



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT

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### Awards Subcommittee Team Meeting

Thursday, January 4, 2024

12 noon to 1 p.m.

#### Minutes

**1: Welcome, Roll Call and Housekeeping** – Meeting called to order at 12:01 pm by Yvonne.

Present: Emily, Ryan, Amy, Yvonne, Kevin, Tammy, Interpreter Laurie, Damiana, Daniel, Clarence.

Excused: Cullynn, Lucas, Janet, Tammy (leaving early), and Matt.

Welcome all to the first meeting. Folks are out for various reasons (5 is quorum, met). Exciting to be here and start moving forward.

Housekeeping items reviewed (raise your hands, ID yourself when speaking). Nothing missed.

Check the agenda link for next time.

Did everyone review the minutes, any corrections or amendments? Question – can people who didn't attend the meeting vote, since we are at quorum (per Amy and Kevin). Does Damiana know? It is kind of iffy per Damiana, if you weren't there to vet accuracy, then it would be kind of hard to vote on it – but the other alternative would be to table the vote until the next meeting and hope we have enough folks who were at the wrap up meeting to do that. Ryan thinks that we need to vote on the 10/19 meeting minutes in question (wrap up mtg). He thinks we can close it up and move it aside, and go forward with the now (discussing this currently – actual quorum needed to vote since 2/5 present were not at the meeting). OK. Per Yvonne, we will table approving the minutes until the next meeting, if that's OK with us all (works for Tammy). Good.

When Ryan and Yvonne met on Tuesday, they developed the agenda, excited about moving forward with more organization/structure for our work, tasks, workplan...meeting yesterday with Damiana, Elizabeth, and Paul who is helping us move forward with GCDE. Going to be discussing at the GM meeting the why, what are we excited about, what are our passions, are we doing the work we want to do to make impact in the communities, if not, how can we change, grow, reflect. After that, Yvonne wanted to discuss with us. Is Awards working, is it value added, are we passionate about it? Please share your insights, why you chose it, what you want us to be doing – open to outside the box ideas/thoughts. How's it working, what might be better/changed, what should stay the same. Any volunteers? Apologies for the short notice.

Tammy will start (leaving at 12:30). Hand from Kevin after. Tammy has participated off and on since 1998 under Gov. Locke. At that time, changes wise, it was at the Seattle Center and part of it (John Evans may be a familiar name) put together a career fair after (event was during breakfast) and there was the Access Career fair in another room afterwards (Yvonne remembers). Commitment from a number of employers, Fortune 500's, pictures, Governor pictures, folks excited to participate. Throwing out the idea of maybe something similar (employers might be looking for it too). Was President of WA Chapter of Disability In, did a career fair at Bellevue college, heavily attended – also a heavy list. Yvonne loves it, recalls from John Evan's 19 years of participation, Yvonne also thinking about incorporating employer training (RA, working with PWD, hiring, etc.). Loves that idea. Hand from Damiana as well.

Amy first. Loves Tammy's ideas (doesn't have historical perspective), but sometimes things are good ideas but are no longer part of it for whatever reason, wants to hear more and participate. What she has seen over the past 2 years, event is good in 2 roles, 1 - honor/acknowledge/showcase those doing the right things (always time well spent), and 2 - makes others aware, constituents, etc. of what's possible/can be done – serves the mission or purpose that we're trying to accomplish in that way (just a matter of working thru logistics that make it successful like the last one, or addressing barriers to folks participating). Thanks for the input. Kevin, then Damiana. Apologies. Thanks.

Kevin could not attend this year, but agrees with what we've heard so far, needs to be more/do more. Invite Leadership that we didn't bring in. GCDE had the Outreach events in Mason Co. before his GCDE tenure, so inspiring – could we combine those activities, have the CO events culminate in the Employer Awards? Thinks we need to do a much bigger show. Yvonne loves it.

