

**Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.**

**Full Council Meeting Minutes**

**May 14-16, 2025**

**In Person**

**Wednesday, May 14, 2025- Pre-Council Meeting**

**Council Members Present:** Eddie Hall, Yolanda Herrera, Lauren Modawell, Enrique Escallon, Charlotte Temple, Elly Hagen, Arizona Jenkins, Michael Sayih, Christina Cordova

**Council Members Absent:** Denise Anderson, Danielle McGill, Kali Wilson, Susan Nipper (APD), Caitlyn Clibbon (DRF), Mirna Diaz (VR), Beth Boone (FCIC), Dennis Hart, Meagan Owens (AHCA), Andrea Gary (DOH), Jean Sherman (Mailman Center), Sarah Goldman, Carla Mercer, Kira Houge (Elder Affairs), Patricia Bodiford (DOE), Victoria Zepp

**Staff Present:** Valerie Breen, Susan Kabot, Kristin Vandagriff, Margaret Hooper, Monica Moye, Chris Reeve, Jennifer Chung, Kristen Conlin, Jamie Mayersohn

**Guests:** Personal care staff

**I. Introduction/Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Eddie Hall at 6:34 p.m. Chair Hall welcomed Council members and noted that the purpose of this meeting was to prepare members for the next two days of meetings.

**II. Review and Discussion**

Breen reviewed the Council book with members with a goal of familiarizing members with the content to be covered over the 2-day meeting. It was noted that new standing committee processes were put in place with standing committees now meeting virtually, which allows reports to be provided with recommendations, enabling the full Council to discuss and adopt decisions.

Hall noted that a member brought an idea to leadership's attention to begin a Council Member Mentor Program. It was noted that the mentor program would need to be in line with Sunshine rules, so having a presentation about what Sunshine is and how to follow the guidelines would need to be done prior to any mentor assignments.

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

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**Full Council Meeting Minutes**  
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**Thursday, May 15, 2025**

**Council Members Present:** Eddie Hall, Chair; Yolanda Herrera; Lauren Modawell; Enrique Escallon; Michael Sayih; Charlotte Temple; Arizona Jenkins; Denise Anderson; Elly Hagen, Danielle McGill; Kali Wilson; Christina Cordova; Dennis Hart; Susan Nipper (APD); Caitlyn Clibbon (DRF); Mirna Diaz (VR); Beth Boone (FCIC); Meagan Owens (AHCA); Andrea Gary (DOH); Jean Sherman (Mailman Center)

**Council Members Absent:** Victoria Zepp; Carla Mercer; Patricia Bodiford (DOE); Sarah Goldman; Kira Houge (Elder Affairs)

**Staff Present:** Valerie Breen; Susan Kabot; Kristin Vandagriff; Margaret Hooper; Monica Moye; Chris Reeve; Jennifer Chung; Kristen Conlin; Jamie Mayersohn

**Guests:** Personal care staff

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall at 9:35 a.m. Hall welcomed Council members and instructed Breen to conduct roll call. Quorum was established.

**I. Adoption of Agenda**

Action Taken: Escallon made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Hart seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**II. Adoption of Minutes**

Nipper made a motion to adopt January 2025 minutes as presented. Escallon seconded. Sherman noted that she was not listed in January 2025 minutes. Hart made a motion to adopt January 2025 minutes with the correction. Escallon seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**III. State and Sister Agency Reports**

Reports were provided by the following:

- Susan Nipper from Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
- Meagan Owens from Agency for Healthcare Administration.
- Mirna Diaz from Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Andrea Gary from Department of Health- Children's Medical Services.
- Jean Sherman from University of Miami- Mailman Center.
- Beth Boone from University of South Florida- Florida Center for Inclusive Communities.
- Caitlyn Clibbon from Disability Rights Florida.

#### **IV. Chair/Vice-Chair Report**

Hall noted that the FDDC Council is doing great work and is focusing on making important things happen for people in Florida. He shared that there are many concerns related to the state budget as well as the federal budget and potential cuts.

Vice Chair Escallon, thanked everyone who participated in the weekly Bylaws Task Force Meetings. He recounted on past efforts such as Project SEARCH and a second UCEDD and noted that FDDC should look at the value of its past efforts.

