



## **Legislative & Public Policy Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

June 5, 2017

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

DD Council Office

1120 Lincoln St Ste 706

Denver, CO 80203

Present: Donna Downing, Community Member, Michael Hoover, Community Member, Jessica Howard, Council Member, Bob Lawhead, Staff Liaison, Marcia Tewell, Executive Director, Anuska Ullal, Council Member, Hal Wright, Council Member

Absent: Claire Dickson, Council Member, Barb Ramsey, Council Member, Shannon Secret, Council Member.

1. Welcome, Introductions and What We Need to Accomplish Today – The meeting was called to order at approximately 11:00 by Bob Lawhead, acting in Ed George's absence. Committee members introduced themselves.
2. Personal Passions – Donna expressed her support for state efforts to "Save Medicaid" from the significant cuts being proposed by current federal healthcare reform proposals. She and Michael also expressed concerns for the minimal supports offered to students in special education programs to actively participate in their annual Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meetings.
3. Minutes Approval for April 3, 2017, April 17, 2017 & May 1, 2017 – The Committee had reviewed the previously distributed meeting minutes. A motion was made and seconded for approval of the minutes for all three previous Legislative and Public Policy Committee meetings. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Legislative session update – Bob provided the Committee with a document from the Arc of Colorado, describing the results of the 2017 session. The conflict-free case management bill, requiring that local Community Centered Boards separate the case management function from service provision was one highlight, as was the bill banning prone restraint in Colorado schools. The Council worked with other advocates on the prone restraint bill. Another bill highlighted was the bill establishing a pilot project to implement an Office of Public Guardianship. The bill to ban school suspension and expulsion of children under the age of

seven failed. This bill, strongly supported by the Council, may be reintroduced in the future. Concern was expressed of the lack of out of home placement for young children who, because of complex support needs may not be able to safely remain in the family home. This represents a potential future topic for legislation. Finally, the concern was expressed that Colorado has lost its reputation as a "highly progressive state in its approach to services for people with IDD." Restrictive "structural funding limitations" were seen as the issue.

5. Waiver Redesign update – Bob has been attending HCPF-sponsored Waiver Implementation Council (WIC) meetings as a guest to provide input to the HCBS Waiver–redesign process. Concerns include recommended service definitions that do not explicitly support inclusion through the building of relationships between service recipients and community members. An additional issue expressed by some families has been that people presently accessing the HCBS-DD Waiver will lose resources once the HCBS-DD and HCBS-SLS Waiver programs are consolidated. The issue of how residential services will be funded and their impact of people served is another related concern expressed by WIC members. The new combined Waiver program application is projected to be submitted at the first of 2018 but there is the potential that this will be pushed back to deal with unresolved issues
6. Pending federal legislation update – The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Education and Reform Act (HR 620) is opposed by the American Association for People with Disabilities (AAPD) and other advocates because it significantly weakens the ADA. It requires people with disabilities who encounter an access barrier to send a legally notification technical letter to a business, provides the business with 60 days to acknowledge there is a problem and then another 120 days to begin to fix the issue. Proponents say the change to the ADA is necessary to prevent unfair monetary damage awards but the ADA does not provide for monetary awards. AAPD points out that no other group is required to wait 180 days to exercise their civil rights! Bob presented a draft action alert for consideration by the Committee. No action was taken.

The American Health Care Act (AHCA), the House version of federal healthcare reform has a significant negative impact on Medicaid over time by reducing the regular increases designed to keep up with rising health care costs. It is estimated that it will result in a \$880 billion decrease in Medicaid funding over the next decade. Bob is working with other advocates to attend a meeting with Senator Gardner's Denver Regional Director, Annie Larson, on June 16<sup>th</sup>. We will present a one-page educational description of the negative impact of ACHA on people with disabilities (developed by the Council in collaboration with the Arc of Colorado, the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition, Disability Law Colorado, the National Federation of the Blind and Alliance) and include personal stories about the positive impact of Medicaid on the lives of people with disabilities. The Council plans to send out action alerts to our mailing list as appropriate and plans to reach out to disability-related organizations throughout Colorado to sign on to the AHCA educational document.

7. Summer schedule for the Committee – The Committee plans to meet monthly for the period between legislative sessions.
8. Discussion items from the Committee – No further items were discussed by the Committee.
9. Adjournment – Adjournment occurred at approximately 1:00 PM.