Damiana thinks we're all on the same page with collaboration. Loves the idea of doing a job or career fair, but doesn't think it's something we need to do on our own, Workforce Boards statewide have been putting those together (particularly for PWD) during October (1 in Spokane - Job Fair, local employer Awards ceremony after a number of years ago). Really good event. Point being, yes, totally loves Tammy's thoughts but doesn't think it's something we need to do ourselves - find a partner, i.e., WFDB, DSB (agency), to do a disability job fair with, partnerships make the work lighter. Are there other employer awards ceremonies we could partner with as well? What do we do that's unique? TOLA is unique, others are similar. Could we partner and take the heavy lift off our group, produce a better product, with more hands doing the work. John Evans was doing it as part of DVR at the time (state and Fed/National employers brought in for job fair). Love that. Yvonne kind of looked at 1 of the events that goes on at the same time, can't think of the name, will have to look again – has similar awards (need to find the sheet). Good idea to join other with orgs and participate. Does Clarence have anything to add?

Listening, touched on many of his suggestions, only addition is something he's been thinking about for a while – the reason he joined was when he was working with T-Mobile, he was placed on a team doing accommodations etc. Started getting highly involved with that aspect of the company. Realized that he was looking around when they were having those meetings to implement things company wide, what would be the best way to do it, weren't many people that were being mentioned about having a disability or anything (lot of people that had PTSD, hearing impairment, vision impairment, mobility issues, but weren't being labeled/classified/recognized). Going through the numbers, they were really low on the number of people that were being recognized as having a disability in the company. Was saddened by that, seemed that people were afraid to come out and self-identify, making their jobs more difficult. Sad because when he found out that people he worked with for many years had various disabilities, and gave them the tools, then their jobs got easier (could've been the whole time). That's why he wanted to join this group. He wanted to help be a voice to the governor/legislature

on what was happening in corporate America, and how we could remove the stigma and help people want to self ID/be more aware of those around them maybe needing some extra help that will benefit everyone and make it easier and more successful. Recap. Vice versa conversation regarding proposed beneficial legislation, etc. Keep working on it until it worked to address issues (long time to implement, but small steps reach the goal). Always been on board with partnering with DVR or anyone else to make the Awards ceremony less straining on us and bring in other ideas and more...opening up a different segment of the employer/employee experience that we miss (not advertently, just not currently participating). Love it. Giving voice. Resonates with Yvonne. That's what she wants us to do. To those who don't have one. How do we do/incorporate that into what we do, impact those working in our communities. Thank you. Hand from Ryan.

Backing up to Yvonne's earlier comment. John Evans. Business Relations Manager at DVR. Is that position still existing/filled? Do we know who? Yes, yes, and yes. She has all of those answers. John was involved for 19 years, incorporated it as part of role his with DVR, YBW is friends with current person in the role (Jeanine Chandler/Denise Clark). Slowing down, sorry. 10 employment specialists underneath them (go out and work with employers/businesses in their communities). Yvonne would be happy to talk to her. DSB also has one (Carl Peterson, formerly of ESD). Yvonne wants to invite them to meetings to talk with us and discuss where we want to go. Tammy loves that idea, knows them both, thinks it's awesome. Damiana is also on board. Kevin agrees too. Yvonne is excited, wonderful discussion, apologies for the agenda change. Haven't heard from Daniel, any thoughts/ideas/feelings? Ryan is fine with agenda change.

Daniel doesn't have much to add. Really liked all the ideas so far. Spot on. Good launching point for us. Thank you. Great discussion all, values input, likes where we're going. Knows agenda went out, (Tammy needs to leave), wants to table the agenda items #4 & 5, for the time being. Amy's hand.

Asked if the folks who can't be here will be able to weigh in to share thoughts (always good to hear other contributions). Yvonne will email. Kevin sounds like we want to get some more employers involved, then the governor may want to be involved, so why don't we work to that end? State leaders don't want the workforce of PWD to be low anymore. Moving onto the next topic.

**2: Awards Event Location** - Yvonne opened the discussion on the 2024 Awards event location.

Already discussed date. Passion for moving on and continuing. Discussed moving to the west side last fall. Lucas suggested the Kitsap Convention Center. They have a hospitality area (Columbia hospitality). Any other ideas for this year?