#### **V. Executive Director Report**

Breen shared her presentation titled, "Pivot for the Future, Pivot in the Present." She thanked Council members who participated in DD Day at the Capitol as well as thanking members for sharing their story. Breen reported that our "Out Care Matters" videos have reached 526,000+ views. She also highlighted our "Our Work Matters" podcast which consists of 6 episodes. Breen spent a large part of her presentation on educating the Council on the State of the State for funding for DD Councils based on a "leaked report" eliminating DD Act funding which had created great concern within the national DD Act network nationwide. She educated the Council on how the formula works for Council funding and provided a plan on how FDDC staff would keep providers and the Council informed. Breen reported that she is closely monitoring with the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities and other stakeholders the status of DD funding and is working internally to review current expenses and commitments with staff in preparation for potential funding changes.

#### **VI. 2025 Legislative Outcomes Report**

Margaret Hooper reported that Florida is in an extended session and reported that 1952 bills were filed – 488 bills passed first chamber – 255 bills passed both chambers.

The following bills all passed:

- SB 112 Children with Developmental Disabilities
- HB 447- Disability History and Awareness Instruction
- SB 1156- Employment of Individuals with Disabilities
- HB 711- Spectrum Alert
- HB 877- School Readiness Program
- HB 1103- Home-and Community

The following bills died:

- SB 460- Student Elopement
- HB 377- Health Insurance Coverage for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities
- SB 412- Repair of Motorized Wheelchairs
- HB 413- Swimming Safety
- SB 257- Exceptional Students and Video Cameras in Public Schools

- SB 1364- Autism Spectrum Disorder Training for Law Enforcement Officer
- HB 229- Elevator Accessibility Requirements

## **VII. Key Projects/Outcomes**

### **Goal 1: Access to Services**

Chris Reeve discussed several areas of the Mathematica project related to Access to Services (ASK)

### **Goal 2: Home- and Community-Based Services**

Sue Kabot presented on participant and family/caregiver quality instruments, including versions available in English and Spanish for “Working with Case Managers” and “Finding the Right Residential Service Provider.”

Jennifer Chung presented on the Training First Responders project. Program context was provided, with modules shown from the 6-module training.

Addressing the Behavior Therapist Shortage efforts were also discussed showing the basic framework for the 14-module manualized training.

Items coming up before September 2025 were also shared:

- Manual for the internship program for dissemination.
- More pilot data including pre and post knowledge assessments.
- Infrastructure and measures for internship and training programs.
- Evaluation checklist to determine adoptability and sustainability of training

Additionally, planning for the coming year was shared denoting the following occurring for year 5:

- Train-the-trainer training for behavioral internship and training models.
- Expansion of the internship and training curriculum to other systems (e.g., CARD, community agencies, universities).
- Identify technical college, state colleges, and universities that offer certifications and/or degrees in criminal justice or emergency medical services.
- Develop and pilot curriculum for integration into course sequences for criminal justice and emergency medical services programs.

### **Goal 4: Self-Advocacy Leadership**

Kristin Vandagriff shared the Welcome Packet and Session 1 of the PIP Curriculum were shared to provide the Council with an example of the Easy Read translation which is being finished to best serve people with I/DD at a 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level or below.

## **VIII. Standing Committee Recommendations for Council**

### **State Plan Committee:**

Jean Sherman shared that there were no recommendations that came out of the State Plan Committee meeting; however, there was a robust discussion about two of the projects that required advice from the State Plan Committee members. There were discussions on various projects.

### **Public Policy Committee:**

In the absence of Sarah Goldman, Chair, Margaret Hooper shared the following Public Policy Committee recommendations to the full Council for issues to be reviewed/addressed over the summer:

- Managed Care Pilot for Individuals with I/DD-provide input and monitor iBudget waitlist with the Managed Care Task Force
- Dual Diagnosis Pilot -monitor the implementation of the pilot
- Transportation-follow innovative services grant process and advocate for recurring funding
- CDC+- educate lawmakers on the importance of this program
- Working People with Disabilities-ensure the program is permanent
- Medicaid-monitor Medicaid funding from the federal government and educate lawmakers as approved
- Home Health Aide Bill Implementation-ensure that this waiver is sent for federal approval
- Presumptive Medicaid Eligibility Implementation- ensure that this issue is implemented according to Florida law if passed.

