

Community Living Committee Minutes

November 4, 2022 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Adjourned @ 12:48 p.m.)

Members Present: Jonathan D'Angelo, Rhonda Cox, Dr. Joshua Gettinger, Dr. Gary Junker, Jamila Little, Charlean Mapson (Chair), Ryan Rotundo, Dale Stephenson, Peggy Terhune

Members Absent: Senator Sydney Batch, Brendon Hildreth, Dave Richard

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

Guests Present: Sharif Brown, Greta Byrd, Caryn Cook (ASL Interpreter), Corye Dunn, Sarah Ferguson (ASL Interpreter), Beth Field, Linda Kendall Fields, Michelle Merritt, Stacy Morgan, Christopher Smith

Introduction:

Charlean Mapson welcomed the committee and did an icebreaker focused on each member's favorite Thanksgiving activity or food.

Joshua Gettinger made a motion to approve the draft May Community Living Committee minutes, and Jamila Little seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous approval.

Fiscal Update:

Shar'ron Williams provided the fiscal update.

Initiative Updates:

Making Alternatives to Guardianship a Reality in North Carolina

Linda Kendall Fields from UNC Cares provided an update with a PowerPoint and said this initiative has four areas of focus for 2022-2023. She said the first one is addressing the school-to-guardianship pipeline. This initiative is participating in a poster session at the Exceptional Children Conference today, and she displayed a copy of the poster, which includes an example of a local school system brochure's language regarding guardianship and recommended alternative language to use.

Linda said the second focus area is participating in the Olmstead Plan implementation, which mentions alternatives to guardianship as the seventh item in its list of priorities. She added that she believes Money Follows the Person (MFP) will continue to fund this work beyond June 2023 because of its importance to the Olmstead Plan.

Linda said the third focus area is raising awareness of accessible, on-demand educational modules on Supported Decision-Making strategies, and she pointed out the resources available on the Rethinking Guardianship website, where people can find downloadable information in plain language.

Linda said the fourth area of focus is reforms to North Carolina General Statute 35A in preparation for the 2023 General Assembly Long Session. She described how the initiative has gained the support of the North Carolina Bar Association to introduce a bill in 2023, while a technical change to the statute could occur in 2024, and additional changes could come in 2025. Linda requested the Council's assistance when the General Assembly is in session. Beth Field commented how guardianship and its alternatives intersect with programs and informing families, and Linda agreed that this work has connections to self-determination and freedom to choose. Philip Woodward said he will connect Linda with NCCDD's Policy Education staff to discuss this area of focus.

Justice: Release, Reentry and Reintegration

Sharif Brown from the Alliance of Disability Advocates (Alliance) provided an update. He said the initiative has received 149 referrals and completed 142 Individualized Reentry Plans (IRPs) and said the initiative currently has a 90-percent success rate. He said one referral is for an individual who has been incarcerated for 37 years who will be released in 2025, so the initiative is working on this individual's case now. Joshua Gettinger asked is there is a financial assessment of how much money is saved when an individual is released from prison and does not return. Sharif responded that it can cost more than \$30,000 to house an individual in prison for one year. Sharif also mentioned the opportunity to present to the State Reentry Council Collaborative on November 7th.

Jamila Little shared how the North Carolina Department of Public Safety split into a new Department of Adult Corrections (DAC), which fully supports this initiative. She said her division releases an average of 25 individuals per month, and very few individuals have opted not to participate in this reentry program. Talley Wells said it is important to identify champions who can support this in their or the General Assembly's budget because NCCDD cannot lobby. Rhonda Cox added that she does not want this reentry work to get lost in the Tailored Plans launch. Joshua Gettinger stated that he wants to propose extending this initiative the way that NCCDD supported work around alternatives to guardianship for more than three years. Joshua added that he believes that placing an emphasis on how this initiative saves the state money will carve a pathway to bipartisanship for legislative support of this work. The committee agreed to continue to discuss this idea at its next meeting.

Supported Living: A How-to Guidebook

Greta Byrd, the Executive Director of Liberty Corner Enterprises, shared a PowerPoint updating the members on the progress of this initiative. She said the initiative has researched what is working with Supported Living in places as far away as the United Kingdom and Australia. She said a survey that the initiative helped to develop to gather information from Supported Living users had to be reworked because of spam responses. She shared how the goal is for the Supported Living Guidebook website (www.SLNC4.me) to be ready for a test launch by December 1st of this year, and the goal is to make it as accessible as possible to everyone. She said the Guidebook will show not just success stories but how Supported Living is provided. She said Year 1 involved gathering all of the information for the Guidebook, and Year 2 will include activities such as a podcast scheduled to start in January 2023. She announced that the initiative will host a Kick-Off Conference on April 20th, 2023 at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College.

