

Background:

Minutes of the February 8, 2013, Public Policy Committee meeting are included for your review.

Public Policy Committee

Agenda Item 3.

Expected Action:

The Committee will review, revise as appropriate, and approve.

**PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
FEBRUARY 8, 2013**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Joe Rivas, Chair, Chair
Kristen Cox, Vice Chair
Hunter Adkins
Kelly Chirhart, UT CDS

Mary Faithfull, DRTx
Kate Layman, HHSC
Jeff Kaufmann, DADS
Sara Kendall, DARS

Amy Sharp, A&M CDD
Lora Taylor
Richard Tisch

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Mateo Delgado

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephen Gersuk
(Not assigned to a committee yet)

STAFF PRESENT

Roger A. Webb,
Executive Director

Belinda Carlton
Melissa Loe

Jessica Ramos
Lucy Walker

GUESTS PRESENT

Cassie Laws, DARS
Marissa Quist

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Policy Committee convened on Friday, February 8, 2013, in Room 108 of the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center, 1900 University Avenue, Austin, Texas 78705. Committee Chair Joe Rivas called those present to order at 8:34 a.m.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Committee members, staff and guests were introduced. Committee members discussed their personal experiences visiting with State Senators and Representatives on Thursday and reported on related activities in which they are involved. Public Policy Director Jessica Ramos thanked everyone for their visits, asked them to send thank you notes and indicated TCDD staff would also follow up with the legislators visited.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were offered to the Committee.

3. CONSIDERATION OF OCTOBER 25, 2012, MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the October 25, 2012, Public Policy Committee meeting.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the October 25, 2012, Public Policy Committee meeting, as presented.

MADE BY: Lora Taylor

SECOND: Stephen Gersuk

The motion **passed** unanimously.

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Member Joe Rivas indicated will speak at the North Central Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center in Lewisville on February 27, 2013, on *Attendant Care for Consumers and Workers: Finding and Keeping the "Right" Attendant*, and *Being the "Right" Attendant*.

5. MEMBER UPDATES

Jeff Kaufmann indicated that the third annual Texas Autism Research Conference will be held by the Texas Autism Research and Resource Center (TARRC) in San Marcos on July 12-13, 2013. It will cover cutting edge autism research including studies on possible causes contributing to autism and best practices for the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. There will be two tracks of sessions as well as poster sessions by graduate students and exhibits.

Kristen Cox is going to Washington, D.C., on Sunday to advocate with the Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy organization and encourage Congress to reauthorize the Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research and Education Act. The MD CARE Act was originally passed in 2001.

Joe Rivas is working on a novel about unicorns, based on a collection of short stories he wrote. He has a blog at joesepicstories.blogspot.com.

Hunter Adkins will compete in the Top Hands Horse Show for people with disabilities on February 15-16, 2013, in Houston. She participates in the Ride On Center for Kids (R.O.C.K.) program which provides equine assisted activities and therapies to children and adults with physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities.

6. PROPOSED STATE PLAN AMENDMENTS

Committee members discussed proposed amendments to the TCDD State Plan and suggested a few changes. One recommendation was to correct an error in numbering of the objectives under Goal 1. Other discussion centered on whether the Plan should specify a specific project (the Gulf Coast African American Family Support Conference) under Goal 5, Objective 3, Activity 4, as opposed to making it more generic and not limiting the geographic location.

MOTION: To recommend that the Council approve the proposed TCDD FY 2012-2016 State Plan, Goals and Objectives with the following modifications: fix the numbering on Goal 1 objectives, and reword Goal 5, Objective 3, Activity 4 so that it does not specify the grantee and geographic location.

MADE BY: Kristen Cox

SECOND: Amy Sharp

The motion **passed** unanimously.

7. REVIEW OF CRIMINAL COMPETENCY POSITION STATEMENT

Jessica Ramos led a discussion regarding the revision of TCDD’s Criminal Competency Position Statement. TCDD staff worked with attorneys from Disability Rights Texas who have expertise in criminal law to rewrite and update the position statement, as requested by the Committee at its meeting October 25, 2012. The revision, titled Criminal Justice, incorporates the changes requested.

MOTION: To accept the revised Criminal Justice Position Statement as proposed and recommend approval by the full Council.

MADE BY: Rick Tisch

SECOND: Lora Taylor

The motion **passed** unanimously.

8. PUBLIC INFORMATION REPORT

Communications Coordinator Melissa Loe reported to the Committee about TCDD public information and outreach activities. TCDD’s new website was launched on January 11, 2013, at www.tcdd.texas.gov. Committee members were asked to inform staff about how the site works on different browsers and if they see anything that needs to be updated. TCDD’s Annual Report contents are drafted and layout and design are in the final stage. The report will be available in English and Spanish. Copies of the 2012 Biennial Disability Report will be available on the resource table at today’s Council Meeting. The Request for Proposals for the Accessible Parking Public Education and Outreach Campaign is expected to post this spring, before the May Council meetings. Several Council members are sharing information via social media, and staff will tweet that Council members met with legislative offices yesterday. TCDD also is tweeting during the 2013 legislative session using #txlege (hash tag). The FYI newsletter transitioned to a Web-based News and Features format. Articles will be posted on an ongoing basis now with a summary emailed once a month and a print compilation sent quarterly.

9. PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Ramos led a discussion on two proposed TCDD Public Policy Recommendations regarding Employment First and Prohibiting Organ Recipient Discrimination.

Regarding Employment First, Committee members provided various comments including the need to raise expectations and to support all people with disabilities so they can reach their goals and achieve meaningful employment at a livable wage. This includes a need to support individuals with disabilities to prepare for and complete all levels of college or other higher education or vocational training, if desired. Committee members suggested various changes in wording to the Employment First proposal and recommended that a small workgroup of interested individuals be tasked to address concerns expressed and make final decisions on wording so the Employment First Public Policy Recommendation could be used in TCDD advocacy efforts during the current legislative session. Suggested members of the workgroup are Kristen Cox, Frank Genco (HHSC), Stephen Gersuk, Jeff Kaufmann (DADS), Sara Kendall (DARS), and David Taylor.

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of the proposed Employment First Public Policy Recommendation in concept and authorize a small workgroup to make final decisions relating to wording.

MADE BY: Kristen Cox

SECOND: Lora Taylor

The motion **passed** unanimously.

Regarding organ transplantation, Committee members stressed that denials must be based on medical reasons, not just because a potential recipient has a disability.

MOTION: To recommend that the Council approve the Public Policy Recommendation to Prohibit Organ Recipient Discrimination, as proposed.

MADE BY: Mary Faithfull

SECOND: Lora Taylor

The motion **passed** unanimously.

10. PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

Committee members received updates and provided guidance for staff advocacy efforts regarding State Policy Issues, including discussion on Senate Bill 7 which is intended to reform the Medicaid long term services and supports system that serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Committee Chair Rivas adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Roger A. Webb
Secretary to the Council

Date