



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT

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Coordinating Committee  
Friday, December 15, 2023  
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Minutes:

### **1:00 p.m. – Welcome, Roll Call, and Housekeeping – Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair (5 mins)**

Meeting called to order by Damiana at 1:05 pm. Welcomed all. Thanked for being flexible with the time change.

Damiana can turn on the camera if needed for accommodation reasons. Please raise your hand to speak (on screen, Alt+Y keyboard, Alt+A to mute/unmute), speak 1 at a time, and state your name when speaking to help (no ASL today, do have CART).

Present (quorum is 5 not including staff – at quorum): CART provider, Emily, Damiana (by phone), Clarence, Elizabeth, Patti, Amy (first half), Cullynn, Marsha, Elaine, and Kristin. Elizabeth managing agenda.

Excused: Ryan off, Marsha at appt. first half, Amy work obligation second half, Warren's term ending, Megan work presentation, Yvonne ill.

### **1:05 p.m. – Member at Large – Announcement about it being a topic at GM, and discussion – Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair (5 mins)**

Could be moved to the end (going ahead). At the last General Membership meeting, asked for nominations for MAL, received via email afterwards. 3 top MAL. According to ops manual, able to determine whether we have 2 or 3 MAL, bring to this group to discuss.

Candidates: Clarence and Cullynn (this year), then Matt Nash. First question – 2 or 3, depending, move to voting on those members. Opening floor to discussion and motion.

Hand from Cullynn (1 of candidates) – advantage to having more, shares the work (discussed previously – phases of availability). Baton passing, with good communication, make easier

for more to share the workload. Thank you. Understood (both present). Appreciates conversation and feedback. Other comments/thoughts?

Hand from Amy. Likes the idea of having people join because they want to join, know what we want to do, aware of constraints, willing to do it. When you have 3 people who feel that way and bring things of value, likes the idea of having the whole slate come in. Kristin joined (recapped). 3 candidates. 2 or 3, decide. Discussion or motion (apologies for being late, coming from another call).

Hand from Clarence. Question. How many people on the current or for next year will be from the east and west side for diversity – determine 2 or 3. Thanks. East side members (prior to new members) are Damiana, Yvonne, and Matt. All 3 have potential to be on CC. Thumbs up from Amy. If no other discussion, motion?

Amy moves for 3 MAL, accepting those named as nominees. Kristin seconds. Moved and seconded, 3 MAL for 2024, 3 candidates named (Matt, Clarence, and Cullynn) selected. All in favor? 2 Ayes. None opposed. No abstentions (do Clarence and Cullynn need to absent?) Question of order – no, both members this year, Elizabeth concurs – not a conflict of interest to vote for themselves, get a vote. Clarence and Cullynn like Matt and each other (nullify each other).

Affirmative vote. Welcome Clarence and Cullynn for 2024, will extend welcome to Matt, as well. Marsha at an appointment, can't unmute. Good to go on this topic, moving to next.

### **1:10 p.m. – GCDE Visioning – Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair (40 mins) per Elizabeth.**

Damiana stepping back to tell the story of where we are, so we know where we're going. Damiana working with Paul, Elizabeth, and Warren (now Yvonne). Paul was ED of GCDE before Toby long ago. Extensive experience in state govt., with disability community. Asked him to help us/work with us on revisioning how GCDE does our work. Could not be with us during reschedule of this meeting. Will be helping facilitate conversation at GM. As we've been collaborating with Paul, taught Damiana about history of GCDE, back when it was created. How the committee got started. At that time, was a group of people dedicated to advocacy for/with PWD in WA, committee created at that time as an avenue for those folks with that passion to have an organized way to conduct the work that really mattered to them. If folks remember/read Damiana's Thanksgiving message from Emily, that's something she wants to return to. Return to GCDE not being a place where you come to do the committee's work, but where likeminded people with common goals are able to collaborate in order to do the advocacy work that's really important to them/the disability community of WA. Been trying to figure out the best way to do that. In discussions with Paul, really think that the best way to move forward is in a lot of ways to move backwards. To what the group of the committee really were. Discussions over the last few months. Think we're all on the same page that this is the route that we want to go. Wants to open the floor up for discussion about questions or concerns about this course of action, also to talk about how we do that. Will see on the agenda, have today's discussion split into 2 pieces – first piece being more philosophical, this is what we want to do, this is what it might look like. 2<sup>nd</sup> half being more

