cover subcommittee reports on their behalf if needed. Further discussion needs to be had regarding the time due to another Accessible Communities Subcommittee meeting that afternoon. More info to come.

None opposed. Motion approved to change the date. Time to be determined offline.

Elizabeth shared that she has met with the B&C office twice, and learned that the Governor was out of country in December (which is typically when appointments are made), and reminded everyone that we are in the midst of a busy legislative session, so there are various factors likely contributing to the delay. There are also a lot of other Boards and Commissions. She mentioned that she did walk through the recommendations with B&C, and they had no concerns, but the Governor does have the authority to make decisions otherwise (which he has sometimes done in the past).

Action item: Elaine and Megan will confirm the time for the rescheduled NMO meeting on 3/15 offline, and Elaine will send a revised invite to the team and rearrange CART. Ryan will rearrange interpreters. Emily will revise meeting material due date reminders for staff.

The mentorship program was discussed. Damiana shared that in talking to current members, they have expressed a desire for more mentorship opportunities. GCDE does currently have a mentorship program, but the way it is structured, it depends on the mentor and mentee to actively participate. This means that the experience can differ from one person to the next depending on the frequency of meetings they decide upon, the level of difficulty or ease they have in scheduling & keeping appointments with busy schedules, or even having been assigned a mentor in the first place etc.

Vote: It was suggested that we try to standardize or formalize the process more (even going so far as to write it down, if possible, to create a guide of expectations available for reference including possible discussion topics such as answering any questions, an introduction to the committee and explanation about subcommittee meetings, clarifying roles etc.) The group agree that this was a good idea due to the possibility that folks may not retain all of the information from NMO. This would mean setting expectations, such as the suggested frequency of meetings during the first 6 months or year (such as at least 1-2 30- or 60-minute check-ins monthly). It was noted that we should be reiterating to new members that we recognize that everyone has something to contribute. Taking it a step further, it was suggested that we could consider creating a graphical representation of the mentorship process.

None opposed. Motion approved to try to formalize, document, and standardize the mentorship process. We will also create a list or database of all members skills or talents that they bring to the committee.



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Action item: Efforts will be made to standardize and document the mentorship process, so it is more formal, to include a graphic. Cullynn will work with Megan on that. Damiana will work on the database of member talents and skills.

9:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. – Executive Director Updates: Elizabeth Gordon, GCDE Executive Director

Elizabeth recognized the folks will likely have looked at her written report by now, and just wanted to highlight a few things. The first is that she recently gave testimony before the United States Commission on Civil Rights around physical access and how it is going in WA State. She had a good time and found it interesting, and had never done this before, but attended with other panel members such as the ADA coordinator from DOT and the Director of the Mobility Initiative from DRW. She thought it was a great conversation and learned a lot, as well as some pointers for next time, if we are ever invited back.

Otherwise, it has been a busy legislative session, and included in the packet is the latest copy of the spreadsheet with Tier 1 and Tier 2 bills. Tier 1 directly affects people with disabilities, and Tier 2 are broader in their impact. Currently, there are about 64 Tier 1 bills, and 74 Tier 2 bills. There are a number of complex issues around housing and special education funding that are happening. Of course, NAUWU is our highest priority. It had a hearing in the House last week. Representative Farivar, formerly of DRW, is the primary sponsor and there are a number of others. It currently has bipartisan support in both the Senate and the House, so that is positive. We are hopeful it will move forward. The deciding vote will be today. From there, amendments will be written in to improve it.

There are also several bills of interest around caregiving and in-home care, such as 1694, and around behavioral health or healthcare otherwise, such as changes to the CNA requirements in hopes of getting more of those positions into the workforce. Elizabeth paused for questions at this time.

A question was posed about HB 1760. Elizabeth is still getting up to date on that, but had some concerns, so she will go to the legislative site and look again as it appeared to limit the ability to file a civil complaint on access, which would be concerning were it to be the case. While it may be intended to stop 'frivolous' lawsuits, it would mean the only remedy under the ADA for corrective action would be lawsuits, meaning a complaint and ruling would have to be made first. So, it is concerning overall and may not be the right way to go about it.

Action item: Aside from looking further into HB 1760, Elizabeth will also share the link to the NAUWU hearing ahead of time via email so that folks can watch the live testimony on TWV.

9:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. – Introduction to Rethinking GCDE Discussion: Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair

Damiana shared that she has talked with all members aside from a couple people, and some trends have come up in almost all of the discussions, so she wanted to get folks thoughts on how we might improve. A request was made for written reports as always, however, there are some questions on the agenda



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that address topics otherwise. After the break, we will move to subcommittee reports, with the goal of focusing on these questions instead. If there are items in the written report that are important or coincide, we can go from there, but the most efficient and effective use of our time will likely be to focus on these questions instead of reiterating what was already provided in the written reports.

