

**HDI Consumer Advisory Council
Online meeting in Zoom
Monday March 6, 2023 10:30AM – 1:30PM**

In attendance today...CAC Members

Joshua Seigle
Karen Ritchie
Meghan Ackerman
Skylar Pash
Jake Cruz
Vivian Lasley
Cathy Lerza
Joe Cowan
Camille Collins
Walt Bower
Julie Pfeiffer

Presenters: Maria Kemplin, Johnny Collett, Carolyn Wheeler, Jason Jones,
Laura Butler

1) Welcome & Introductions Jake Cruz

Jake opened the meeting. All members introduced themselves.

2) Review and Approval of December Minutes Jake Cruz

Joshua Seigle made a motion to approve the minutes, and Joe Cowan seconded.

3) AUCD update – Council on Leadership in Advocacy (COLA) Walt Bower

Sherece Cole was unable to attend the most recent COLA meeting. Walt Bower provided a short overview of COLA. The purpose of COLA is to enhance the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) by fostering current and new leaders with lived experience of disability, including their family members, to promote leadership in their programs and communities.

4) Election of New CAC members All

The CAC nominating committee met and recommended Bobby Begley, Virginia Bland, and Cathy Buncher as new members to the CAC. Joe made a motion to accept the nominees as members of the CAC and Meghan seconded. The CAC members voted, and the motion passed.

5) Transportation Initiative – Hart-Supported Maria Kemplin
Living grant
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Maria Kemplin shared that the Transportation Initiative is a project of UK's Human Development Institute supported by a grant from the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Transportation Initiative works to provide education, information, and technical assistance on accessible transportation for Kentuckians with a disability.

Maria discussed transportation options for people with disabilities in rural areas of Kentucky. Maria shared that in rural areas, many of the community transit services are provided through Community Action Agencies with outreach offices in all 120 Kentucky counties. Some of these agencies, like the Community Action Agency in Montgomery County, even have funds set aside to assist riders who can't pay their \$1 per trip county-wide fare.

Maria shared that through the Veterans Benefits program, a veteran or service member with a qualifying disability can receive a grant to purchase a new or used vehicle. Maria also discussed the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program, or the K-TAP program. K-TAP is a program that provides financial assistance and support to Kentucky families in need. For example, K-TAP provides assistance for a wide variety of things, including rent, utility bills for heat, electric, gas, or water, and work expenses including gasoline and car repairs.

Maria reported that the Hart-Supported Living grant is helpful in terms of transportation options. For example, there are transportation options within the Hart-Supported Living grant that can be used to attend an advocacy event in Frankfort. The time for questions at the end of the presentation resulted in a lively and collaborative discussion about transportation among the CAC members.

6) Engaging the CAC update Johnny Collett
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Subcommittee members, consisting of Skylar Pash, Joe Cowan, Cathy Lerza, and Harold Kleinert, updated the Consumer Advisory Council by-laws. Revisions included elimination of redundancy and improvements in format clarity. Johnny made additional comments and opened the updating of the by-laws to revisions, as this is an iterative process.

- 7) Focus group project Laura Butler
-Input and feedback from CAC members Jason Jones

Jason and Laura provided an opportunity for the CAC members to participate in a focus group concerning sustainability. The purpose of the focus group was to better understand the thoughts and feelings of persons with disabilities and those who support or care for persons for disabilities about the sustainability efforts of businesses.

- 9) Agency Updates (P & A, DD Council, DDID, OVR) Each Agency

Protection & Advocacy – Camille Collins provided an update for P&A. P&A does work in educating individuals with disabilities and professionals about supportive decision making as an alternative to guardianship. P&A has hired a new attorney who is a former District Court Judge and has experience related to supported decision making. P&A is also hiring two new advocates for the children and youth team. Recently, the P&A advisory board, which consists of 15 individuals with DD, went to the capitol to provide education to legislators about the impact of bills currently in session for people with disabilities.

Developmental Disability Council - Jake Cruz provided an update for the DD Council. The DD Council last met on March 2nd. A new Executive Director, Johnny Calebs, will be starting April 1st. The DD Council also had a retreat in February where the council worked on their 5-year state plan which they are putting into action now.

Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities - Cathy Lerza provided an update for DDID. As of May 1st, DDID will be taking on more of the responsibility for the Michelle P waiver. Additional responsibilities will include reviewing all applications, making decisions on which

applicants will be placed on the waiting list, and performing follow-up for allocation of waiver funding.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation - Jonathan White sent an OVR update to Walt and Walt provided the OVR report. OVR is working on implementing a new case management system with hopes that the system will be in place by November 2023. OVR continues to focus on consumer engagement to get consumers in the door and provide services as timely as possible.

- 10) STABLE accounts update Carolyn Wheeler
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Carolyn Wheeler, a STABLE ambassador, provided an update on STABLE accounts. In the state of Kentucky, ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) accounts are called STABLE accounts. STABLE accounts allow individuals with disability to save money without impacting eligibility for SSI and Medicaid. To participate, the individual's disability had to have occurred before the age of 26.

STABLE accounts are owned by the person who lives with a disability and allows for \$17,000 a year to be contributed if the individual is not employed and up to \$30,590 a year in the individual is employed. Withdrawals from STABLE account must be used on "qualified disability expenses." A STABLE account can be opened at the website, stablekentucky.com. Carolyn showed the CAC members how to open a STABLE account online.

- 11) New Business and Announcements Skylar Pash

Walt made an announcement concerning two upcoming HDI seminars. On Friday, March 24th HDI will host a seminar titled, "Traumatic Brain Injury: What is it and How Does it Manifest?". On Friday, April 14th HDI will host a seminar titled, "Disability Pride and Prejudice: Beyond the Self in Self-Advocacy".

Camille made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Joe seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:33pm.

NEXT CAC MEETING: Monday, June 5, 2023, at 10:30 AM – 1:30 PM