



## State of Wisconsin

Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities

1 WEST WILSON STREET,  
ROOM 551  
POST OFFICE BOX 2659  
MADISON, WI 53701-2659  
Telephone: 608-266-9354  
Website: [gcpd.wisconsin.gov](http://gcpd.wisconsin.gov)

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### Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities (GCPD) Bi-Monthly Teleconference Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
1:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Approved April 21, 2021

#### Action and Motion Items

##### A. Action Items

1. **Action Item:** DHS support staff will complete a Doodle Poll to get Work Plan Committee monthly meetings scheduled.

##### B. Motion Items

1. **Motion Item:** Tom O'Connor made a motion to approve the GCPD February Bi-monthly meeting agenda. Nancy Leipzig seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. **Motion Item:** Margaret Kristan made a motion to approve the GCPD December Bi-monthly meeting minutes. Ben Barrett seconded the motion. Motion carried.
3. **Motion Item:** Ben Barrett made a motion to approve the final draft of the GCPD 2020 Annual Report. Ramsey Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried.
4. **Motion Item:** Maureen Ryan made a motion for GCPD write a letter to the Governor's office requesting the Department of Administration fill their vacant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator position(s) as these positions are more relevant as a result of the pandemic. Ramsey Lee seconded the motion. Discussion on the motion was had but it did not pass.
5. **Motion Item:** Maureen Ryan amended the motion, asking GCPD's Executive Committee writes a letter to the Governor's office to form an accessibility committee. Ramsey Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried.
6. **Motion Item:** Sandy Popp made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Leipzig seconded the motion. Motion carried.



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#### C. Meeting Minutes

##### I. Welcome and Introductions, David Morstad, Chairperson

**Committee members present:** David Morstad; Sandy Popp; Margaret Kristan; Maureen Ryan; Nancy Leipzig; Ramsey Lee; Rhonda Staats; Ben Barrett; Fred Ludwig; Tom O'Connor; Julie Blasky; John Olson; Daniel Laatsch; Dan Idzikowski; Kimberlee Coronado; Pearl Fessenden; Evelyn Azbell; and Gail Bovy.

**Committee members absent (excused\*):** John Hartman\*.

**Committee liaisons present:** Sarah Lincoln, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Colleen Larsen, Wisconsin Technical Colleges; and Eva Kubinski, Department of Public Instruction.

**Guests:** Karen Odegaard, COVID-19 Response Team (CRT), Department of Health Services (DHS); Joe Larson, CRT, DHS; Jeff Fox, Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities; Victor Forberger, Disability Attorney at Law - Milwaukee; Stephanie Ricketts, University of Wisconsin Madison, Masters of Social Work student; Emily Savard, Department of Workforce Development; and Lawrence Brown.

**Captioning Services:** Margo Lucas.

**DHS staff support present:** Lisa Sobczyk, DHS, Bureau of Aging and Disability Resource (BADR); Ashley Walker, DHS, BADR; and Amber Mullett, DHS, BADR.

##### II. David Morstad, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:02 P.M.

The meeting was available via phone at 1-844-708-2569 and Meeting ID: 876 2041 6489 and via [Zoom](#).

##### III. Review and Approve February Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda

- Tom O'Connor made a motion to approve the GCPD February Bi-monthly meeting agenda. Nancy Leipzig seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 1.



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#### IV. Review and Approve of December Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes

- Margaret Kristan made a motion to approve the GCPD December Bi-monthly meeting minutes. Ben Barrett seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 2.

#### V. Public Comment on Issues Affecting People with Disabilities

- Victor Forberger highlighted the systematic unemployment barriers for individuals with disabilities. The online unemployment insurance (UI) system has many accessibility issues and navigation issues. Overall the UI website and Department of Workforce Development (DWD) website are not accessible to people with disabilities.
- Lawrence Brown stated many issues with COVID-19 vaccine supply and access; both physical access of vaccination locations and online accessibility. Lawrence Brown also mentioned that the UI website is not accessible with JAWS or alternative text.