Among the trends Damiana spoke of earlier in her conversations with members, some came up more often than others. More in-person meetings, or at least hybrid has come up, which of course we have been doing less of since the pandemic. We used to offer a speakerphone option at the GM meetings, but it was not very effective (participation in discussion was difficult due to the distance). Since the pandemic, our option has been virtual. However, there has been some effectiveness lost this way, despite possible gains in folks not having to travel to meetings or take time off of their full-time jobs since we have more members who are actively employed now – so we will need to look into a more effective option. While this will be a priority, the change won't necessarily happen anytime soon, but we can still conduct some research to decide how to move forward.

Aside from that, legislative workgroup is another topic that has come up frequently. We have heard from many folks that they came onto GCDE believing that they would be able to have a larger impact in this area and be able to effect change or that we have a direct line to the Governor initially, which as we know is not the case. However, there may still be places where we can be more effective, and exist more connection points in our work (particularly when it comes to intersecting with the legislative workgroup). We have also been discussing the format, and the possibility of changing it into a subcommittee, but that has its pitfalls as well (mainly staff bandwidth). We can open discussion during this meeting on how to accomplish more within the restrictions of staff time and subcommittee status (subcommittees typically have a larger time requirement, and more expectations or requirements than a workgroup, paperwork, scheduling, as well as certain costs covered, more formality, a workplan, appointed members etc.)

Discussion was also had about possibly revisiting the structure of GCDE. There are pros and cons to the current structure. For example, a couple of our projects are more geared toward annual (once per year) events – Awards and YLF. This means that there is typically a lot of action leading up to the events, but also an "off-season," typically directly after each event concludes, where a break is taken before preparation begins for the next year's event. A thought was posed about whether we could consider combining these two efforts in some manner, so that they occur more spread out over the year, and not as close to one another.

It was also shared that, not having followed legislation before, that was a bit of a learning curve for some folks in terms of the process and the various cutoffs – so hopefully the group will be better able to plan for next year now that they've been through it once with the new leadership of the workgroup and be more effective in their partnerships.



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It was noted that certain activities are written into our executive order, so that is also something to be cognizant of as we are planning.

Back to Clarence's comment about combining efforts on YLF and Awards, it was clarified that the intent was not to eliminate anything, hold the events simultaneously, or combine them – with the recognition that Awards typically happens in October due to NDEAM and that lots of work goes into both events (such as work happening in between on the Awards nomination packet and brochure, etc.) – but rather to assess how we might better utilize certain aspects related to marketing or sponsorships for both events (i.e., asking the same entities to market or sponsor). Similar possibilities may exist between AC and Outreach, as well, for example. We need to think about the logistics of each and the intersectionality.

We could also potentially utilize the aforementioned database documenting members skills and passions to call upon people outside of the subcommittees when needed for specific projects Discussion was also had as to whether increasing the number of tasks on people's plates versus assigning them specific projects and following up leads to increased accountability when considering other needs people may have in their lives outside of GCDE (i.e., work, family, personal time etc.) However, we also have to be cognizant that we are not completing our subcommittee work in silos, either – or that the same people are doing all of the work across various subcommittees.

Action item: Research more effective hybrid meeting options. Continue discussion on the format of the legislative workgroup and effective partnerships that might exist within our work. Consider the current structure of the committee, and what makes the most sense, to allow us to be the most effective with the amount of time and resources that exist.

10:00 a.m. to 10:10 a.m. – BREAK (10 minutes)

10:10 a.m. to 10:55 a.m. – Subcommittee Reports/Discussion of future plans (see questions at the bottom of this agenda): Subcommittee Chairs

Membership: Did report earlier, 6 new members, NMO on 3/15 for 2 hours, assigning mentors are current goings on. Megan is new to the role, can't think of any assistance needed, work is cyclical and mostly happens in the Fall. Aside from the aspects about mentorship, new member orientation, which have already been discussed – there is not much else to report. No questions were heard. Megan will meet with Clarence about coming up with a better mechanism to advertise year-round and branch out to include more diversity. It was noted that reappointments are typically made at the same time as new appointments. There also exist some partial terms due to people filling in vacancies.

Awards: The Awards subcommittee has set a date for the event (10/6). A location has also been reserved (the Wenatchee Convention Center). We have 15 rooms held at the hotel. It is Matt and Yvonne's first



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year chairing the committee and they are excited to make some changes. They have created a workgroup on sponsorships and gotten that information sent out ASAP. We also have a group working on travel to the event. So far we have received \$14k in sponsorship only 8 weeks into the year. Some other organizations were suggested to reach out to, such as tribal VR, as well as the possibility of accepting in-kind donations. We are also discussing renaming one of the categories and potentially adding a new one, and working on edits to the brochure. So, things are moving forward, and we are excited to see where the subcommittee goes. We will need help in distributing nomination packets once ready (targeted for April). We really want more people to submit completed nominations this year. By way of tangible homework assignments, we will likely ask that people send it to 3-5 people in their network.