Amy suggests if we have new participants honored in the last couple years, encourage that, go to where some of those folks are from, likes the idea of going statewide, but if we have a handful of new employers doing the right thing in say Kitsap or Vancouver, take a strong look at those.

Kevin wonders if there's a reason why we couldn't use a casino? When CO came to Omak in 2016, they used the Colville casino. Have lodging, food, etc. Does Kevin have one in mind? Kevin is thinking of the one between Olympia and Shelton in Chehalis, hosts a lot of conventions (Little Creek). Damiana says we've used them for lodging for CO (at one of the last in person ones), doesn't think there's anything saying we can't, just a matter of whether they're willing to work with us and are available. It has been done before. The only thing that's popping in the back of Yvonne's mind (Clarence hand), when we talked in the fall about 3-year strategic location plan, suggested in 2025 that we do it close to Olympia when there's a new gov onboard

(why he raised his hand). Can see a problem with the casinos, could be willing to renegotiate fees, most of them are pricey to do anything in their areas. Trying to be like Vegas, bringing in big concert headliners, wanting top dollar – could be a problem there. Health concerns for smoking policies also. Thanks for remembering that; Yvonne had it on the agenda. Be aware of that. Usually there are two sections. They have high powered smoke eaters so that you don't know that there's smoke on the other side. Even if people had allergic reactions to perfume, can't even smell it, they're that good – aunt visited at Emerald queen in smoke free area, and dropped a perfume bottle, but was like she didn't even drop it, anywhere else would be noticeable.

Yvonne with location question. The place that YLF uses - never been there, does it have accommodations for lodging and food, looks beautiful. Hand from Ryan. That place is in FW, limited to 96 people capacity. Doesn't think that would accommodate our group. Emily concurs. Any other suggestions?

Clarence. East or west side? West. Agreed last fall to move it to the west side this year. Clarence will think about it. Tulalip? Does a lot of conferences.

Kevin wonders if we've thought about the airport (hotels nearby, maybe folks flying in from east side, SeaTac area). Red lion used to hold conferences, GCDE awards event at maybe the Hilton in around 2000. Could explore that area near the airport. Thinking about the gov trying to get out, take away excuses. Why clarence suggested Olympia in 2025. Any venues in SeaTac? Yvonne knows of a nice one, but doesn't think they do the govt rate any more. Resort at SeaTac (Cedar Brooke).

Kevin wonders if we're doing someone else's work. Is there a statewide function group that could help us with this (chamber of commerce, business development group?) Maybe they have already researched event locations? Not sure. Maybe Carl or Jeanine would know. Amy.

Loves the idea of 2025 in Olympia for getting the attention of folks being there then. If we are going to be central on the west side in 2 years, maybe we go more north or south before then such as Bellingham, Vancouver, or the peninsula even though it would be a trek to get to (not as central). Anything in mind? Amy lives in Bellingham, depending on the time of year, lots of venues – casinos, convention center, is an airport to Kevin's point (also in Vancouver and Everett to help folks come and go). Nothing specific in mind, hasn't done planning for an event as big as ours, certainly be willing. Clarence.

When he was in Olympia (thinking of a new governor), what about the center there (does conventions). This year or next? When did we want to have them. Both ideally, but 2025 may be more realistic. Next year then for the new administration. Yvonne writing it down, likes the idea.

Ideas:

Tulalip Casino Convention Area

SeaTac

Bellingham

Vancouver

Little Creek Casino

Kitsap Convention Center

Olympia in 2025

Could send out a voting poll for members. Is that a good idea to make the selection? Kevin suggests that those who suggested venues connect with them and get proposals on our behalf,

then send out a voting poll once we figure out those items. Kevin will reach out to Little Creek. Can we have that research turned in by Jan 25?

Quick overview of parameters – how many people to accommodate? Is 200 the estimate? Overnight guests – yes. Ryan thinks 140 was last year (shooting for capacity of 150, up to 200 just in case, is a good scenario). The group can decide capacity, just reporting what it was. Looking at 1 meal (lunch or brunch, depending on what we decide to do with the event this year, still in planning mode with ideas/partners). Clarence.