Joshua Gettinger asked about a third year and whether the initiative will track how many people the Guidebook reaches or how many lives it affects. Greta responded that the important benchmark to measure is how many people receive Supported Living. Greta also highlighted the barriers to Supported Living, saying her organization could serve twice as many people, but they do not have the available staff, and housing is also a major barrier. Linda Kendall Fields shared how this initiative arose out of the Supported Living Level 2 & 3 Action Team's desire to see a how-to Guidebook and asked if it will "scratch the itch" to gain the knowledge of Supported Living that individuals with I/DD and families need to make it work successfully.

The Unmet Needs Initiative: A Coordinated Campaign to Impact the Registry of Unmet Needs (now Meet the Need NC)

Beth Field from the Mental Health Transformation Alliance's (MHTA) Leadership Alliance for Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LAND) program provided an update that included a PowerPoint and a handout for this initiative that has rebranded itself as Meet the Need NC. Beth mentioned how the Advisory Council had 45 people in Year 1, and she discussed key players for Year 2. Beth said the Year 2 structure will give the initiative a venue for anyone in the I/DD community to come participate. She shared how the launch of the Medicaid 1915(i) waiver and the Tailored Plans has been delayed and how some people with I/DD might have a waiver but not a plan. She said this delay has created a huge education opportunity.

Beth said the initiative hosted successful events in Boone and Greenville in September 2022 and finalized a survey for all North Carolina General Assembly members. She discussed the importance of measurable outcomes and said "systems change" means change both within and outside of the I/DD community, where currently, not everyone understands the I/DD community in North Carolina.

Future Investment Discussion

Transportation

Ryan Rotundo shared how he has been in communications with representatives of Lyft, the on-demand ride platform. He shared information about Lyft Pass in Ohio, Maine, and California as well as how Lyft has been a champion for non-emergency medical transportation during the COVID-19 pandemic. He shared how his sister has a job but used up all of her money earned working by paying for Uber and Lyft rides, thus highlighting the need to find more affordable options. He emphasized the need for partnership opportunities and for looking at the language used in service definitions in terms of reimbursement for transportation.

Christopher Smith, a guest, mentioned Medicaid transportation and how an individual must call at least three days in advance and can use it only for doctor appointments. Jonathan D'Angelo mentioned having a good friend in New York City involved in ridesharing services there. Joshua Gettinger went to the Lyft website to find Lyft availability in rural areas, and the website instructs the user to go to their Cities page. He asked about an opportunity to fund a transportation initiative in the future with Philip Woodward doing the legwork and suggested contacting companies like Lyft to inform them about future funding opportunities if NCCDD releases another Request for Applications (RFA) involving transportation.

Roommate-Matching Service for Individuals with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)

Philip Woodward provided an update on the Roommate-Matching Service Request for Applications (RFA), including how NCCDD received two applications in response to this RFA, the RFA Application Review Committee process, and how the Application Review Committee selected Partners4Housing with six contingencies. Joshua Gettinger asked about delaying the start of this initiative until after February 2023 or allowing the Executive Committee to review and approve the proposed contractor's response to the contingencies. Joshua asked what the proposed contractor's track record is, and Michelle Merritt, an Application Review Committee member, answered that she and Philip Woodward met virtually with Partners4Housing and that they have a presence in other states. The committee made the following motion:

Joshua Gettinger made a motion for the NCCDD to approve the recommendation of the RFA Review Committee to provide funding to Partners4Housing for Year 1 (of 3) of the initiative entitled **Roommate-Matching Service** in the amount of up to \$120,000 with a required minimum of 25% non-federal matching funds (up to \$40,000) with Year 1 (of 3) starting no sooner than January 1, 2023 and ending no later than October 30, 2024 and including the following contingencies:

1. Make the ongoing application/service user-friendly where a person with I/DD can understand the application and how to use the system with ease.
2. Address diversity, including serving Hispanic/Latino individuals and families who speak Spanish.
3. Provide more detail on the evaluation plan, including selecting Performance Measures to report to the NCCDD quarterly.
4. Provide a more detailed sustainability plan.
5. It will be important to have a local partner/subcontractor to ensure the local success of this initiative. Therefore, the applicant should outline its plan and budget for a partnership/subcontract agreement in the pilot county where this service will launch.
6. Ensure that the applicant's workforce has enough current North Carolina knowledge or a local partner with sufficient North Carolina knowledge.

The Executive Committee will have the authority to approve or deny the proposed contractor's response to these contingencies at an upcoming Executive Committee meeting.

Jamila Little seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Wrap Up

Charlrean Mapson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Joshua Gettinger seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:48 p.m.