practical, this is what I'm asking from you all as subcommittee chairs, in order to be prepared for the GM meeting in January. Had the opportunity to talk with a few of you as subcommittee chairs about what those pieces are that will be really important to be prepared with for GM. In order for the members of GCDE to make an informed decision about how they want to move forward. We know that we have these legacy activities (YLF, CO, Awards) – all really exciting programs, also very time consuming, both for staff and volunteers. It may be that if GM decides that there's other places they want to focus their energy, for example, more on employment – we talk about it thru Awards, but not really otherwise. If as a GM, we decide we want to focus on employment, what that may mean is that we forego an activity for the year or perhaps longer. It may also mean that we look at the work of the subcommittee differently. For example, talking with Marsha earlier this week about CO. It might not be that CO doesn't happen in 2024, but it looks really different, because we have a different purpose for it. Maybe instead of being focused geographically on a specific area of the state (city/county) to come up with solutions to their local issues, maybe we use CO as a statewide listening session about a particular issue (basic/general like transportation or housing, or even more targeted, related to other subcommittee work such as in legislative subcommittee – the Right to Repair bill or another legislative issue to help inform advocacy). Damiana cutting out. Pausing for reactions until Damiana returns about Damiana's sharing per Elizabeth. She is excited for the discussion. Any thoughts? Will loop in Damiana.

Hands from Marsha and Amy. Marsha seconds what Damiana says. Added, in addition to advocacy function, thinks it's critical that we do organizing, as well – will support effective advocacy with more people. Is Damiana back? Possibly. Damiana can hear us, now we can hear her. Wants to hear Amy's thoughts.

Amy has several thoughts, has to leave at 2. Loves the idea of coordinating subcommittee work so there's intentional overlap or leveraging, pulling in a common direction, resources. Interested how that might play out. Another thought. With each change of membership every year, might be a whole resettling and new set of priorities which is fine, expect that you may lose the relationships and strengths of legacy activities (not because you've always done them, serve a purpose, create results trying to receive). Assess annually, get temperature of group, losing relationships, momentum, historical value, some of the things that each new group every year that might not value as their personal priorities. No other hands. Damiana muted.

Damiana appreciates the comments from Amy. Does think it will be really important, interesting, we've had almost an oral tradition in GCDE – seems like it wouldn't work very well, considering we have turnover with new members, but does think that doing things in this new way will really require us keeping better records about the way that we do activities. If there is a year pause, or even longer, that we don't lose that knowledge of how we conducted an activity. For example, Kristin let folks know today at YLF, that YLF is going to take a pause for 2024. Several reasons. Part of what's happening is doing some of the work of making sure we're recording all of our knowledge and have a work plan (each subcommittee chair will be asked to do), so if in 2025 the committee decides that YLF

should be continued, we're not starting from scratch – have knowledge recorded to have a running start to get the activity going for 2025. Other thoughts/questions/concerns?

Hand from Clarence. From his historical knowledge of how to do kind of revamping's, best to map out how you're going to jot down and store this knowledge. Whether it's by classifications like groups, or dates, or knowledge base, people etc. and make sure that the structure stays consistent. So if YLF decides they want to organize by dates, they could have a YLF folder for 2024, and break it down from there. That would be consistent throughout every other group so there is a working consistency that everyone can follow and make sure it's being transferred from one group to the next without any question of how to store this info, if that makes sense. That's all for now.

It makes sense to Amy. Damiana may have dropped off. Articulated well (Damiana reconnecting per Elizabeth). Any other thoughts? Would love to hear from everyone about their thoughts and feelings.

Hand from Cullynn regarding the example topic. Acknowledges what everyone says, in accordance with them so far, adds that is hearing that we want to focus on employment. Is interested in it themselves. Esp. generally considered high functioning, not receiving needed resources, issue in our discourse about disabilities. Would love to connect with others on. Acknowledge that high functioning is a negative term, is open to other suggestions, if people have it (commonly used). Elizabeth concurs.