Accessible Communities: Are working on the fiscal year, not the calendar year, which requires some different planning. Elaine and Elizabeth will work to get a better idea of the current funding available. This may require some coordinating with ESD, but if we could generate even a simple report, it would help us prioritize depending on what funds have been used or are unallocated. We have also implemented some changes to the grant process. Currently, the incoming grants are reviewed 2x per year, instead of on a rolling basis. This allows for better comparison and prioritization. We are now considering implementing 2 different "tracks," so to speak. This would be for the larger grants and the smaller grants. We would approve the larger grants of 25-50k once per year, and the smaller grants of under 10k separately. This would allow for a more competitive process. We are also currently changing the process for reimbursement of expenses related to RA so that it is more equitable. We will also be looking to partner with the Secretary of State's office on the creation of new ACAC's in coordination with the required voter advisory committees, as the group can serve both purposes, but many counties don't have them in place yet. We also want to follow up more intentionally regarding the impacts of the grants and any measurable impacts. The subcommittee will also be seeking new members as many folks who went off the committee last year had served previously, so we will be looking to those whose skills and interests lend themselves to participation. We may be able to partner with Community Outreach to help aid in the formation of county ACAC's at locations they visit. We also want to work more closely with the counties in the development of grant proposals.

YLF/LWG: No one from the subcommittee (aside from Elaine) was present to provide reports.

CO: We have a planning meeting next Friday so we are all on the same page regarding the direction. Looking at the questions on the agenda, and to catch people up, we ended the year with a couple of things: 1) a successful outreach in Port Orchard, and 2) running into a conflict with our support of NAUWU in the legislature and the current format of our events. We invite people with disabilities to speak up at the Town Hall, but then do not intentionally involve them and their lived experience at the leadership meeting the next morning. We want to call upon them and empower them to solve the



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problems they are encountering in their own communities. There may have been reasons it was done this way in the past, but a lot of those currently on the committee have not ever seen an in-person event, and the in-person events had a different energy to them. We are not sure about the feasibility of going back to in-person events or using the same model currently. So that is where we find ourselves. We will be discussing two things in the planning meeting, 1) the different disability organizations that exist, and 2) asking people to reflect on how we can better empower people with disabilities to solve the problems they are encountering. Both will likely be necessary as we move forward, and we want to honor and pay attention to that, even though we don't quite know what it will look like yet but we have set aside some time to address it. We may want to work with AC and other disability organizations to create more of a cross-disability advocacy network so that we have a stronger and more united front. Lots to think about.

It was noted that members have a desire to focus more on employment if possible as well. It is in our name and we should celebrate those that have overcome barriers to employment and are leaders in the field or role models for our youth.

10:55 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. – Next Steps and Closing Remarks: Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair

Megan and Cullynn will have a conversation regarding the next steps of visualizing the mentorship process.

Emily and Clarence will communicate about creating the spreadsheet about members skills, interests, and abilities. Elizabeth can help with formatting the spreadsheet if needed.

Megan and Clarence will discuss ways to advertise that will allow for broader diversity on the committee.

We will connect Awards and YLF to focus on employment.

11:00 a.m. – Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting – Coordinating Committee Meeting, April 28, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Has your subcommittee started planning their 2023 activities?
2. What would be needed to make your subcommittee's activities more impactful for WA citizens with disabilities?
 - A. Activities (Are we doing the right activities?)
 - B. People (Do you have the people you need, and do they have the skills you need?)



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- C. Resources (In a perfect world, what would you need? And, with the resources available, what can you accomplish?)
- D. Partnerships (Are there other entities you could partner with to maximize resources, increase impact, and/or share burden?)
3. Are there current activities or procedures of your subcommittee that could be reduced or eliminated?
4. Are there ways other parts of GCDE could be incorporated into your subcommittee's activities?

MEETING FACILITATION RESOURCES – Not every bit of all of these apply to GCDE, but there is good information in each of them:

[12 Tips for Running the Most Effective Meetings of Your Life | Workshopper](#)

[how to run an effective meeting with volunteers - Google Search](#)

[Managing Your Volunteer Board: 3 Ways to Deepen Engagement \(galaxydigital.com\)](#)

[Be an MVP \(by Managing Volunteers Perfectly\): Volunteer Management Tips from the Pros - YouTube](#)