Suggested this before. Should we make a cheat sheet of what we need for the event? Kevin concurs. Lighting accommodations, ramp, stage, mics, speakers, tables/chairs, accessible motel rooms, get it together and send it out so we don't miss anything. Yes. The original plan was to break down into teams, event logistics would look at that, what we can do is take those and create a sheet now. Do Ryan and Emily have anything already to build on? Clarence wants to add that when we get the cheat sheet, he's always thinking of making things better (can be difficult), but small steps help it be more manageable. Could we incorporate (Emily does a great job at this, relying on her to say if we can do it this year our build up to it) ... Yvonne started it (in excel sheet from last week, breaking down into chunks, could break it down further). Some way of making the ceremony something we could do over the internet (not contributing, but could be aware or a part of it while it's happening, if they can't travel to the location but still want to participate – feed, virtual component that shows it). Where should we send the research? Yvonne and Ryan. 8 minutes left. Matt is unsure when he will be joining us (will send him our best). Loves that idea. Incredible conversation.

Please take the excel spreadsheet with the info and feel free to add to it, break it down into smaller chunks, not set in stone – initial guide to get us started and going. Going to review that at our next meeting (sub workgroup and follow up on homework assignments form 1/25). Ryan and Yvonne and Emily will go through them together and build out info to share with the team for review.

GM meeting on 1/26. Awesome things Damiana will be leading us thru (watch crip camp again or for the first time to help with the facilitated discussion). It is powerful (Judy H. is her hero). Helps ground us in our advocacy. How can we access it? Is on Netflix. Not sure if on other streaming. Another thing is – should have known at the start, recently got braces, enunciating is hard – apologies. Next meeting reminder. 5 mins left. Wrap up now or any other discussion before closing the meeting? Repeat next date. 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month (same time). The spreadsheet is not legible – could we send the broad headlines? Repeat. Not accessible. Wants at least the headers at least. Thank you. He can figure it out. Hand from Ryan. Thanks for letting us know. Then Clarence (making sure Kevin has access). Remind him to include the text in the email when he sends it out to make sure he has access when everyone else has a calendar invite. Amy leaving.

Unsure if feasible, be thinking about or pass along, when doing research or trying to find a location – if we could possibly (coordinate with another subcommittee doing an event), go to one of the organizations that we want to house the event at and see if we could get a discount for holding 2 events there (Awards and YLF for example even if at different times). Putting it out there. Good idea. All for that. OK all, time to wrap up, 1 minute left. Adjourned. Looks forward to seeing us at GM on 1/26. Thanks for a great meeting. Bye.

**3: Awards Event Theme** – Tabling for next meeting.

**4: Meeting Dates and times of Subcommittee team and sub-workgroups** – Tabling for next meeting.

**5: List of sub-workgroups** – Tabling for next meeting.

**6: Next Action Steps -**

- 1: Check agenda link for next meeting
- 2: Tabling approval of 10/19 wrap up meeting minutes for next meeting
- 3: Tabling other agenda items for next meeting
- 4: Invite partners/DVR/DSB Business Relations Managers to the meetings to share input (Fair) (continue to think about the other suggestions on our new agenda item about the future, as well)
- 5: Yvonne will email those who couldn't be present to get their thoughts on the new agenda item
- 6: Those who suggested venues do more research by 1/25 (send to Ryan and Yvonne) - discounts
- 7: Yvonne to work with staff on a cheat sheet for venue research purposes (needed info)
- 8: Consider adding a virtual component to 3–5-year plan (work up to it as able)
- 9: Review the event timeline sheet before 2/1 meeting and be prepared to discuss (check access)
- 10: Be sure to attend the GM meeting on 1/26 for an exciting discussion on the future of GCDE (please watch Crip Camp – available on Netflix – first to prepare for the conversation at GM).

*7: Next Meeting date and time will be on February 1<sup>st</sup> from noon to 1pm. First Thurs. of month. Include text in the body of the invite for accessibility.*