Hand from Marsha. She has heard advocated higher and lower support needs instead of functioning (within the community). Thank you. Clearer way to say it. Support people across the spectrum of their needs. Focus area not talked about, heard from others. Low support needs (correct) – minimal accommodations, could still benefit significantly, second area to focus on – put out for a topic idea for this year.

Can't talk about employment without transportation per Marsha. Can't get to a job, can't have one. Fine with focusing on employment, as long as transportation is also focused on – critical to PWD. Cullynn seconds that. Complicated issues, regions where public transport isn't as available, or easy to use. Folks requesting transcript and seconding comments on language and topics.

Elizabeth added sidewalks and hardscape infrastructure – may want to be thrown into the mix, decide if it's important, often missing.

Amy concurs – worked with COB in Comms with Public Works, developing ADA transition plan for city, coming up on these same barriers where people getting where they need to go and do what they need to do. Challenges with city, most significant projects on a 6 year plan, another year or 2 of public desire to motivate city to assess needs, do traffic studies, balance against other taxpayer concerns. Not saying we don't emphasize these issues, transport, sidewalks, crossings, and auditory can happen quickly once approved, but approval process can take 2-6 years – putting that out there. Wow. Is Damiana back? Yes. Apologies.

Didn't want to interrupt, enjoying flow of discussion, unsure what missed – heard language discussion as well as talking about transportation. Appreciating discussion. Any other items to bring up?

No pressure, haven't heard from Patti or Kristin, either want to step in? Fine if not. Kristin is onboard with these ideas. Tried from the beginning to look at visioning what YLF looks like through that lens, will only improve things for all the different groups. Already discussed at YLF meeting, folks weren't present, remembering it here. Thought carefully on direction based on comments from different GCDE members/Damiana in the past, around what's most advantageous for getting the work of YLF/GCDE done, and what kind of work GCDE needs to be doing/for whom. Excited about the new direction, Damiana's vision, getting thoughts on how this can look into account. More nimble, members more useful, leveraging individual skill sets and be around for the needs of the committee as a whole to better carry out our objectives. Very in favor of and excited about the direction. Damiana thanked Kristin, appreciates that, other thing – Paul said something that made sense, trying to figure out what's going on with volunteers, lower attendance, lower participation in activities – part of that is a change in the way folks are volunteering, other part is that people aren't feeling as connected to the work as we'd like. Instead of chasing folks to try to get participation, hoping we can look at the work in a new way and motivate folks by giving them more say in what they're doing – more intrinsic value in doing something important with them, instead of out of a desire not to let people down, for instance.

Hand from Patti. Is at another meeting (stepped out). Does think it's important. Another barrier is time and commitment. WFH, pandemic, lots of meetings – people going back to in-person, difficult to attend meetings (missed LG today, in transit). Other thing, excited about some of the things we're doing in LWG, finding about strengths/weaknesses, play to them, get people excited and involved in it – integral to what we do, laws are important. Wants the opportunity to hear more about what the other committees are doing (siloed). Know what groups participates in are doing, not others. More of that opportunity would be great. Thanks for the opportunity to speak. Seconded in chat (Amy hopping off, Damiana getting back on). Any other thoughts from folks as they think about this?

Elizabeth shared that 1 of the things that's exciting is the opportunity to look at our work in smaller chunks (maybe someone could work on a small project, if they couldn't attend meetings). Opportunity to look at our work differently, exciting. Is Damiana back? Yes. In mtns. SSDI comment in chat.

Cullyn and then Clarence. Thought about allowing folks to do project based works – valuable, schedules, busy-ness, needs, accommodating. Bigger change to consider, more MAL roles, part of GCDE – work on specific projects, niche role to fill (less consistent committee meeting, maybe small group meets a lot for 3 months of the year or something). Thank you. That's very much in alignment with what we're thinking may pan out to be. Clarence, then info, before break. 2<sup>nd</sup> half – will talk more details.

