

Community Living Committee Minutes

April 16, 2025 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Carol Conway, Jonathan D'Angelo, Dr. Joshua Gettinger, Deb Goda, Brendon Hildreth, Mary Mac Jenkins, Dr. Charleean Mapson (Chair), Kay McMillan, Bethany Smith, Ginger Yarbrough

Members Absent: Senator Sydney Batch, Rhonda Cox, Debra Farrington, Dr. Peggy Terhune

Staff Present: Pam Dempsey, David Ingram, Irlanda Ruiz, La'Quadia Smith, Talley Wells, Shar'ron Williams, Philip Woodward

Guests Present: Wendy Boone, Dustin Chandler, Caryn Cook (ASL Interpreter), Beth Field, Sarah Ferguson (ASL Interpreter), Michelle McWilliams (Direct Support Professional), Stacy Morgan, Sarah Potter, Cheryl Powell, Devika Rao

Introduction:

Dr. Charleean Mapson led an icebreaker activity and then asked for a motion to accept the draft February 2025 minutes. Carol Conway made a motion, and Bethany Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Fiscal Update:

Shar'ron Williams provided the fiscal update. She told the committee members that they will vote the next day on continuing in-house initiatives and NCCDD's Media Relations Program initiative.

Initiative Updates:

Autism and I/DD Safety Training for First Responders

Dustin Chandler of the Interaction Advisory Group was available for a follow-up discussion to his presentation to the full Council. The committee received two question cards in response to Dustin's presentation to the full Council:

1. Olivia Rose Scott: Could an ad hoc committee be created to help towards IAG's goals and initiatives for keeping folks with IDD and other disabilities safe during law enforcement encounters?

Response: Dustin Chandler said in addition to first responder training, there is community training to help community members know how they can improve their interactions with law enforcement officers. He mentioned talking with NCCDD's Hispanic Disability Advocate Irlanda Ruiz to set up a training for the Hispanic and Latino I/DD community.

2. Yvonne Copeland, DCFW, DHHS: Offering assistance w/ plan to expand training. I started the CIT statewide training with LME/MCOs. It's a well-established system and I suggest we work w/ them to add to it. It's a 40-hr commitment by law enforcement & there are fiscal implications. Let me know if I can assist w/ leveraging the existing CIT system to add the "robust IDD" component we are rolling out.

Response: Dustin Chandler said Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) is different than the training he leads, but there are similarities. He said de-escalation is the main similarity, but he also covers four or five other topics. He said he would consider working with Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), but the training he leads is geared toward four hours of I/DD training.

Kay McMillan asked if Dustin would include people with I/DD in facilitating the training, and Dustin replied that the Interaction Advisory Group welcomes any self-advocate or parent to help because police officers getting to know self-advocates can help foster good relationships between the police and the community. Bethany Smith asked how members can get involved, and Dustin said NCCDD will notify its members of the location and time when a training is scheduled. Joshua Gettinger asked if there are some great commonalities with mental health and I/DD. Dustin noted that police officers are getting a lot of mental health training without more specific autism / I/DD training. He added that a law enforcement officer cannot interact with every human being the same way, but more specific training can help officers interact more safely with everyone. Jonathan D'Angelo pointed out the need to address the use of force; for example, people with Down syndrome may have heart conditions or hypotonia (low muscle tone). Dustin said it is important to teach proper restraint methods so as not to injure the person with I/DD and good communication skills. He also mentioned the importance of considering all options before placing a person with I/DD in jail.

Ginger Yarbrough asked if there is a way for the Interaction Advisory Group to get this training into a police academy. Dustin said getting the academy to change their curriculum can be difficult. Dustin expressed a willingness to partner with the academy or get an hour to train their students. He said he shows body camera footage and explains how an officer may have handled the incident differently. He pointed out that it is important to build a sense of community in how law enforcement officers interact with other people, and safety is always the primary goal.

Meet The Need NC

Beth Field of the Leadership Alliance for Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LAND) joined virtually along with Cheryl Powell, a person with I/DD, and provided an update on this initiative with a PowerPoint presentation and a video featuring a Medicaid success story involving a person with I/DD. Beth shared the Work Plan goals for Year 4 of this initiative and discussed the I/DD Legislative Caucus Listening Session that occurred at the North Carolina General Assembly with 17 speakers in Raleigh on March 26th. Beth

pointed out that the North Carolina Senate budget did not have the funding that people with I/DD need, but there is still a hope that the North Carolina House of Representatives budget will have this funding. Beth talked about hand-delivering 150 letters to members of the General Assembly at the end of February. She mentioned media placements, with 13 stories placed as a result of the event, including WUNC, the front page of the digital *News & Observer*, the *Cardinal & Pine*, and the *Carolina Journal*. Beth said social media is the next place where the initiative will work to activate for grassroots advocacy. Beth thanked NCCDD for its support, and Cheryl pointed out that it felt as if this initiative had moved the needle on addressing the issues it has worked on.

Future Investment Discussion:

Division of State Health Service Regulation

Wendy Boone from the North Carolina Division of State Health Service Regulation (DHSR) joined the meeting virtually in place of Robin Sulfridge, who was unable to attend. Ginger Yarbough explained that she invited DHSR to send a representative to this meeting to help NCCDD try to figure out the housing situation for people with I/DD. Wendy said the DHSR currently offers 31 services in licensing different types of facilities from residential to day programs. She said the DHSR offers a monthly training for providers called “Connect the Dots.” Wendy mentioned housing rules that go back to 1996 and are part of North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) Section 27-G. She said once approval is given to a structure, the request comes back to the licensure training team. Carol Conway said parents of individuals with I/DD have a difficult time understanding the legal issues surrounding setting up housing for people with I/DD, and she suggested that the division communicate its rules to the general public. Wendy said if a residence is serving more than one adult with I/DD, then it needs to be licensed. Joshua Gettinger asked how many facilities has DHSR actually licensed, and Wendy said approximately 3,200 facilities. Kay McMillan asked if DHSR talks to people with I/DD to ask if they want to live in a certain place, but Wendy replied no and pointed out that the Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) takes on this responsibility. Carol Conway said she hopes to have a deeper conversation with Wendy, Robin, and Stacy Silvia to discuss this issue and to ask some questions. Philip Woodward said he will e-mail the PowerPoint to the members.

Current Initiatives and Future Investments

Carol Conway said she would like to have time to brainstorm about not just housing but also four additional topics. The committee members agreed to have a special meeting the way the committee did in July 2023 to take the time to discuss these items.

Wrap Up:

Charlrean Mapson made a motion to adjourn, and Carol Conways seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.