Action Taken: Escallon made a motion to adopt the Public Policy Committee's recommendations related to the above items. Modawell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Hooper reported that this year the Public Policy Committee wishes to present legislative achievement awards, The Public Policy Committee recommends to the full Council the following award recipients, denoting that supplemental materials have been provided regarding these awards.

- House Legislator of the Year Award 2025: Representative Chase Tramont
- Legislative Champion Award: Representative Allison Tant

Action Taken: Herrera made a motion to adopt the legislative award recipients. Hart seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Finance Committee:**

Hart reported that a May 1<sup>st</sup> finance committee meeting was held, and the minutes were included in the Council supplemental materials.

Hart reported that the Finance Committee is recommending to the full Council to adopt the Funding/Budget Policy changes presented in the supplemental materials to the full Council.

Escallon made a motion to adopt the Funding/Budget Policy as presented. Sherman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Executive Committee:**

Hall directed members to the recommendations of the May 1, 2025, minutes located in their supplemental materials. Breen noted that as part of the Salary/Compensation and Benefits study conducted in May 2025 by Compensation Resources under the direction of FDDC's HR consultant, Danielle Towery, the committee agreed to recommend several "no-cost" changes to the benefits offered to FDDC employees. This included unlimited jury duty, bereavement leave extended, military leave unlimited, one additional floating holiday, flex time to have more approvals, and open paid time off- a new best practice for many employers. Hall directed the Council to review the memo in the

Council supplemental materials, that was being provided to staff to transition the paid time off (PTO) practice currently implemented by FDDC to an open PTO policy/practice. The open PTO policy was included for review in the Council's supplemental materials.

Escallon made a motion to adopt all benefits recommendations. Jenkins seconded. No discussion occurred. Motion passed with one abstention, Andrea Gary.

#### **IX. Public Comment**

Hall asked attendees if there were any questions from the public. No public comment occurred.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.'

#### **X. Council Dinner**

WellFlorida staff presented on their background on who they are, what they do, and why it matters. They also shared an overview of the working session which would be conducted the following day to support Council member preparation relating to state 5-year planning efforts.

#### **Friday, May 16, 2025**

**Council Members Present:** Eddie Hall, Chair; Yolanda Herrera; Lauren Modawell; Enrique Escallon; Michael Sayih; Charlotte Temple; Arizona Jenkins; Denise Anderson; Elly Hagen; Danielle McGill; Kali Wilson; Christina Cordova; Dennis Hart; Susan Nipper (APD); Caitlyn Clibbon (DRF); Mirna Diaz (VR); Meagan Owens (AHCA); Andrea Gary (DOH); Jean Sherman (Mailman Center)

**Council Members Absent:** Victoria Zepp; Carla Mercer; Patricia Bodiford (DOE); Sarah Goldman; Kira Houge (Elder Affairs); Beth Boone (FCIC)

**Staff Present:** Valerie Breen; Susan Kabot; Kristin Vandagriff; Margaret Hooper; Monica Moye; Chris Reeve; Jennifer Chung; Kristen Conlin; Jamie Mayersohn

**Guests:** Personal care staff, WellFlorida staff: Lindsey Redding and Christina Abarca

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall at 8:31 a.m., roll call was taken, and quorum was established.

#### **I. Strategic Planning for the 2027-2031 State Plan**

WellFlorida Council, Inc. staff, Lindsey Redding and Chris Abarca oversaw facilitating the morning to obtain the next set of Council member input into the next 5-year state plan. They shared various data that became the deciding factors for the new state plan, which resulted in 3 priority areas: Access to Services, Behavioral Health and Challenging Behaviors and Aging Caregivers. WellFlorida reported that they would take all the information gleaned from each Council member from the 3 priority areas during the morning session and synthesize it for use by the FDDC writing staff to create the Goals, Objectives and Key Activities for Council review and adoption. It was reported that the next step would be for the State Plan Committee to meet in April 2025 with all Council members encouraged to attend. The purpose would be to familiarize themselves with the reasoning behind the proposed draft goals, objectives and activities in preparation for the September full Council meeting.

## **II. Public Comment/Meeting Adjourned**

Hall asked attendees if there were any questions from the public. No public comment occurred.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:38 p.m.