Clarence quickly. Seconds Cullyn's comments, exactly what he was going to say, got to it first. Great minds. Likewise. Same as earlier.

Briefly before break, second half will be discussion/brainstorming how things will look. Damiana will be asking subcommittees, particularly those that are event focused (CO, YLF, Awards, also Membership, AC, and legislative to) – come to GM with 2 things – 1<sup>st</sup>, general workplan (not date specific, no deadlines for this and that), here's the date of the event, 2 days prior this completed, 2 weeks this completed, 2 months this completed – activities/workplan can be applied whether they take place in 2024 or 2034. Second piece is job descriptions. Think about the work of your committee, 2 things: 1<sup>st</sup> – what is the basic number of people needed to plan an activity (not implement/carry out). Plan the events (YLF, CO, etc.) Then, once it's time to have it, what roles are needed – Awards needs an emcee, folks to review nominations, etc. What are those roles that need to be in place for an event or activity to be conducted. Job description for those roles. When we get to GM, people understand what a committee is, what an event entails, and exactly what they would be signing up for if they say the subcommittee should continue and I want to sign up for 2024 to be a table facilitator, for example. Yes, Awards should continue, I will sign up to review nominations, etc. Once we have all that info, as part of GM, people will be signing up not just to say that the activity should continue, but I want to participate in this way. After we go thru that sort of people selecting what they want to do process, the next piece of that will be to look at the activity, and for example for CO – we'll say OK, so CO, we said that we needed these roles to be effective. We did not get the signups that we need for this event. So, by our understanding, we didn't get enough people to sign up for that event – so by our decisions, we won't continue in 2024, is that our decision. Number of checks and balances, how it will pan out at GM. Any questions before break? Hearing none.

**1:50 p.m. – Break (10 mins)**

Be back at 2:12 pm to continue the brainstorming for each committee if folks need help or want to share info.

**2:00 p.m. – Analysis of Subcommittee roles and work – All (40 mins)**

Damiana called the meeting back to order at 2:12. We can hear her. Elaine's hand is up.

Wondered if Membership should have a work plan (forming a team, press release, NMO, etc.) Yes. All the subcommittees really will need to do a workplan, even if they don't have events, since there are timelines to follow for recruiting, reviewing, sending recommendations to B&C, doing NMO. Clarence can represent AC (no chair, need to take care of), as they are giving out grants for when applications are due, when voting needs to happen, etc. They do require member time and contributions. OK. Thank you.

Before break, Damiana threw some things out. Are there any questions about her requests. If not, does anyone want to start brainstorming? Is there anything the rest of CC can help folks with?

Hearing nothing immediately. Hand from Cullyn.

Felt like they didn't know where to get started with discussing the low accommodation needs conversation, not a huge focus, but something to consider. Coordinating something with the few people who have mentioned it, reaching out to GCDE as a whole, should we have a start of year meeting to discuss how we could work on it this year? Thanks. Making sure she understood (start of conversation may have occurred when disconnecting). Recapping. Talking about for folks with different needs, what the expectations of GCDE more challenging for people to fulfill, looking at the roles of GCDE for different needs. Is that the idea?

If Cullyn understands correctly, what we can do to encourage employers support, what support systems are still lacking. Talking to LWG, AC, branch out into existing committees and focus areas that don't. Tracking? Damiana may not have been. Wasn't sure the context of the conversation – where we were going. Also heard from folks that sometimes asks of members is harder for folks with different needs to fulfill, has heard that part as well. May be a separate but related discussion to supporting members, this would be separate, as GCDE advocacy relating to employment not addressed. Thanks for the clarification, understood. Definitely an important topic. Would be figuring out how we want to address it as GCDE. Initial thought is if that's something that's a priority for GCDE, it's definitely something that should be brought up during GM, if folks concur, then at that point is where we would have those smaller meetings to be able to determine how we would do the work. If there are multiple folks...chat being read out, sorry. Patti's message received. Smaller meetings after priorities are decided by committee. If there are multiple wanting to bring that forward, great to do some brainstorming in advance about how we would bring that to the committee as a recommendation for work for us to do. We can discuss it here, if the folks who are motivated to work on that topic, are here with us today.