#### VI. COVID-19 Response Team Updates on Outreach to People with Disabilities

- Karen Odegaard updated GCPD on DHS' COVID-19 Response Team efforts.
  - DHS is maintaining commitment to equitable distribution of vaccine, and dedicating funds to support community based organizations to help with vaccine distribution, mobile vaccination teams, education, and continued testing.
    - Specifically DHS has provided \$6.3 million total, \$1 million of this funding was allocated to Aging and Disability Resource Centers to assist with vaccination of homebound individuals and \$3.1 million to local organizations to assist with vaccination including community based clinics and mobile vaccination unit.



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- Vaccines will continue to be prioritized for individuals who are 65 years old and older. In March, the priority groups will be people in long-term care programs and in April it will be educators and child care providers.
- Ramsey Lee asked what GCPD members can do as individuals to help?
  - Karen Odegaard responded to continue good public health practices, e.g. wearing masks, social distancing, staying home, and getting COVID-19 tested if symptomatic.
    - GCPD discussed physical access to testing and vaccine locations; along with online registration and accessibility being a barrier for people with disabilities and older adults.
    - Karen Odegaard shared with GCPD that Joe Larson will be a point of contact on these issues going forward.

#### **VII. GCPD Executive Committee Election Results**

- GCPD elected three members to serve in the vacant at-Large Executive Committee member positions via ballot prior to the February Bi-monthly meeting. The following GCPD members were elected to the Executive Committee:
  - Tom O'Connor, Council on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Representative;
  - Rhonda Staats, Statutory Council on Blindness Representative; and
  - Ben Barrett, Council on Physical Disabilities Representative.



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### VIII. GCPD Executive Committee Updates

- David Morstad shared updated to the full Committee on what the Executive Committee had completed since December 2020 at the last GCPD Bi-Monthly meeting.
  - **Establishing Work Plan Committee for Development of New Three-Year Plan**
    - The Executive Committee voted to establish a Work Plan Committee for development GCPD's new three-year plan. A timeline and deliverables for work plan development were distributed to the full Committee for review to ensure that a final draft can be ready by May 2021.
    - David Morstad asked which GCPD members would be willing to serve on the Work Plan Committee. The following GCPD members volunteered to serve: Maureen Ryan; Rhonda Staats; Kimberlee Coronado; Gail Bovy; and Dan Idzikowski.
    - DHS support staff will complete a Doodle Poll to get Work Plan Committee monthly meetings scheduled. See Action Item 1.
  - ***Survey: Right to Have a Support Person/Caregiver at Appointments***
    - GCPD drafted and sent out a survey on February 1, 2021 to gather more Information on how modified policies and procedures that have been implemented by health care providers may be impacting people with disabilities throughout the state and how this may be impacting access to medical care and treatment. GCPD will use this data to engage in conversations and dialogue aimed at improving access to health care for people with disabilities, both during the pandemic and into the future.



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- The survey was designed to be completed by a:
  - Person who has a disability;
  - Caregiver to a person who has a disability; or
  - Advocate (such as a family member, care manager, IRIS consultant, professional advocate, etc.) for a person who has a disability.
- To date over 400 survey responses have been received. The survey will remain open until February 28, 2021.
- GCPD also discussed membership vacancies. In particular, a need for a representative from the Statutory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse. If we cannot get a representative GCPD can look to partners or other groups to fill this vacancy as mental health issues need to be represented on the Committee.
- GCPD also discussed the need for diversity on the Committee and how GCPD can work with the Governor's office on recruiting diverse membership.
- GCPD discussed keeping a Bi-monthly meeting schedule through the end of calendar year 2021. The meetings will remain the third Wednesday of the month.

#### **IX. Review and Approve GCPD 2020 Annual Report**

- David Morstad gave an overview of the draft GCPD 2020 Annual Report.
- Sandy Popp thanked the Executive Committee for their work on the Annual Report.
- Nancy Leipzig thanked David Morstad for his leadership of the Committee this past year.
  - Ben Barrett made a motion to approve the final draft of the GCPD 2020 Annual Report. Ramsey Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 3.



