

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES
AND SPECIALEDUCATION**

Legislative Committee

LOCATION

**Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference**

Meeting Date

**May 28, 2013
1:00 p.m.**

Attendees:

Dean Gates
Eric Gebhart
Terese Kashi
Steve Lesko
Ric Nelson
Margaret Kossler

Staff:

Teresa Holt
Patrick Reinhart

Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo
Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 1:00 p.m.
ROLL CALL

Reading of the Council Mission

Eric Gebhart read the Council mission: Creating change that improves the lives of people with disabilities.

Announcements and Good News

Patrick Reinhart announced that HB 88, the respectful language bill, will be signed on June 3rd at 4:00 p.m. at the Special Olympics training center in Mountain View. Ric Nelson announced that he was asked to speak at the ceremony.

Patrick Reinhart announced that Hannah Foreman has been chosen as the new Council intern. She will begin her internship late summer/early fall.

Patrick Reinhart announced that Representative Millett has already taken steps towards employing people with disabilities in State government. She has sent a letter to both the House and Senate Rules Committees requesting that a person with a disability be hired as a page in the legislature. He believes that the effort will be underway through REACH to find qualified candidates.

Teresa Holt announced that the SESA bill, HB 87, will be signed tomorrow morning at the Governor's office in Fairbanks.

Ric Nelson announced that public comment on the Anchorage taxi ordinance was postponed until July 23rd.

Teresa Holt announced that Amanda Cooper was hired as a new staff person at the Council office. She will staff the health grant and the ASPEN grant. She is anticipated to start on June 10th.

Conflict of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest to declare.

Approval of Agenda

There was not a quorum, and the agenda could not be approved.

Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

There was not a quorum, and the previous meeting minutes could not be approved.

Correspondence

Teresa Holt stated they received a news release from the National Council on Disabilities noting that they have created two information reports: Medicaid Block Grant Program Implications for People with Disabilities; and A Case for Medication Self Direction, a White Paper on Research Practices and Policy Opportunities. She stated that she can send the links out to these reports.

Legislative Updates

Review Priorities Assigned at the May Council Meeting

Advocacy and Leadership

Nothing assigned to the Legislative Committee.

Community Inclusion and Support

1. Direct service professional living wage.

Patrick Reinhart noted that Representative Millett may be interested in putting in statute regulations regarding the rate review.

2. Equipment technology reuse including changing Medicaid policies to allow for reuse. Legislative Committee could assist with research needed on this issue.
3. Complex Behavior Collaborative. The CBC needs to get into the Governor's budget because it is unlikely that the legislature will fund it as a one-time increment again.

Housing

Nothing assigned to the Legislative Committee.

Transportation

1. Advocate for a state match for public and community transportation.
2. Provide comment to the Anchorage Assembly on the taxi ordinance.

Employment

1. Employment First legislation.
2. State as a Model Employer.

Teresa Holt added that Representative Millett stated that she would pre-file something related to these issues. Teresa added that Mike Lesmann and the commissioner stated that the Governor may be interested in doing something with this, so they need to get some materials ready for Mike Lesmann by the end of the week.

Early Intervention

Nothing assigned to the Legislative Committee.

Education

1. Continue to advocate for alternative routes for students with disabilities to pass the HSGQE and/or receive a diploma.
2. Advocate for state and federal regulations regarding restraint and seclusion.

Teresa Holt added that Representative Millett stated that she would pre-file regarding restraint and seclusion.

Health

1. Follow up on the Autism Insurance Act.

Teresa Holt stated that there are a lot of issues regarding the

implementation of this Act. She stated that they have one documented case where Blue Cross has denied based on the fact that autism is in the DSM, and all things in the DSM are mental illness; therefore they are excluding it under the policies that have youth mental health exclusions. She stated that the family appealed it to the Division of Insurance, and the Division of Insurance backed up Blue Cross. She stated that this issue might require some follow-up legislation. Teresa Holt noted that Representative Saddler is working on this issue as well.

2. Recommendations for state and federal Medicaid reform.

Teresa Holt stated that the Legislative Committee will work with all the other committees on all of these State Plan objectives.

Report from the NGA Meeting

Teresa Holt reported that the National Governor's Association (NGA) has picked a platform this year, which is employment of people with disabilities and what states can do about it. States need to come up with a plan regarding what they are going to do by August of this year.

She stated that hearing from the business perspective at the NGA meeting was very interesting. She stated that organizations want service entities to research their business and figure out which positions the business needs, then set up a plan to hire a person with a disability to fill that need. Business entities felt that service organizations also need to be aware of the actual desires of the prospective employee to ensure the placement will be successful. She stated that the message from the business community was for service organizations to approach the businesses as if the business is the customer of the service organization.

Teresa Holt stated that at the NGA meeting, they presented the State of Alaska as a Model Employer and the Provisional Hire Program. She also learned about the federal program called Schedule A Hiring, which is a federal program designed for hiring all people with disabilities, not just people with IDD.

Teresa stated that another interesting program she heard about was Philanthropy Northwest, which is somewhat of a clearinghouse of

philanthropy organizations. Similar to the business perspective, people interested in approaching a philanthropic organization should carefully research the organization to ensure they serve the particular area that an applicant is interested in.

Teresa Holt stated that during a recent meeting with the commissioner, Mike Lesmann, and others, the plan moving forward is to work on the provisional hire process and begin a PR campaign. As Teresa had noted earlier in this meeting, Mike Lesmann requested additional information about Employment First legislation. Teresa noted that during this meeting, she also made the suggestion about a Project SEARCH site in Juneau in State government. She noted that there is another state that uses Project SEARCH as their State as a Model Employer project.

CBC Funding: Advocate for it to become part of base funds

This issue was discussed above under “Review Priorities at May Council Meeting.” Patrick Reinhart reiterated that it will be critical to get this funding in the Governor’s budget, and they should have ample data to support its success.

Employment First Legislation

Again, Council staff will work to get information to Mike Lesmann to see if the Governor is interested in sponsoring some type of legislation. They can also work with Representative Millett to help carry it forward. Ric Nelson stated that this is also one of Peer Power’s goals, and Peer Power can assist with this item.

One of the issues is that the examples of Employment First legislation they have reviewed calls for the organization of another board. The Governor has stated that he will not convene any more boards. They can perhaps work with the Trust to look into the possibility of a current board absorbing these duties or creating a review committee comprised of current board members that has no costs associated with it.

Other Actions to Focus on Over the Summer

Ric Nelson stated that the House Finance Committee will be meeting

monthly to review various State departments. Teresa Holt stated that the key will be getting notice of these meetings ahead of time and getting constituents to meet with members of the House Finance Committee.

Teresa Holt asked Legislative Committee members to be looking for alert e-mails detailing these meetings.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Legislative Committee is scheduled for June 25th, 2013 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.