Hands from Clarence, Patti, and Cullyn. Clarence had a question for Cullyn and all. Should we possibly get our prospective groups together and ask the subcommittee members how they envision those particular groups working in the past and future? Or are we coming up with ideas now, and presenting to them at the next meeting? Damiana thinks that both are possibilities. If folks want to brainstorm here, with the support of CC, we have a bit of time to do that. Conversely, if the subcommittee is where the robust discussion would happen since they understand the work better than CC, then that's an option too (or both).

Patti. Apologies – didn't think about the chat reading, apologies. In another meeting so was trying not to talk. We are GCDE – E - thinks Cullyn has a point, maybe we could look at advocacy thru legislature, to help PWD maneuver the workplace. Big topic at last DIN Disability Justice Subcommittee – Ryan chairs. Big in State and private employment alike. How can we encourage employers to accommodate folks who don't need a lot of accommodations, but more understanding, neurodiversity etc. Thinks it's something worth exploring, agrees with Cullyn. Damiana not discouraging chat, just paused for reading. Please feel free to use the chat.

Cullyn. Wanted to say as far as discussing it now, going from memory, not all the people who have stated interest are here today. Doesn't necessarily feel ready to delve into it, open with the time we have, though. Wanted to make sure that we make good use of the time

(Damiana). If people want to discuss it, just wanted to make sure people had background, and space for it. If folks aren't here, or aren't prepared, we don't need to do that today. No other hands. Patti?

Maybe it's something we need to put in a parking lot and maybe address it later. It's important, but maybe not for today. Sounds good.

Hand from Marsha. Thinking about this. Probably deserves some focused attention because it cuts across a lot of our work. At YLF retreat, population coming to YLF, increasingly those who are neurodiverse. Marsha needs to do a lot of reading (done some, helpful). Probably pretty typical of the general population that neurotypicals don't often have a good understanding of what autism is, and the myriad of impacts. Given that people with autism may make up a large population of the community, may behoove us to educate ourselves in this area. Can't advocate otherwise.

Damiana thinking about last shortened GM. Didn't do a cross-disability discussion. Maybe that would be good for the upcoming GM on autism, seems like it would be timely, if this is part of the discussion that we anticipate coming up during our revisioning of GCDE. Just a quick thought. Seeing no other hands, only seconds. Few other things on agenda. Proposes that we move onto a couple other things (Elizabeth's report), then have a few minutes at the end if other areas of this topic come to mind prior to closing for the day. Any objections? If not, will move on, and return prior to closing. Hearing none.

**2:40 p.m. – Executive Director Report – Elizabeth Gordon, GCDE Executive Director (10 mins)**

Elizabeth said we have her report, and recap/action steps. For this meeting, Elizabeth didn't write a formal report, can give an update about what she's been working on in the last couple of months. 1 exciting thing was her invite to join the RW team to plan a PPR on disabilities and employment. Was part of the planning group, and also got to speak alongside the Office of Equity. Nice, good discussion. Heard after the fact that it was the most follow up items the Gov has ever asked for after a PPR. Meant the Gov was paying attention. Elizabeth had 6 mins to present on support systems for PWD in employment (part to DIN – pulse survey on PWD in state govt. employees, important to mention). Couldn't share all of it, Gov listened to that, good discussion.

Another piece that's been ongoing/on reports, now moving forward, is the rewrite of EO 13-02, EO that talks about hiring PWD in State Govt. That project was ID's right after Elizabeth started in the role. Lots of different input, presented to DIN, made the rounds with lots of input. Felt stuck. Reached out to OOE for experience/timing with EO's. Megan reached out on our behalf, what's going on, things moving ever since. Last week pres. To state HR directors, being revised, coming their way. State deputies next week. Final legal reviews in Gov's office. Thinks we'll actually get a signature. Highlights: asking all supervisors to be trained in RA/ADA to support PWD in state govt. All employees trained in accessible documents, producing materials externally and internally, basic understanding needed. Hire PWD. % of PWD in state WF same as % PWD in WA. OCIO give guidance to rest of state



on the fact that accessibility software isn't something that should go thru the regular vetting process, pre-approved list so people don't have to wait for their RA's. Anything else?