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#### X. Update on Unemployment Insurance and Accessibility Issues

- Emily Savard, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) presented on Unemployment Insurance and Accessibility Issues.
  - GCPD discussed ongoing issues with website accessibility, navigation, and concerns with the call-in system for unemployment insurance.
  - Ramsey Lee suggested adding an email or chat feature to the DWD's website to assist with overall questions and access.
  - Maureen Ryan shared that there is a lot of confusion and misinformation across the state regarding Social Security Income/Social Security Disability Income and unemployment insurance.

#### XI. Liaison Updates

- ***Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)*** – Sarah Lincoln shared that DVR offices remain closed to the public but face-to-face meetings can be arranged on an individual basis. DVR continues to provide services through DVR staff and service providers.
- ***Wisconsin Technical Colleges*** – Colleen Larsen shared many program and services are still being offered virtually. Colleges across the system are continuing to expand ability to provide students with loaner laptops, hotspots, and other technology in order to access college courses and resources. Each of the 16 colleges created a local equity report where they outlined equity gaps experienced by students and staff. A consistent finding in these reports was a gap in program completion for students with disabilities. There has been an increased emphasis on transition services for students with disabilities and college-wide accessibility.
- ***Department of Public Instruction (DPI)*** – Eva Kubinski shared that the Deputy State Superintendent recently sent communications to all school districts related to transition requirements for students on



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Individualized Education Plans (IEP) during COVID. These requirements include ensuring at least one outside agency to be invited to the IEP meeting where postsecondary transition goals and transition services are being discussed.

## XII. Council Updates

- **Council for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind (CDHH)** – Tom O'Connor shared CDHH's top three goals for 2021:
  - By-laws – allow for non-voting members to be part of Council to allow for increase in membership and participants – consider increasing number of members on Council.
  - Collaboration – increase input/participation with ODHH, provide more information to Governor's Office.
  - Diversity & Equity – Reach out to minority groups, improve communication and accessibility.
- **Council on Physical Disabilities (CPD)** – Ben Barrett submitted a council report. CPD would like to partner with GCPD to create two documents the Know your Rights/Accommodations 2-sided one pager and a joint cover letter to go in a new Communication folder being created to assist consumers and providers in address access to health care during COVID and communication barriers. The cover letter would explain the purpose of this folder and if people are experiencing difficulties to please share this information with GCPD. Also possible jointly developing training PowerPoint for health care and service providers on these resources, accommodations, and disability etiquette. These documents would need to be completed by June 30, 2021.
- **Statutory Council on Blindness (SCOB)** – Rhonda Staats shared that SCOB is focused on accessibility of state documents. Rhonda Staats shared SCOB's collaboration efforts with CPD on Emergency Preparedness Toolkit updates and distribution.
  - GCPD discussed the ongoing issues with documents and websites lacking accessibility for individuals with disabilities.





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- Maureen Ryan made a motion for GCPD write a letter to the Governor's office requesting the Department of Administration fill their vacant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator position(s) as these positions are more relevant as a result of the pandemic. Ramsey Lee seconded the motion. See Motion Item 4.
  - Discussion on the motion was had.
  - Margaret Kristan asked if GCPD should carbon copy each state agency or department on the letter to the Governor.
- Maureen Ryan amended the motion, asking GCPD's Executive Committee writes a letter to the Governor's office to form an accessibility committee. Ramsey Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 5.
- No other Councils submitted a Council report.
- GCPD discussed the Governor's Budget Proposal and GCPD possibly drafting a response to the proposed budget.
  - Maureen Ryan stated that she had begun reviewing the Governor's Budget Proposal and would share thoughts with the Executive Committee as a starting point for drafting a written response.

### XIII. Adjourn

- Sandy Popp made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Leipzig seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 6.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:23 P.M.**