Partnered with OFM and ESD and WTECB on a grant. Focus is not funding, but an opportunity to work with national leaders on disability policy. Said we wanted to work on creating a pathway into state employment for PWD similar to federal program, quick pathway in, preference for hiring. Will include DSB, DVR, quickly put together app (DSB/DVR wanted to do it, and their idea, at the table, given credit). 3 big recent exciting things. Any questions?

Q from Clarence – new administration – still initiatives that will follow the next administration? Will they change with whoever comes in? Great questions. Eos don't end when a Gov leaves, not true, Gov would have to do a direct order to disband, can, likelihood (GCDE has an EO – several Admin changes), likelihood what Gov will say we don't want PWD working in state govt. Unlikely to be undone, suppose is possible. Thanks. You never know. Do we know when we'll hear. They said they'd let us know (starts in Feb – end of the year). Even if we don't get a grant, could still work on it without focused timeline, or resource of NGA to write policy – longer path. Emily confirmed – decisions 12/22, starts 1/15-6/30. If we get it, or not, this may be some way to focus GCDE work around employment (particularly if we can see ways that members can be helpful, may primarily fall to staff, but if there are ways members can help – may be a great way for us, talked as a whole and in CC, how important it is for us to be represented in state govt. – maybe members can contribute). Written in as a voice for bringing lived experience to the table, super critical. DIN – Disability Inclusion Network, state BRG for PWD and allies. Any additional Q's/comments for Elizabeth on her report? Hearing none. Thanks for the discussion. Last 15 minutes. Recap action items for subcommittees preparing for GM and then if there are any additional questions or comments to prepare, we may have time for that.

## **2:50 p.m. – Recap/Action Steps – Damiana Harper, GCDE Chair (10 mins)**

Damiana recapped that the primary ask in prep for GM is for each subcommittee to create a time specific (not date specific) workplan for subcommittee work. If the event is this day, then these items need to be done at certain times prior to that event. Along with the workplan, we also want a list of core members of the planning team, and the number of members to implement the work of the activities. Recapping (cut out). Work plan, then roles needed for the committee. Roles for planning the activity, and roles for implementing the activity. What is the core group of people for planning the event or project, and then what's needed to implement the activity (day or week of, etc.). Not just a facilitator, but what do they do? Having that info in prep for GM. Damiana will only be taking the weekend...cutting out

Hand from Cullyn. Suggests due to connectivity – short follow up email with Damiana's action items (trouble following). Would that work? Cutting out again. Will follow up with an email regarding the ask and meeting next steps, bullet points about what we're looking for and by when.

Hand from Clarence. Pretty sure that Damiana's input is needed, pass along – 1<sup>st</sup> thing, is there something that we're doing for Warren for his service to GCDE since it's nearly year end and his term is ending, 2<sup>nd</sup> – what is Damiana thinking (or who's taking over for him) as AC Chair?

Per Elizabeth, 2 things – 1<sup>st</sup>, we do plan to recognize him at the next GM meeting, but did also send him a token of appreciation from GCDE recognizing his contributions (in the works). Damiana has been in conversation with Steve about potentially taking over the chair role, sort of holding right now, until after the next GM where we do some of the planning (not planning for a role that might look different). Steve has said he'd be willing to be the chair, conversations happening, just trying to figure out what comes out of the strategic plan/visioning activity before we figure out next steps or what the role looks like or differently. Answered the question. Clarence didn't want to be considered. Did we miss any follow up items? Emily will check her notes and email Elizabeth/Damiana by COB.

Thanks for the great conversation, excited about the work we're going to be doing, please let us know if there's any way we can be of support to that work. With that, giving folks a few minutes back in their day. Thanks all and Connie, happy holidays, have a great day.

*Next Meeting to be announced later.*

*Logos coming next week. Ready before GM.*

*Rough transcript to Ryan/Patti/Amy.*

*More transparency about MAL process for next year.*